

# Archives 101:

## A CHRAB Workshop



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Image: The Papers of Charles F. Lummis, Colorado State University, Archives and Special Collections,

<http://lib.colostate.edu/archives/findingaids/manuscripts/cflm.html>

# Our Schedule for Today

I. Introduction and General Overview of Our Profession

**Break**

II. Selection and Appraisal of Materials

III. Accessioning of Materials

IV. Arrangement and Description of Materials

**Lunch**

V. Preservation

VI. Research and Access

**Break**

VII. Outreach and Publicity

VIII. Continuing Education

**Q&A**

# **I. Introduction and Overview**

**The Activities of an Archivist**

**Archives vs. Libraries**

**Records vs. Manuscripts**

**Some Archival Definitions**

# The Activities of an Archivist

- **IDENTIFY** and **ACQUIRE** materials of institutional, cultural, topical or social importance and enduring value
- **ARRANGE, DESCRIBE** and **PRESERVE** collected materials
- Make collections **AVAILABLE** and **ACCESSIBLE**
- Provide **REFERENCE** service
- Conduct **OUTREACH** and **EDUCATION** about holdings
- Sustain collections through **BUDGETING, FUNDRAISING** and **GRANTS**
- **COLLABORATE** with other institutions on special projects

Archivists often have a working knowledge of basic copyright guidelines, digitization standards, preservation standards and facilities maintenance. Donor outreach and cultivation is also a part of the archival enterprise.

# Libraries

- **Secondary Source Material**
- **Items are classified and collected at an individual level**
- **Weeding decisions, typically, can be reversed (new copy, Amazon, e-book)**
- **Items are described and classified according to pre-existing national/international classification schemes and the judgment of catalogers and metadata specialists**
- **Description standards are well-established**
- **Libraries are often dependent on acquisitions budgets and approval plans to build print collections.**

# Archives

- **Primary Source Material**
- **Items are classified and collected in aggregate**
- **Weeding decisions are, typically, irreversible**
- **Items are arranged and described according to the rules of provenance, hierarchy, material type, original order, and the judgment of processing archivists and archival metadata specialists**
- **Description standards for Finding Aids only recently established**
- **Archives are often dependent on parent institution transfer or donor base to build collections**

# Records\*

- **Materials created by an institution, corporation, organization or government agency (e.g., University of Northern Colorado, Boeing, USDA, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union)**
- **Traditional title of oversight position: “Archivist”**
- **Traditionally housed in Archives**
- **Kept to meet the needs and operations of the creating organization. Part of preserving the “Institutional Memory” of the organization**

# Manuscripts\*

- **The papers and collateral materials of an individual or family (e.g., James Joyce, James Madison)**
- **Traditional title of oversight position: “Manuscript Curator”**
- **Traditionally housed in Repositories**
- **Collections reflect the topical area interests or research interests of the repository. Also: To document the activities of socially, politically or historically significant individuals and groups**

**\*The lines of these traditional distinctions are now often blurred. For example University archival departments often contain University records, records of other organizations and manuscript collections/papers of individuals.**

What we learned from the French and Prussians...



## Provenance

**The materials generated by one individual, organization or department should not be mixed or combined with the materials of another.**

## Original order\*

**Materials should be kept and arranged in the order in which they were originally created, maintained or used.**

**\*Not so sacrosanct with modern collections**

# Introduction and Overview

## Bibliography

- Hunter, Gregory S. 2003. *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives, Second Edition*, New York: Neal-Schuman





## **II. Selection and Appraisal**

**Value**

**“The Records Lifecycle”**

**Retention**

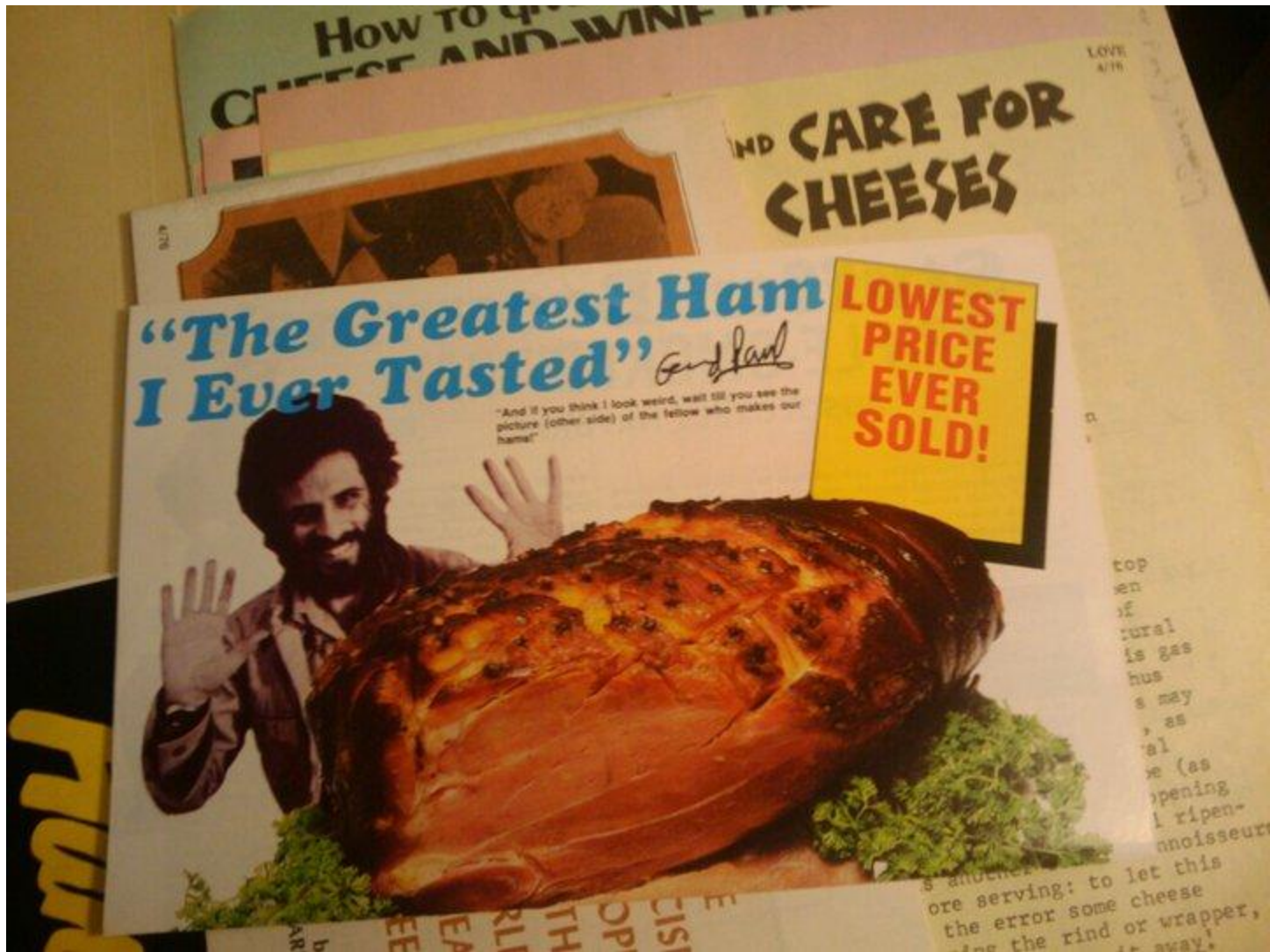
**Institutional Surveys**

# Value

- **Evidential Value:** Materials that document organization, function, policies, actions, decisions (i.e., presidential diaries, organizational charts, minutes). Best evidence? Highest level? Most complete? (final draft, main committee report rather than sub-committee)
- **Informational Value:** Materials that document people, places, things, events. Importance? Researcher value? Uniqueness? (e.g., student newspapers, Sanborn maps)
- **Intrinsic Value:** Materials linked with fame, important event, artistic merit, uniqueness of format, high monetary value (e.g., Declaration of Independence, glass plate negatives)

*For more information see: Gregory S. Hunter, "Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives" (2003)*





*Ham Order Form, circa 1970-1981, Ruth Underhill Collection.  
Denver Museum of Nature and Science.*

# Permanent Retention

- **Subject Correspondence**
- **Minutes, Proceedings, Reports (Administrative, Committee and Departmental)**
- **Material generated by and unique to your institution: Awards, Brochures, Certificates, Course Listings, Newsletters, Newspapers, Pamphlets, Press Releases, Syllabi**
- **Literary productions of individuals connected with your institution: Manuscripts, Memoirs, Research Notes, Reminiscences, Speeches and Lectures**
- **Legal and administrative documents: Deeds, Mortgages, Titles, Policies and Charters**
- **Photographs, Slides, DVDs, and other audio/visual materials produced by your organization**
- **Scrapbooks and ephemera that document your activities**
- **Maps, charts, diagrams and blueprints**

**Important tip to remember: Take into account your “born digital materials” and where they reside**

# Temporary Retention

- **Bank statements, voided checks, check stubs and check register tapes**
- **Purchase records: orders, payment vouchers authorizing payment to vendors and vendor invoices.**
- **Sales records: invoices, monthly statements, remittance advisories, shipping and mailing papers.**
- **Travel and entertainment records: account books, expense statements.**
- **Monthly financial statistics and statements used for internal purposes.**
- **Routine form letters and correspondence**
- **Statistics compiled for office reports.**

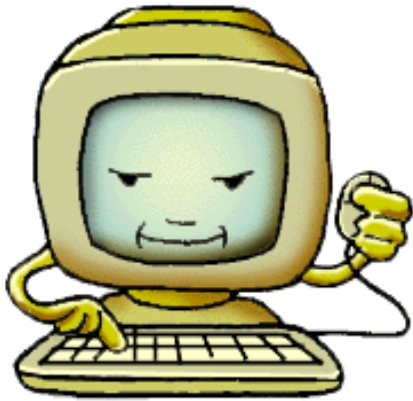
**Important Tip to Remember: The Intrinsic Value of an item may make it worth keeping.  
(Linked with fame or a famous individual, an important event, artistic merit, uniqueness of  
format, high monetary value.)**

# Materials That Usually Need No Retention Period

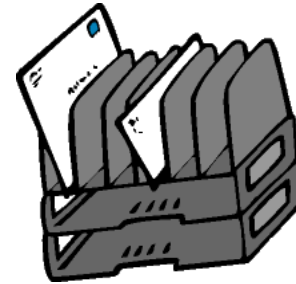
- **Duplicates**
- **Miscellaneous notes or memos that do not relate to the functions of your organization**
- **Preliminary Drafts (unless showing a significant change or reversal of policy)**
- **Published reference materials (working files)**
- **Routine memos or forms used to request or respond to requests for information, forms, mailing lists, etc,**
- **Routing slips**
- **Extra stocks of publications**

**Important Tip to Remember: The Intrinsic Value of an item may make it worth keeping. (Linked with fame or a famous individual, an important event, artistic merit, uniqueness of format, high monetary value.)**

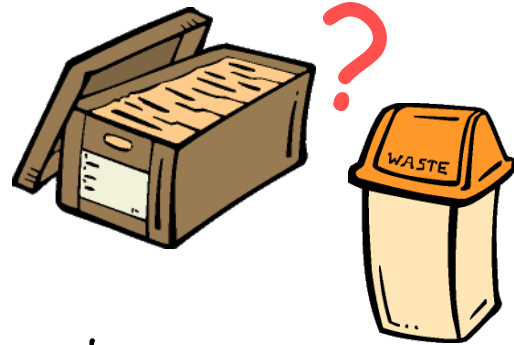
# The Life Cycle of Records



Creation

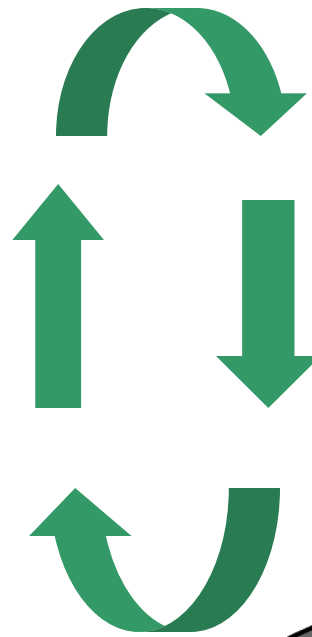


Distribution and Use

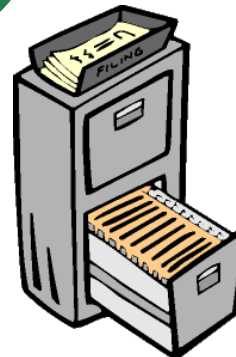


Final Disposition

Archive, Transfer, Migrate, Reformat, or Destroy?



Classification and Filing



Storage

On site or remote?

# By-Products of an Organizational Archival Survey and Inventory

- **Knowing what kind of records and information predominates your organization: Who needs it, uses it, and what purpose it serves**
- **Understanding “creation patterns’ and the culture of your organization—and what you need to document**
- **Gauging your organization's future ability to accession historic materials from other institution**
- **Practice in identifying types of materials (this will help you to organize other historic collections)**
- **Gathering the information to create a preliminary retention schedule for your active records if you do not have a records management system in place.**





# **III. Accessioning**

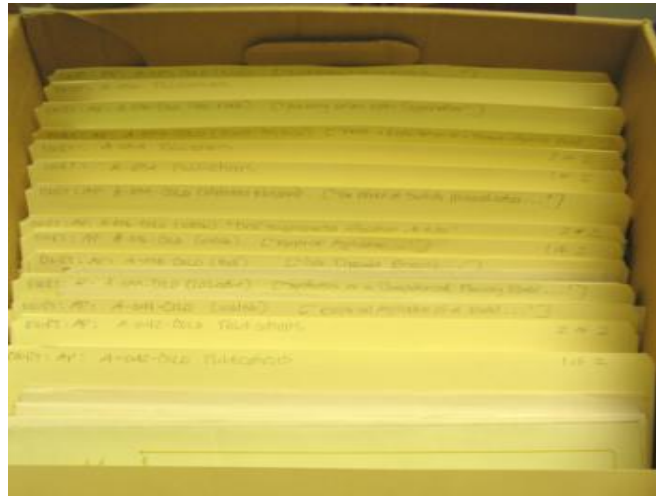
**Considerations**

**Copyright**

**Forms**

# Things to Consider in Accessioning Archival Materials

- **Were these materials originally generated by my institution? (Separated at birth and now reunited)**
- **Does this collection fit with my institution's mission and collecting policy?**
- **Does this collection complement the collections we already have?**
- **Do we have the space to house these materials?**
- **Do we have the person-power to do base-level organization and processing of these materials?**
- **Can we get a grant to process these materials or is there funding attached to the donation?**  
**What stipulations are attached to donation funding?**



Consider who holds the copyright to materials deeded to your institution

# Forms Used in Accessioning Archival Materials

- **Internal Transfer Form (Institutional Records)**
- **Deed of Gift**
- **Informed Consent Form or Deed of Interview (e.g., oral history projects)**



When creating deeds of gift consider future digitization projects and donor permissions for other future uses of materials

# **IV. Arrangement and Description**

**Levels of Arrangement**

**Physical Arrangement**

**Finding Aids**

**MPLP**

# Arrangement and Description

Chaos → Order

- Processes used to gain both intellectual and physical control of the materials.



# Arrangement and Description

## Basic Principles of Arrangement

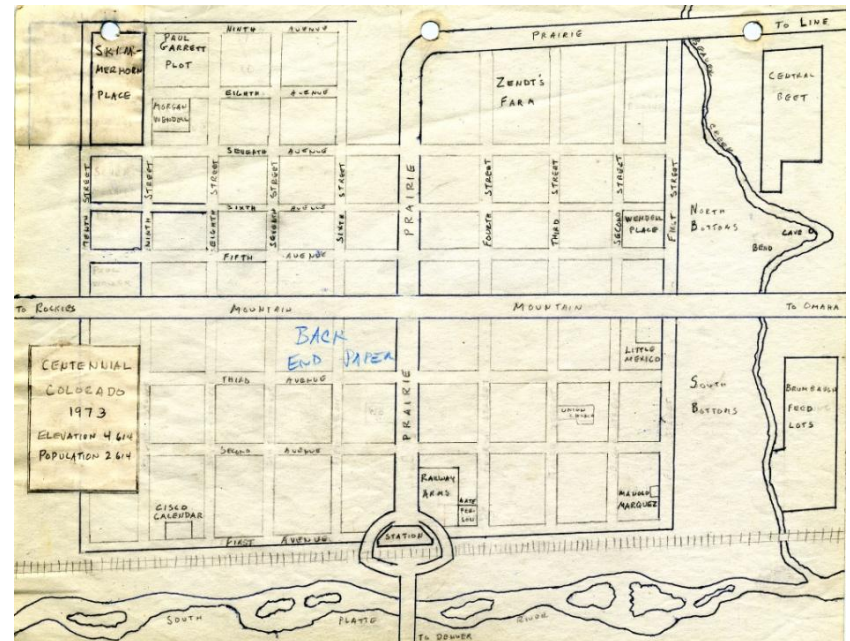
- Provenance: records of a given creator must not be intermingled with the records of other creators.
- Original Order: records should be maintained in the order in which they were placed by the organization, individual, or family that created them.



# Arrangement and Description

## Levels of Arrangement

- Repository
- Record Group (collection)
- Series
- File Unit
- Item



# Arrangement and Description

## Levels of Arrangement - Repository

- Repository: top-level divisions within the institutional holdings

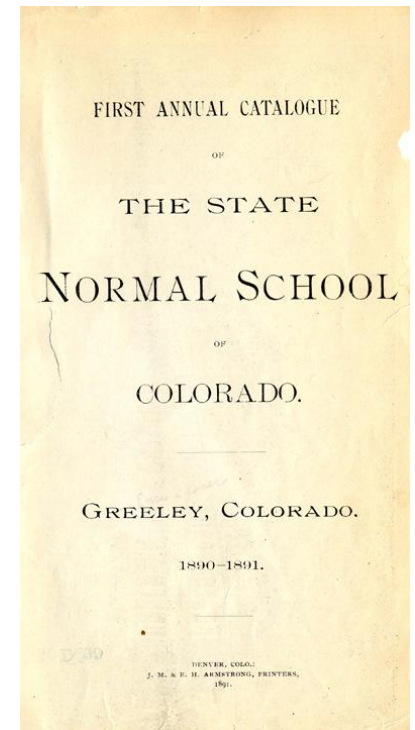




# Arrangement and Description

## Levels of Arrangement – Record Group

- Record Group: A body of organizationally related records established on the basis of provenance, with particular regard for the complexity and volume of the records and the administrative history of the record-creating institution or organization.



# Arrangement and Description

## Levels of Arrangement – Series

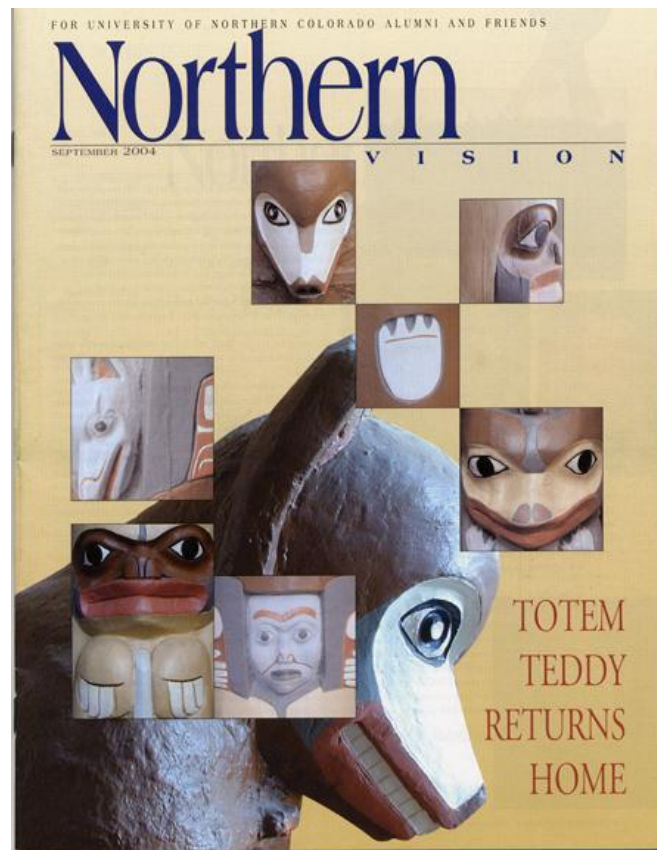
- Series – Group of files or documents maintained together as a unit because of some relationship arising out of their creation, receipt or use.



# Arrangement and Description

## Levels of Arrangement – Series

- Identification
- Creation
- Rearrangement



# Arrangement and Description

## Levels of Arrangement – Series

### Series examples

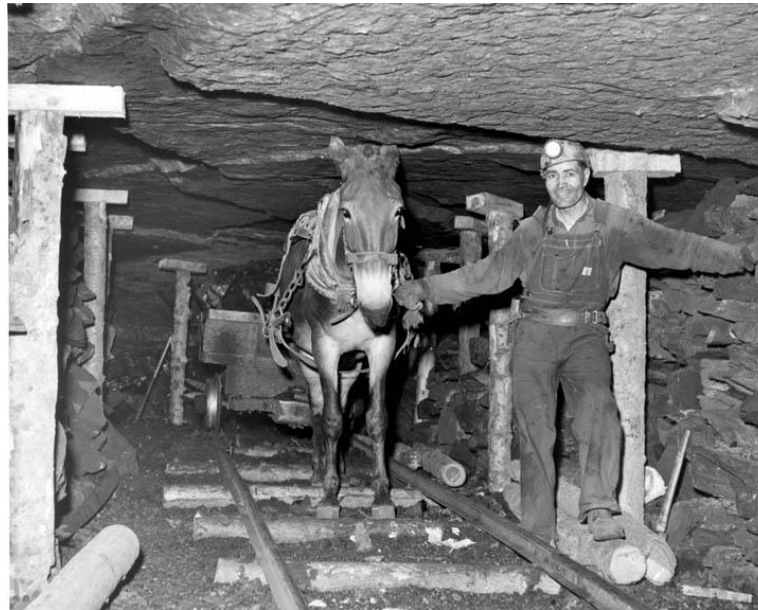
- Correspondence, 1970-1990
- Board of Trustees Minutes, 1892-2014
- Annual Reports
- Photographs
- Oral History Tapes
- Diaries, 1933-1965



# Arrangement and Description

## Levels of Arrangement – File Unit

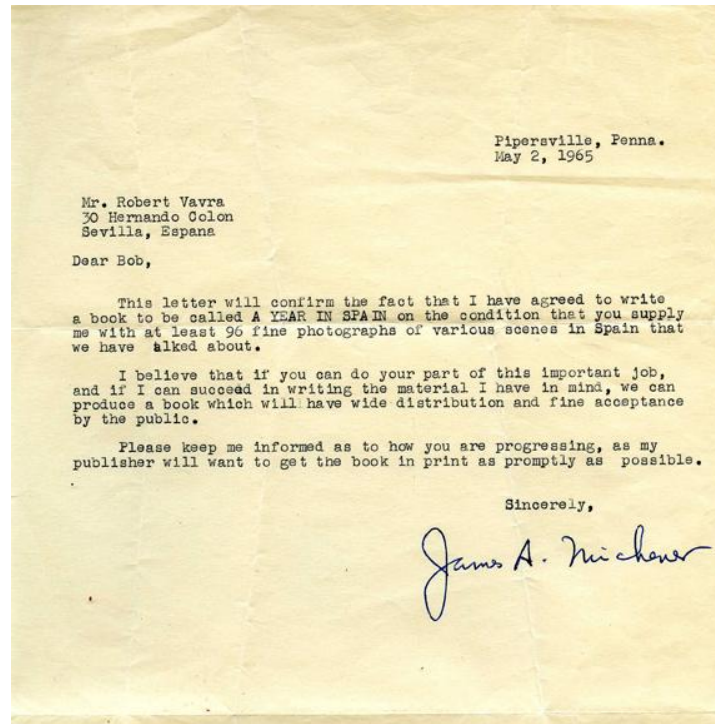
- Alphabetical
- Chronological
- Geographical
- Subject
- Numerical



# Arrangement and Description

## Levels of Arrangement – Item

- Specific item within the file unit, such as a single photograph, letter or diary.



# Arrangement and Description

## Levels of Arrangement - Example

- Repository: University of Northern Colorado: University Records
- Record Group: University Presidents
- Sub-group: Zachariah X. Snyder, 1891-1915
- Series: Photographs and Portraits
- File Unit: Box 2, Folder 15
- Item: Photograph - RG021\_01\_02\_04\_005



# Arrangement and Description

## Physical Arrangement

- Weeding
- Rehousing
- Labelling
- Basic preservation

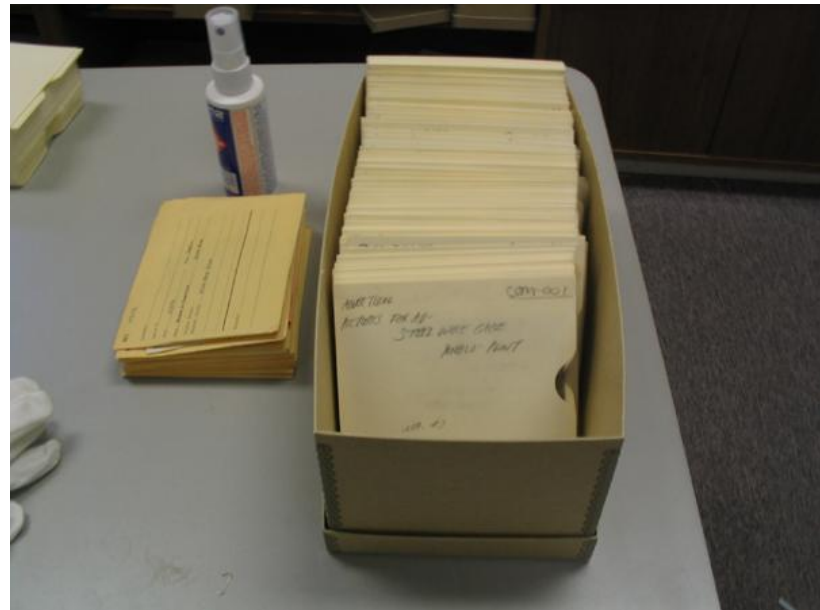




# Arrangement and Description

## Archival Supplies

- Gaylord
- Hollinger Metal Edge
- University Products
- Archival Methods



# Arrangement and Description

## Description – Finding Aids

- Finding aids are the descriptive media, published and unpublished, created by an originating office, an archival agency, or a manuscript repository to establish administrative and intellectual control over holdings.



# Arrangement and Description

## Description – Finding Aids Inventory

- Administrative/Biographical history
- Description of the records
  - Scope and content
  - Series descriptions
  - Container/folder list
- Administrative information
- DACS



# Arrangement and Description

## Description – Finding Aids Accessibility

- Paper-based
- PDF/Electronic documents
- EAD
- MARC
- Archival Content Management Systems
  - ArchivesSpace
  - Eloquent
  - CollectiveAccess
  - Past Perfect



# Arrangement and Description

## Description – Finding Aids Examples

- CSU Water Resource Archive -  
<http://lib.colostate.edu/archives/water/>
- University of Northern Colorado – James A. Michener Papers -  
<http://library.unco.edu/archives/michenercollection.htm>



FILLING STATION

# Arrangement and Description

## More Product, Less Processing

- Goals of MPLP processing
  - Expediting the availability of collections to users.
  - Assuring adequate arrangement of materials for users needs.
  - Taking minimum steps necessary for physically preserving collection materials.
  - Describing materials sufficiently for use.



# Arrangement and Description

## Bibliography

- Greene, Mark and Dennis Meissner. 2005. "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing." *The American Archivist* 68, Fall/Winter: 208-263. <http://www.archivists.org/prof-education/pre-readings/IMPLP/AA68.2.MeissnerGreene.pdf>
- Miller, Fredric. 1990. *Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts*, Chicago: Society of American Archivists.
- Roe, Kathleen. 2005. *Arranging and Describing Archives & Manuscripts*, Chicago: Society of American Archivists.
- Society of American Archivists. 2013. *Describing Archives, A Content Standard, Second Edition*, Chicago: Society of American Archivists. <http://files.archivists.org/pubs/DACS2E-2013.pdf>

# **V. Preservation**

**Preservation vs. Conservation**

**Causes of Deterioration**

**Planning and Storage**

**“Quick Tips”**



# Preservation

## Preservation vs. Conservation

- Preservation – range of activities associated with the extending the life of materials.
- Conservation – range of chemical and physical activities associated with stabilizing or restoring items.

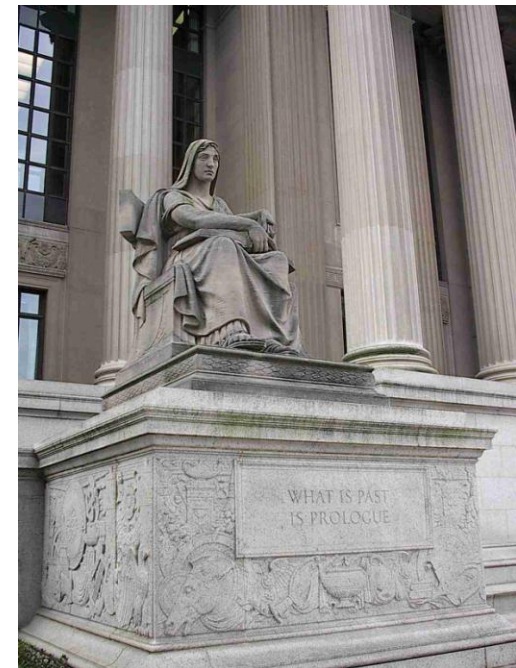


# Preservation

- Paper clips or metal fasteners removed
- Folded items flattened
- Acidic materials interleaved with acid-free paper and tissue
- Re-housing original in acid-free folder or mylar sleeve
- Acid-free spacers used in storage boxes that are not full
- Preservation surrogate copy made
- Scanning and digitization of original to provide public access surrogates and eliminate further handling of original

# Conservation

- Photograph sent out to conservation lab to repair tears and creases in image
- Tape and adhesive residue chemically removed from surfaces of posters and maps



**“Preservation is what I can do. Conservation is what I have to send out for someone else to do.”**

# Preservation

- Clear off table and dust before using
- No liquids, food or drinks
- Keep out of direct sunlight
- Put archival items away when not in use
- Wash and dry hands
- No jewelry or loose fitting clothing

Prepare your  
Workstation



# Preservation

## Causes of Deterioration

- Temperature and Relative Humidity
- Atmospheric Pollutants
- Light
- Biological Agents
- Abuse
- Disasters



# Preservation

## Preservation Planning

- Preservation Survey
  - Institutional
  - Collection
- Preservation Priorities
- Conservation?



# Preservation

## Storage Environment

- Temperature: 68°
- Relative Humidity: 45%
- UV Light Filtration
- Good Housekeeping



# Photographs

- Handle all prints, slides and negatives from the edges
- If possible, remove photos from non-archival albums
- Only use pencil to write on the back of prints
- Store prints out of direct sunlight
- Scan original prints to have backups (300 dpi .tif or .jpg files)
- Attempt to date photographs!
- Digital prints fade quickly unless pigment-based ink is used. Most printers use dye-based ink



Brussels, Belgium October 8, 1944

# Scrapbooks and Photo Albums

- If possible, remove photographs and news clippings from “sticky” or black paper albums
- Take photographs and/or scans of each scrapbook page
- Interleave acid-free tissue paper between each page
- Store in a cool, dry place
- Wrap muslin “tape” around overstuffed albums to keep binding intact



This newspaper scrapbook, "a treasure trove" of information, catalogs U of U events from the turn of the 20th century to the 1950s and 1960s.



# Motion Pictures



Red Man's America, film series by Ruth Underhill, 1956

- VHS, Beta, 8mm, 16mm, etc.
- Store in a cool, dry, dark place
- If film smells like vinegar, get digitized ASAP and store original in freezer
- Transfer original movies to DVD format, update technology every 5-10 years
- Clean 8mm, 16mm film with dry film cloth while winding. Keep shiny side out



Archival film processing station, Denver Museum of Nature and Science

# Textiles



- Clothing, hats, rugs, crafts, etc.
- Store in acid free box with acid free tissue paper
- Stuff sleeves and shaped pieces with tissue to preserve shape
- Roll rugs and tapestries around an acid-free cardboard tube
- Every year, refold garments and change out tissue paper
- Keep out of sunlight and moisture
- Do NOT wash, gently vacuum

# Displaying Treasures

- Use reprints of original photographs
- Use archival (acid-free) matting
- If affordable, use UV-protectant glass in frames and shadowboxes
- Keep any materials out of direct sunlight



# Preservation “Quick Tips”

- Wash hands often and avoid lotions
- Use gloves when handling photographic materials
- Mantra: “My pencil is my best friend”
- Shun scotch tape, paper clips, markers, and rubber bands.
- Not every supply marked “archival quality” is archival
- Avoid placing collections on floor, under pipes, against outer walls, in front of windows
- Study your institution to see care and maintenance patterns and potential problems (i.e., wooden shelves and off gassing, lack of fire suppression systems)
- Check to see if insurance riders are in place for your archival materials of high value
- Rotate archival collections if materials are put on display



# Preservation

## Bibliography

- Ritzenthaler, Mary Lynn and Diane L. Vogt-O'Connor. 2006. *Photographs: Archival Care and Management*, Chicago: Society of American Archivists.
- Ritzenthaler, Mary Lynn. 2010. *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, Chicago: Society of American Archivists.



## **VI. Research and Access**

**Archival Reference**

**Access Restrictions**

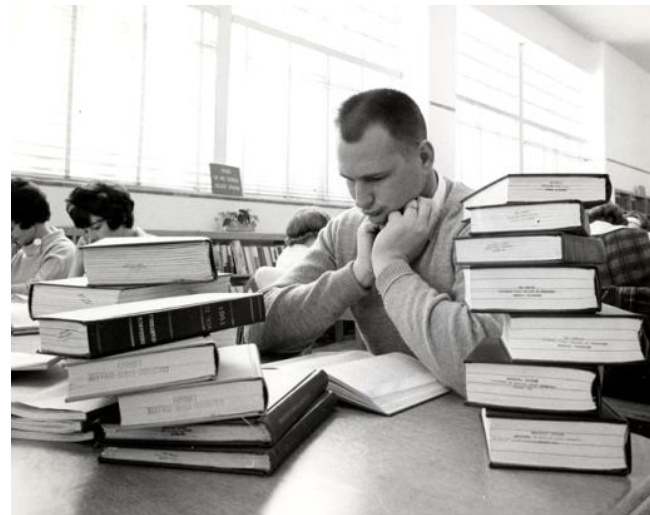
**Digitization**

**Grants**

# Research and Access

## Archival Reference

- Providing information about holdings
- Assisting with research visits
  - Research interview
  - Reference room activities
  - Duplication services
  - Copyright concerns





# Research and Access

## Access Restrictions

- Copyright/Legal restrictions
- Donor agreements
- Preservation



# Research and Access

## Digitization

- Digitization planning process
  - Access
  - Priorities
  - Preservation
- Equipment
- Metadata creation
- Standards
  - File Formats
  - DPI – minimum 300



# Research and Access

## Grants

- NHPRC
- NEH
- IMLS
- CHRAB



## **VII. Outreach and Publicity**

**Promotional Materials**

**Web and Social Media**

**Fundraisers**

**Community Events and Activities**

# Printed Promotional Materials and Branding



Website for CSU's Agricultural and Natural Resources Archive: <http://lib.colostate.edu/archives/agriculture/>

- **Brochures and pamphlets**
- **Postcards**
- **Press releases**
- **Cards and calendars with historic images**
- **Giveaways (post-it notes, magnets, pencils, coasters)**
- **Articles in the local newspaper**

## Digital Displays, Web and Social Media



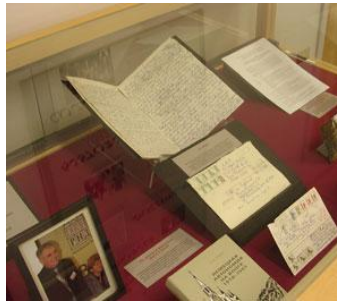
CSU's "RamStories" Oral History Project



Google Liquid Galaxy Display @ CSU

- **Websites**
- **Digital signage**
- **You Tube**
- **Blogs**
- **Entries in Wikipedia related to your archive's topic**
  - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruth\\_Underhill](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruth_Underhill)
- **Online oral histories and testimonials**
- **Crowdsourcing information about digitized objects**

## Community Events, Activities and Fundraisers



# WATER TABLES

Dinner and conversation to benefit the  
Water Resources Archive



Website for CSU's Water Resources Archive: <http://lib.colostate.edu/archives/water/>

- **Reading Room Exhibits and Traveling Exhibits**
- **Thematic Speaker Programs Highlighting Archival Holdings**
- **Community Workshops**
- **Community Open House**
- **K-12 Artwork Inspired by Collection Holdings**
- **Fundraisers**

## **VIII. Continuing Education**



# Continuing Education

## Professional Organizations

- Society of American Archivists
- Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists
- Colorado Historical Records Advisory Board
- Colorado Association of Libraries
- Colorado-Wyoming Association of Museums
- Northeast Document Conservation Center



Thanks!

Are there any questions?