

ARCHIVES GAZETTE



City of Seattle
Seattle Municipal Archives

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Office of the City Clerk
Legislative Department

Message from the City Archivist

The late Stephen Jay Gould, a paleontologist and master explainer of the natural sciences, penned one of my favorite non-fiction passages:

“...creative thought in science is exactly this—not a mechanical collection of facts and induction of theories, but a complex process involving intuition, bias, and insight from other fields. Science, at its best, interposes human judgment and ingenuity upon all its proceedings. It is, after all (although we sometimes forget it), practiced by human beings.”

This is the concluding paragraph in an essay about theoretical ecology and the Cambrian “explosion” of life. He could have been writing about the archival endeavor.

There is much to unpack in this short passage. Gould seems to have defined science much as the dictionary on my office bookshelf does in its first definition: “the state of knowing.” Yet, he talks of intuition, bias, and human judgment. I don’t believe these are terms most people readily apply to notions of the hard sciences. What he appears to be saying (and, indeed, has said elsewhere) is that discovery and the advancement of scientific knowledge occurs by following a shifting recipe of theory, methodology, accumulated knowledge, and guesswork (a cruder term but similar to Gould’s “intuition”).

Archival science fits the Gould model, at least in consideration of “creative thought.” We have our theories, methodologies, and standards; and we often employ intuition, make informed judgments, and draw on the knowledge and skills of non-archivists. As information explodes and technologies rapidly involve, we increasingly partner with other information professionals (especially in our IT departments) out of necessity if we are to produce meaningful work.

No part of our work is free of the “complex process” that Gould describes, whether it is applying appraisal theories, employing descriptive standards, utilizing scientific knowledge in preservation and conservation, or depending on our emotional intelligence in reference service.

Yet, what always strikes me about Gould’s statement is its implicit demand that we recognize our biases and predilections for making pre-judgments, that we understand the personal contexts that form our humanness. In doing so, we guard as best we can against the introduction of self-interest alone in our lives.

In another essay found in his collection, *Ever Since Darwin*, Gould confesses: “I am a strong advocate of the general argument that ‘truth’ as preached by scientists often turns out to be no more than prejudice inspired by prevailing social and political beliefs.”

Much of the archival literature that I read in graduate school was influenced by positivist ideas of

progress. Since the mid-1990s, some of the best archival writing has been produced with post-modern or deconstructionist sensibilities. And the latter ultimately will be supplanted (if it has not already) by a new prevailing social and political trend.

We all live and work with internalized prejudices and biases. Our job is to be cognizant of our complexities and be watchful of how they impact our work and the profession. Archives, is after all, practiced by human beings.

--Scott Cline, City Archivist

Yesler-Atlantic Neighborhood Improvement Project (YANIP)

A focus of neighborhood planning efforts in the 1960s, the YANIP area covered about 52 blocks or 137 acres within the Central Area in Seattle. Project boundaries were from 14th Avenue South through 24th Avenue South, between Yesler and Jackson Place, extending to Charles Street between 20th Avenue South and 24th Avenue South. Begun as a neighborhood rehabilitation program, YANIP received federal funds for residential rehabilitation, relocation, and redevelopment.



House at 436 23rd
Ave S. - Part of Yesler
Atlantic
Urban Renewal
Project.
August 22, 1966

Item 168548, Seattle
Municipal Archives

A transcript of a public hearing held on September 11, 1967, is included in Clerk File 259286, along with a series of photographs of buildings, including the one above. The transcript is a good source for community and City contextual information on the project.

(continued on the next page)

(YANIP cont.)

Reverend John Adams, representing the Central Area citizens committee, gave two caveats for the success of the project in his comments. "...I will certainly hope that the council in its proceedings to implement this project will make certain that this image of massive Federal monies being used to remove Negroes from desirable areas to live does not take place....With these concerns expressed—one, about Negro removal and two, about the right of the little businessman to remain little and still have a place in the community where he has made his roots, I would commend you to go...forward with the Yesler-Atlantic Renewal Project." Other voices that can be read in the transcript include Robert Dean, Edward Banks, Frank Hattori, and Isaiah Edwards, among others.

YANIP projects included Operation Breakthrough Housing; Kawabe Central Senior House, designed by Paul Thiry; a day care center, and a pedestrian pathway along 21st Avenue South between South Jackson Street and East Yesler Way.

The Archives holds many records that can be used for researching YANIP:

**Department of Community Development
Community Services Records, 1966-1975**
Record Series 1604-01, 1 cubic foot

Includes correspondence, reports, activity reports and press clippings.

**Urban Renewal Program Subject Files,
1958-1971**

Record Series 1642-02, 1.25 cubic feet

Includes administrative files, records of community groups and project records.

**Department of Community Development
Departmental Publications, 1962-1992**

Record Series 1600-06, 0.4 cubic foot

Newsletters and brochures relating to YANIP are included in this series.

**Department of Community Development
Housing and Neighborhood Development
Central Files, 1960-1979**

Record Series 1620-02, 18 cubic feet

Includes correspondence, reports, drawings, accounting records and newspaper clipping from the Urban Renewal Program Office.

Photos

New in the photograph database from June to September are 164 images from the early phases of the Mercer Corridor project. The majority of the photos are of building demolition featuring heavy equipment and burying of power lines. In addition, Seattle City Light images from 1954-1955 have been added, including photographs of employees, restaurants that were City Light customers, the 1954 Seafair Parade, employee events, and employees working.



Seattle City Light Home
Economist Mary Norris, Sep-
tember 23, 1954
*Item 168161, Seattle Municipal
Archives*



Underground Division, Seattle
City Light,
November 22, 1954
*Item 168262, Seattle Municipal
Archives*

Over 100 new images associated with Comptroller/Clerk files from the 1950s and 1960s were also added to the database, including many accompanying rezoning petitions such as this image of Dahl Field.



Dahl field before construction, CF 231291
February 25, 1957
Item 168094, Seattle Municipal Archives

(Photos cont.)



Mercer Corridor Project Building Demolition, April 5, 2010
Item 168662, Seattle Municipal Archives

New Seattle Voices Audio Exhibit: Musicians in the Pike Place Market

On March 4, 1975, the Public Safety and Health Committee included a discussion of whether and how to regulate street musicians at the Pike Place Market. Counsel for the market's Public Development Authority (PDA), O. Yale Lewis, Jr., made a request to City Council (see Comptroller File 280842) to amend Section 348 of the License Code in Ordinance 48022 and to delegate responsibility for managing the musicians to the Pike Place Market PDA.

One of the individuals who spoke at the meeting was Garry Marshall, a farmer from Briar. Others who spoke included Councilmember Sam Smith, Jonathan Gaballe, Deborah McPherson, George Rolf, Lynn Magnuson, D. H. Gurea, Steve Fowler, Norm Hoagy and O. Yale Lewis.

Read the transcript and listen to all or part of the hearing: http://www.seattle.gov/CityArchives/Exhibits/voices/ppm_musicians.htm

In the Vault

The SMA holds the records of many, but not all, mayors for the City of Seattle, including those of Norman B. Rice.

Rice served eleven years on City Council, beginning in 1978, including a term as Council President. He was elected mayor of Seattle for the term beginning January 1, 1990 and served two full terms. The first African-American mayor in Seattle's history, he also served as President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Rice (cont.)

In addition to Rice's City Council records, SMA holds:

- **Departmental Correspondence** (Record Series 5272-01), 1990-1997 - 58 cubic feet
- **Subject Files** (Record Series 5272-02), 1978-1997 - 10.4 cubic feet
- **Mayoral Proclamations** (Record Series 5272-05), 1990-1997 - 3.2 cubic feet
- **Speeches and Statements** (Record Series 5272-06), 1989-1997 - 2.4 cubic feet
- **Photographs** (Record Series 5272-07), 1978-1997 - 1.6 cubic feet. Includes campaigns, political events, parades, marches and celebrations.
- **Campaign Materials** (Record Series 5272-09), 1978-1996 - 1.0 cubic foot

Recently Cited

Images from Seattle Municipal Archives were used and cited recently in:

- Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) program for national conference (6 images used)
- AMIA chose an SMA film, "Picture of a Young City" (1961), to appear in the "Festival of the Archives"
- Blog "[Wall of Retro](#)" used 1952 image from SMA
- A UK blog used a 1950s image in a post on "[Embracing the Past](#)"
- A 1962 image of [engineers](#) at a drafting table was used in a film on daylight savings

50 Years Ago: Beginnings of the SR 520 Bridge



Construction begins on the SR 520 bridge over Lake Washington. March 20, 1962

Item 70342, Seattle Municipal Archives

August

29, 1960 marked groundbreaking for a second bridge across Lake Washington, the Evergreen Point Floating Bridge. The City of Seattle financed the Montlake Interchange portion, 5.93 miles in length. Part of the Interchange was intended to meet up with the R.H. Thomson Expressway, which was never built. ceremonies were held August 28, 1963.

Flickr News/Social Media

We have been expanding our social media presence this year. Regular readers know about our [Flickr](#) site, which now has more than 2000 images and almost 250,000 views. You may not know that we have recently joined two other sites as well.

On [Pinterest](#) (<http://pinterest.com/seattlearchives/>), we currently have 18 boards on themes ranging from vintage postcards to Bumpershoot to the city's changing skyline. Images can be "repinned" by other Pinterest members onto their own boards, and links within each pin lead users back to our website where they can find more information about the image and about SMA.

And thanks to our volunteer Jonathan King, we have also launched a [YouTube](#) channel highlighting some of our moving image collection. Our channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/SeattleArchives>) currently features films from City Light, the Fire Department, the Engineering Department, and others, and includes everything from raw footage of streets and traffic to fully produced and edited films. Short clips of each film are also posted on our Flickr page, with links to the full video on YouTube. Our [most viewed film](#) shows activities of the city's Department of Streets and Sewers in the 1920s.

One of the advantages of using social media is the opportunity to interact with people who are interested in our collections. Please follow us on the sites and let us know what you think!

The most popular Flickr image for June-September is part of the set "Dining Out":



Mr B's Hamburgers, 1954
Item 78963, Seattle Municipal Archives

Volunteers and Interns

The SMA has six continuing volunteers. Jonathan King, graduate of the University of Washington iSchool, accepted a processing position at Texas State Archives. We are thrilled for him but sad to see him go. Jesten Ray is down to one day a month, as the library levy has given her more hours at her paid job. Her contributions to projects in photographs and textual records are greatly appreciated. In addition to Jonathan and Jesten, the SMA thanks Alex Hagenah, Carolyn Downs, Lydia Vernon, and Rachel Price for all their ongoing work.

Recent Accession: Maps

Friends of Seattle Olmsted Parks arranged for the transfer of over 50 maps relating to Seattle parks and the work of the Olmsted Brothers in 2012. In the process of being cataloged and, in some cases, scanned, the maps illustrate the work of the Olmsted Brothers at Green Lake, Seward Park, Woodland Park, and Hiawatha Playfield, among others. Description of maps can be found in the catalog here: <http://clerk.seattle.gov/~public/maps1.htm> using the search 5801-06.

Proposed plan for
the development of
Green Lake
Item 2315,
Seattle
Municipal
Archives



Upcoming Events

- January 17 - History Café - 7 pm
MOHAI Cafe, 860 Terry Ave N

Seattle Municipal Archives

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