Archival Literacy Project E-Archives

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Archival Literacy Project

About the Project:

You will learn how to search, access, and analyze materials in the Purdue University Archives and Special Collections’ e-Archives for this assignment. You will use these skills to locate 2 digitized documents and then conduct a document analysis of each. There are also exploratory questions that I want to consider and answer. The documents can be photographs, letters, reports, telegrams, bulletins, medieval manuscripts, newspapers, newsletters, newsreels. After you conduct your document analysis and answer your exploratory questions, I want you to compile your research into a coherent paper. I encourage you to include images of your two documents in your paper. Remember to cite your sources!

Please carefully read through the Primary Sources in Archives & Special Collections LibGuide, as this will orient you to the Purdue Archives and Special Collections. There is also a very helpful section on citing archival sources.

Below are your document analysis activity and list of exploratory questions. This will help you generate content for your paper.

Document Analysis Activity:

OBSERVE

- What kind of document are you viewing?
- Who created it?
- Who is it intended for?
- When was it created?

REFLECT

- Why was it created?
- What is surprising about it?
- If applicable, what does it reflect about Purdue at the time? About culture at that time?

QUESTION

- What further questions do you have after seeing this document?
• Do you want to learn more about the time period, the creator, a topic addressed in the document, etc.?
• Where and how might you look for answers to your questions?

**Exploratory Questions:**

• How did you find your documents?

• Why did you choose those specific documents?

• Did you already know something about your topic/documents? If yes, what did you know?

• Did you do any background/additional research on your topic after seeing your archival materials?

• What were some of your first thoughts/impressions when you looked through e-Archives? Is it what you expected? Were you surprised by anything? Be specific.

• What are some of the most interesting digital archival materials you looked at? Why did you find them so interesting? Remember you can share images in your paper!

• Did you look at documents from one collection, or did you look at documents from more than one collection?

• Were any of the documents confusing or difficult to read? If yes, why? How did you overcome those challenges? Did you overcome those challenges?
Do you think it’s important for archival materials to be digitized? Why?

What did you learn from working with these digital archival materials?

Once you have gathered all the information on your 2 documents, I want you to compile your findings into a coherent paper; you should not simply list your findings.

Checklist for your archival literacy project final draft:

- 1,000-1,500 words, 12-point font, double spaced, 1” margins
- Analysis of findings
- Discussion of your experiences during the archival research process
- Cite sources in MLA style
- All images are cited
- Include a formal introduction and conclusion
- Include a works cited page

Point Breakdown:

Rubric:

Due Date: