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Guide to the Albert Freedman Papers, 1955-2008

— 123.4838

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English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong

The Strong

One Manhattan Square

Rochester, NY 14607

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URL: <https://www.museumofplay.org/collections/brian-sutton-smith-library-archives-of-play/>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong
Source:	Freedman, Albert Z., 1922-2017
Title:	Albert Freedman papers
ID:	123.4838
Date [inclusive]:	1955-2008
Date [bulk]:	1957-1959
Physical Description:	3.5 Linear Feet (3 document boxes, 1 oversized folder)
Language of the Material:	The majority of the collection is in English, with some instances of Italian and French.
Mixed Materials [box]:	1-3
Text [folder]:	OS1
Abstract:	This collection of papers from Albert Freedman, an American television producer, documents the quiz show scandals of the 1950s. The materials are dated from 1955 to 2008, with the bulk of the materials from 1957 to 1959. The papers are comprised of newspaper clippings, correspondence, photographs, production scripts, audio transcripts, and completed contestant questionnaires for the game show, <i>Twenty-One</i> .

Preferred Citation for Publication

Albert Freedman papers, Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong.

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Biographical Note

Albert Freedman was an American television producer. In the 1950s, Freedman moved from the West Coast to New York and found work on the show *You Bet Your Life*. After *You Bet Your Life*, he worked closely with Barry & Enright Productions on *Tic-Tac-Dough*, *Twenty-One*, *The Big Surprise*, and others. Freedman was indicted and charged with perjury during the quiz show scandals. After the scandals,

Freedman and his family relocated to London where he worked for *Penthouse* magazine. Freedman earned his PhD from the Institute for the Advanced Study of Human Sexuality in 1981.

In the 1950s, a series of accusations of popular quiz shows being rigged incited the American population and the press. The scandals involved producers and contestants of *Twenty-One*, *Dotto*, *The Big Surprise* and *Tic-Tac-Dough*. In 1956 the game show *Twenty-One* aired on NBC to very low ratings. The show sponsors were unhappy, and producers started rigging the shows to make them interesting. Producers would feed contestants answers, give them categories they were familiar with, or tell them to intentionally answer a question incorrectly. *Twenty-One* contestant, Herb Stempel, went to the press with allegations of cheating but was ignored until another contestant accused *Dotto* of rigging in 1958. The combined complaints were enough to initiate a New York County grand jury investigation. Several producers and contestants perjured themselves in front of the grand jury to protect themselves. Charles Van Doren and Elfrida von Nordroff pleaded guilty to perjury and 12 other contestants were also arrested. There were no indictments, but the judge sealed the findings and testimony and aroused suspicion that corruption was involved, which attracted the attention of Congress. A formal congressional subcommittee investigation, headed by Joseph Stone, began in August 1959. Charles Van Doren and other contestants testified before Congress. Findings from the congressional hearings led to the amendment of the Communications Act of 1934 to prohibit the rigging of game shows.

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Collection Scope and Content Note

The Albert Freedman papers contain documentation relating to quiz show production, the scandals of the 1950s, and Freedman's role in both. Materials include articles about the 1950s quiz show scandals and congressional hearings, newspaper clippings of Freedman's life, set photographs, correspondence, game show scripts, contestant questionnaires for *Twenty-One*, and promotional materials (photographs and brochures). Also included are game show scripts of *The Big Surprise*, *Tic-Tac-Dough*, *Juvenile Jury*, and a script for the movie, *Quiz Show* (1994). Additional scope and content information can be found in the Container List section of this finding aid.

The papers have been arranged into four series and are housed in three document boxes and one oversized folder.

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System of Arrangement

Series I: Legal documents and transcripts, 1957-1960, 1994

Series II: Marketing, 1956-1958

Series III: Program development, 1955-1958, 1986

Series IV: Published articles, 1957-2008

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for use by staff of The Strong and users of the library and archive.

Conditions Governing Use

Though the donor has not transferred intellectual property rights (including, but not limited to any copyright, trademark, and associated rights therein) to The Strong, they have given permission for The Strong to make copies in all media for museum, educational, and research purposes.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The Albert Freedman papers were donated to The Strong in December 2023 as a gift of Derek Freedman. The papers were accessioned by The Strong under 123.4838. The collection was delivered to The Strong by Howard Blumenthal in three boxes.

Processed by

Stephanie Ball, April 2024.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

In 2024, Adam Nedoff donated two publicity photographs. The first of Jack Barry, Hank Bloomgarden, and James Snodgrass (obj ID 124.1927) on the set of *Twenty-One*. The second photograph consists of a black and white photograph of Jack Barry and five contestants of *Juvenile Jury*.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Tic-Tac-Dough (Television program)
- Twenty-One (Television program)
- Juvenile Jury (Television program)
- Television quiz show contestants
- Television quiz shows
- Scandals in mass media
- Interviews
- Screenplays
- National Archives of Game Show History
- Freedman, Albert Z., 1922-2017
- Enright, Dan
- Barry, Jack, 1918-1984
- Barry & Enright Productions
- Van Doren, Charles
- Bloomgarden, Henry S. (Hank)
- Stempel, Herb, 1926-2020
- Nearing, Vivienne
- Von Nardroff, Elfrida

Collection Inventory

**Series I: Legal documents and transcripts,
1957-1960, 1994**

box 1

Scope and Content Note

This series consists of deposition transcripts, affidavits, statements, interview transcripts, handwritten notes, and correspondence related to the legal proceedings of the quiz show scandals. The series also contains a folder of handwritten notes, correspondence, letters to editors, and a detailed account, all written by Freedman. The transcripts include Enright's interview and deposition, a recorded conversation between Herb Stemple and Enright, and Freedman's written statement.

Title/Description	Instances	
Affadavit - Daniel Enright, 1960	box 1	folder 1
Correspondence, 1958-1959	box 1	folder 2
Freedman interview transcript, undated	box 1	folder 3
Statement - Albert Freedman, c. 1959	box 1	folder 4
"The Case" - handwritten notes, correspondence, and photographs, 1959-1962	box 1	folder 5
Transcript - Daniel Enright interview, c. 1994	box 1	folder 6
Transcript - Herb Stempel and Daniel Enright, 1957	box 1	folder 7

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Series II: Marketing, 1956-1958

box 1

Scope and Content Note

This small series consists of set photographs, market research reports, press releases, and other marketing materials for *Twenty-One*. The set photographs include contestants [Charles Van Doren, Vivienne Nearing, Taslenko, Elfrida von Nardroff, Hank Bloomgarden] and host, Jack Barry.

Title/Description	Instances	
Contestant photographs, brochures, and drawings, c. 1958	box 1	folder 8
Press releases - <i>Twenty-One</i> , 1958	box 1	folder 9
<i>Tic-Tac-Dough</i> promotional booklet, 1956	box 1	folder 10

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Series III: Program development, 1955-1958, 1986

box 1

box 2

Scope and Content Note

This series documents the production process including scripts, contestant questionnaires, an inventory of projects in development, and a program ideas release form. The quiz show scripts represented in this series are *Tic-Tac-Dough*, *Juvenile Jury*, and *The Big Surprise*.

Title/Description	Instances	
Barry & Enright introductory memo, 1986	box 1	folder 11
<i>The Big Surprise</i> program 23 script, 1956 March 10	box 1	folder 12
Contestant contact list, c. 1958	box 1	folder 13
Correspondence, 1957	box 1	folder 14
<i>Crash</i> teleplay, undated	box 1	folder 15
"Current inventory of projects in development", c. 1975	box 1	folder 16
<i>Juvenile Jury</i> scripts, 1955	box 1	folder 17
Program ideas release form [blank], undated	box 1	folder 18
<i>Tic-Tac-Dough</i> scripts, 1956 July 23-25	box 1	folder 19
<i>Twenty-One</i> contestant questionnaire - Test B, undated	box 1	folder 20
<i>Twenty-One</i> contestant questionnaire - Test C, undated	box 2	folder 1

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Series IV: Published articles, 1957-2008

box 2

Scope and Content Note

box 3

This series contains newspaper clippings, magazine articles, book chapters, and articles written by Albert Freedman. The newspaper clippings contain coverage of the congressional hearings, *Twenty-One* contestants, producers, executives, and other quiz shows. This series includes the issue of *Time* magazine with Charles Van Doren on the cover from 1957 and front page headlines about the scandals. Also included are book chapters from *Investigation of Television Quiz Shows*, *Don't Quote Me*, and *The Age of Television: Gold and Dross*. The series also contains a copy of the script from the 1994 movie *Quiz Show*.

folder OS1

Title/Description	Instances	
<i>CBS: Reflections in a Bloodshot Eye</i> - chapter 19: "\$64,000 Indigestion", 1975	box 2	folder 2
Chapter 2 - "The Scandals", undated	box 2	folder 3
<i>Don't Quote Me</i> - Chapter 8 by Marie Torre, 1965	box 2	folder 4

"The Dream Machine: Illusion, Scandal, and the Flowering of American Television", 1994	box 2	folder 5
<i>Investigation of Television Game Shows</i> , 1959	box 2	folder 6
Newspaper clippings - Barry & Enright, 1957	box 2	folder 7
Newspaper clippings - Congressional hearings, 1959	box 2	folder 8-11
Newspaper clippings - Front page headlines, 1959	box 2	folder 12
Newspaper clippings - Front page headlines, 1959	folder OS1	
Newspaper clippings - New York press, 1959	box 2	folder 13-14
Newspaper clippings - Perjury charge, 1958	box 3	folder 1
Newspaper clippings - Pre-investigation, 1956-2008	box 3	folder 2-3
<i>Quiz Show</i> movie script [copy], 1991	box 3	folder 4
"Robert Redford is full of..." article and manuscript, c. 1994	box 3	folder 5

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