

**S5. From Ballot Box to Document Box:
Exploring Contemporary Challenges
with Congressional Papers**

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Dianne's Collection

Seton Hall University School of Law

Peter W. Rodino, Jr. Law Library

- Single Collection, processed and arranged, open for research
- Peter W. Rodino, Jr. (10th Congressional District-NJ) 1949-1989,
- Contains documents, artifacts, photographs, audio-visual materials, 1909-2005

Zach's Collections

Vanderbilt University

- Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN) - 2003-present
- Sen. Jim Sasser (D-TN) - 1977-1995

Rutgers University

- Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) - 1982-2001, 2003-2013

University of South Carolina

- Sol Blatt - Speaker of SC House - 1937-1973
- Don Fowler - DNC Chair ('95-97), longtime figure in Dem. Party

Copyright and Access Restrictions

How much of the collection is considered property of the congressperson? All of it? How do you figure out what's not?

Sharing photographs on Wikipedia/releasing copyright

Maryanne Trump Barry's tax returns

Access and Current Officeholders

Reference service for Congresspeople

Donor setting access restrictions

On the plus side, more collections in the hands of archivists

MPLP and Congressional Collections

Size of collections demand physical processing time, but description is possibly of more value.

How valuable is constituent mail?

Sheridan: Rutgers, Lautenberg Collection

Senator Frank Lautenberg

In office: 1982-2001, 2003-2013

Party: Democrat

Project

Type: Single Collection, Project-based

Funding: 3-year grant from ADP Foundation

Size: initially 2,250 lf, aim to cut to about 1,500 lf

Materials: paper, photographs, AV, born digital, social media

Appraisal and Privacy Concerns

Two institutional imperatives: reduce the total linear feet by $\frac{1}{3}$, mirror processing patterns of other Congressional collections at Rutgers

Sampling best plan

- Constituent Mail - retain 10% of mail
 - other collection retained 66%; too much in this case
- Case Files - completely eliminate
 - privacy concerns outweigh research potential

Archiving Social Media

Web presence: official senate sites; Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook accounts

Web: NARA keeps copies of Congress websites from each session

Social Media: two version of each account (campaign and office use)

- petitioned Facebook for access to that page
- got log in for other sites from old staffer

Working with Digital Curator to maintain archived files, goal to link live pages of social media to finding aid

Outreach and Issues of Trauma

Upcoming exhibit on Lautenberg Collection opening Spring 2018

Collections evoking trauma: 9/11 memorials, Bosnian genocide, Holocaust, drive hunting of dolphins and whales, etc

- Framing exhibit to show value of memorialization
Audience considerations: visitors with PTSD, children

Migration of Formats

Paper/Tape to CD/DVD

Archiving digital content requires ongoing technological strategy to ensure access.

Analog-to-digital

Remember that the digital version may not exactly represent the analog original

Punch Card--Cassette Tape--5" Floppy Disk--3.5" Floppy Disk--CD--DVD

Betamax Tape--VHS Tape--DVD

Resources

Congressional Papers Section, Society of American Archivists

<http://www2.archivists.org/groups/congressional-papers-section>

Electronic Records Committee, CPS, SAA

<https://cprerc.wordpress.com/>

Center for Legislative Archives, NARA

<https://www.archives.gov/legislative>

Association of Centers for Study of Congress

<https://acsc.wildapricot.org/>

Resources

Miller, Cynthia. 2008. *Managing congressional collections*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists.

<http://saa.archivists.org/store/managing-congressional-collections/967/>

Paul, Karen Dawley, Glenn R. Gray, and L. Rebecca Johnson Melvin. 2009. *An American political archives reader*. Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press.

<http://saa.archivists.org/store/an-american-political-archives-reader/1378/>

Phillips, Faye. 1996. *Congressional papers management: collecting, appraising, arranging, and describing documentation of United States senators, representatives, related individuals and organizations*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland.

Resources

The Peter W. Rodino, Jr., archives, Seton Hall Law Library

<http://law.shu.edu/library/rodino/>

The Senator Frank R. Lautenberg papers, Rutgers University Libraries

<https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/news/archives-processing-lautenberg-papers>

Politics, Policy, and Government Primary Resources in Special Collections, University of Delaware Libraries and Museums

http://guides.lib.udel.edu/spec_politics

South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina Libraries

<http://library.sc.edu/p/Collections/SCPC>

Resources

Records Management Manual for Members of the U.S. House [of] Representatives, Office of the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives. 2017.

Records Management Manual for Committees of the U.S. House [of] Representatives, Office of the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives. 2013.

To ask for contact: Robin Reeder, Archivist and Deputy Chief, Office of Art and Archives, Office of the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives,

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<http://history.house.gov/Records-and-Research/Accessing-Records>

Resources

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