Here, There and Everywhere:
The Preservation of Our Photographic Heritage

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Here, There and Everywhere: The Preservation of Our Photographic Heritage

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Or..... *Don’t Leave Grandma in the Attic!*
Understand the value and vulnerability of these treasures…

Anonymous ca. 1845
salted paper print, hand colored
Private Owner
Understand the value and vulnerability of these treasures...
Photographic Collections are **Endangered**

Tintype
Private Owner

Albumen photograph
Private Owner
Photographic Collections are **Endangered**

Bathing Beach “LA PLAYA”, Marianaoo

Havana, Cuba.

Gelatin silver developed-out print
Private owner
Photographic Collections are **Endangered**

Image courtesy of Nora W. Kennedy
Photographic Collections are Endangered

Image courtesy of Nora W. Kennedy
Easy-to-Access Resources


GENERIC STRUCTURE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIALS
Photography: Component Parts

Support
(paper, glass, iron, silver plated copper, plastic, textile, leather, wood and more)
Photography: Component Parts

**Binder**
(albumen, collodion, gelatin)

**Support**
(paper, glass, iron, silver plated copper, plastic, textile, leather, wood and more)
Photography: Component Parts

**Final Image Material**
(silver organic dyes, pigments, platinum, gold, iron salts)

**Binder**
(albumen, collodion, gelatin)

**Support**
(paper, glass, iron, silver plated copper, plastic, textile, leather, wood and more)
Photographic Collections are **Varied**

- Early direct positive processes

Quarter plate daguerreotype
www.daguerreotype.nl
Daguerreotype

- 1839 – 1865
- Silver-plated copper support
- Gold-mercury-silver amalgam image material

Evans, Charles
*Girl with doll, holding mother’s hand*
Daguerreotype
George Eastman House, 77:0240:0024
Daguerreotype

- 1839 – 1865
- Silver-plated copper support
- Gold-mercury-silver amalgam image material

Anonymous
Daguerreotype with glass degradation
Private owner
Photographic Collections are **Varied**

- Early direct positive processes

Tintype
Private owner
Tintype

- 1856 – 1890
- Japanned iron support
- Silver image in collodion binder
- Typically varnished. Hand coloring in cheeks common
Tintype

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Heather Brown
Self-portrait, 2012
Tintype on coated aluminum, varnished with synthetic resin
Wet collodion workshop at the Center for Alternative Photography, NY
Easy-to-Access Resources

- George Eastman House – Photographic Process videos: http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4F918844C147182A
Photographic Collections are **Varied**

- Early direct positive processes
- Print Materials
Photographic Collections are **Varied**

- Early direct positive processes
- Print Materials

Ca. 1920s-30s
Hand-colored Silver Gelatin Photograph Postcard
Image Permanence Institute
Common 19th Century Photographic Print Materials

- Salted Paper
- Albumen
- Silver Gelatin
- Collodion Chloride
- Printing Out
- Platinum
- Cyanotype

Mathew B. Brady
Madame Medori
c.a. 1857
Salted paper print from glass negative
Gilman Collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Common 19th Century Photographic Print Materials

- Salted Paper
- Albumen
- Silver Gelatin
- Collodion Chloride
- Printing Out
- Platinum
- Cyanotype

Anna Atkins
Equisetum Sylvaticum
Cyanotype
J Paul Getty Museum
Print Processes

1840-55: Salted paper
1855-95: Albumen
1895-1905: Gelatin & collodion printed-out papers
1905-60: "Black & white" developed-out papers
1960-present: Chromogenic color paper

Timeline:
1840 1860 1880 1900 1920 1940 1960 1980 PRESENT
Image Permanence Institute’s Graphics Atlas

Graphics Atlas is a new online resource that brings sophisticated print identification and characteristic exploration tools to archivists, curators, historians, collectors, conservators, educators, and the general public.

BEGIN EXPLORING OUR STUDY COLLECTION BY SELECTING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TOOLS:
Albumen Photograph

Anonymous
Albumen Photographs
Private Owner
ALBUMENIZED LIGHT-SENSITIVE PAPER
Albumen

The Albumen Print: Photographic Processes
Albumen

ALBUMENIZED LIGHT-SENSITIVE PAPER

CONTACT PRINT WITH NEGATIVE

EXPOSE TO SUNLIGHT
Albumen

ALBUMENIZED LIGHT-SENSITIVE PAPER

CONTACT PRINT WITH NEGATIVE

EXPOSE TO SUNLIGHT

The Albumen Print: Photographic Processes
Portrait Formats: Carte-de-Visites

approx. 2 \( \frac{1}{2} \) x 4 to 4 \( \frac{1}{4} \) in.
Portrait Formats: Cabinet Cards

approx. 4 ¼ x 6 ½ in.
Photolytic Silver / Gold Toned

Albumen Binder

Albumen

100% Rag Paper Support
Albumen

- 1851 – 1890
- Thin paper support
- Silver image
- Egg white binder
- Image fading
- Binder will crack

Portrait of Jaswant Singh II of Jodhpur (1873–1896)
Photographer unknown, overpainted by Shivalal
ca. 1875
Hand-colored Albumen Photograph
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Albumen

- 1851 – 1890
- Thin paper support
- Silver image
- Egg white binder
- Image fading
- Binder will crack

Albumen Photograph, Cabinet Card from Graphics Atlas
http://www.graphicsatlas.org/identification/?process_id=5
Albumen

- Binder will crack

Albumen Photograph, Cabinet Card from Graphics Atlas
http://www.graphicsatlas.org/identification/?process_id=5
Silver Gelatin

- 1895 – 1960
- Paper support coated with baryta
- Silver image
- Gelatin binder
- Image fading
- Silver mirroring
Silver Gelatin

- 1895 – 1960
- Paper support coated with baryta
- Silver image
- Gelatin binder
- Image fading
- Silver mirroring

Gelatin silver developed-out photograph
Private owner
Silver Gelatin

- 1895 – 1960
- Paper support coated with baryta
- Silver image
- Gelatin binder
- Image fading
- Silver mirroring
Chromogenic Color

- 1940 – 2010
- Dye-based image
- Gelatin binder
- Dye fading
Chromogenic Color

- 1940 – 2010
- Dye-based image
- Gelatin binder
- Dye fading
Photographic Collections are *Varied*

- Early direct positive processes
- Print Materials
- Negative Materials
Photographic Collections are **Varied**

- Early direct positive processes
- Print Materials
- Negative Materials
Photographic Collections are varied

- Early direct positive processes
- Print Materials
- Negative Materials
- Photographic Albums
Photographic Collections are **Varied**

Silver Gelatin Photograph Album
Private Owner
Basic Preservation Advice

- House collections in good-quality plastic or paper enclosures and box for protection
Basic Preservation Advice

- House collections in good-quality plastic or paper enclosures and box for protection
Some Recommended Suppliers

  - 1-800-526-5640
  - 1-800-962-9580
  - 1-800-628-1912
  - 212-219-0770
  - 1-800-862-2228
- Archivart: [http://s390435715.onlinehome.us/](http://s390435715.onlinehome.us/)
  - 1-888-846-6847
Basic Preservation Advice

- Store family photographs in interior closets where environment is best protected. Control temperature and RH as possible.
Basic Preservation Advice

- Secure collections against emergencies. Be prepared. Handle carefully.
Basic Preservation Advice

- Limit light levels for display. Exhibit digital or other copies.
Easy-to-Access Resources

- Library of Congress – Collections Care Preservation:
  http://www.loc.gov/preservation/care/

- CCAHA – Preservation Resources:
  http://www.ccaha.org/publications/technical-bulletins

- Northeast Document Conservation Center – Resources:
  http://www.nedcc.org/resources/family.php

- National Park Service – Conserve O Grams:
  http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/conserveogram/cons_toc.html
Basic Preservation Advice

- Seek advice from experts. Local museums or The American Institute for Conservation.
Silver Gelatin Photograph from the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts, Philadelphia (CCAHA)

Before Treatment

Private Owner, c. 1920s
Silver Gelatin Photograph from CCAHA

Before Treatment

After Treatment

Private Owner, c. 1920s
Art Conservation Department

- Undergraduate
- Master’s-level
- Doctoral Program in Preservation Studies
Global Partnerships

Group of people at the pyramids Selim Abu Izzeddin
Guizeh, Egypt, 1902
Arab Image Foundation
Photograph Preservation in the Middle East

Anonymous
Silver Gelatin Photograph
Kamran Collection, Iran

Anonymous photographer
Aicha (center) and Hajja Habiba Amor.
Morocco, 1936-1937
Copyright © Arab Image Foundation
Photograph Preservation in the Middle East

Instructors and participants in the November 2012 MEPPI, Abu Dhabi, NYU – AD
Many Thanks!