

CATALOGING VISUAL MATERIALS

The following information is meant to serve as a brief introduction to the principles and goals of cataloging visual materials (film and photographic), and as a resource for further research into the cataloging of non-book material. It does not include other visual materials such as graphics (posters) or magnetic tape (video). Cataloging here means full level MARC cataloging for single items or groups of visual materials which may form part or all of a collection. Cataloging at accessioning is addressed in a note at the end of this guide.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND GOALS FOR ALL VISUAL MATERIALS

There are three categories that must be addressed when cataloging visual materials: description (what the items are); genre or form (what the items exemplify); and subject (what the items portray, and what they are about).

1. **Description:** encompasses the name of the creator (if known), the title of the item or collection (if any), facts relating to production (where and when), and physical description (dimensions and medium).
2. **Genre or form:** includes information about the character of the items in a collection (political cartoon, albumen print, advertisement). Although genre is a type of subject access, it is usually kept distinct from other kinds of subject access.
3. **Subject:** start with the obvious: what is the item an image *of*? Then move on to the less obvious: what is it *about*? A film may portray moviegoers in Durham, but does it also speak to racial inequality as it shows black and white moviegoers passing through different entrances? Consider a researcher's appreciation of this image: what valuable *documentary* information is contained in it? How clearly is it documented (is the image sharp? Are the details interesting?) Consider especially the RBMSCL's collecting priorities: do the images in a collection speak to Southern history? Advertising history? Occupational culture? Gender or ethnicity?

All of the information-gathering activities above may seem deceptively simple. In the case of one item, a full cataloging record is not too difficult to create. But if a cataloger is working on a collection of visual items, the decision-making process -- especially for subject access -- may slow down to a crawl. Focus on what may be valuable about the items to a person researching that historical period, political event, social reform, or genealogy, no matter how far in the future. For further assistance on describing and handling visual materials, the cataloger should first contact the Visual Materials specialist in Technical Services.

CATALOGING RESOURCES FOR GENERAL RULES AND PRINCIPLES:

General:

AACR2, Non-Book Materials section. Chapter 8. The first place to look for the rules that cover visual materials. This section gives all pertinent rules for describing dimensions, color, and includes a list of commonly used genre terms such as daguerreotype, lithograph, etc.

APPM, 2nd ed.: Steve Hensen's publication on cataloging manuscript materials. Valuable for all basic cataloging questions about choice of access points, formulation of different kinds of author entries, describing physical dimensions, etc. In Room 201.

Subject Access:

Art and Architecture Thesaurus (or *AAT*). Getty Art History Information Program. The RBMSCL has a copy of this in the Tech. Services Department, Room 201. Catalogers can use these terms for the MARC 655 field. Also available online through a web interface at <http://www.getty.edu/research/institute/standards/fda/index.html>. Currently used in Technical Services, but for full-level cataloging, GMPGC is best for visual materials such as photographs and film as it contains more specific terms for all formats and processes.

Thesaurus for Graphic Materials II: Genre and Physical Characteristic Terms (GMGPC). Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division. Washington DC, 1995. Also available online through the web at <http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/print/tgm2>. The equally important companion volume, *Thesaurus for Graphic Materials I: Subject Terms*, which offers assistance with subject classification and headings (650 field), can be found at <http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/print/tgm1/toc.html>.

Library of Congress Subject Headings. (LCSH) Five volumes. Kept in Room 201.

Other Resources:

Cataloging of Audiovisual Materials and Other Special Materials: A Manual Based on AACR2, 4th ed., by Nancy B. Olson. A good manual on how to catalog non-textual materials. Olson makes the most convoluted cataloging theory easy to understand and apply.

Graphic Materials: Rules for Describing Original Items and Historical Collections. Library of Congress, 1982. Compiled by Elisabeth Betz Parker. Useful guide to cataloging visual materials; available in on-line version that has been updated regularly.

Moving Images (Film):

Archival Moving Image Materials: A Cataloging Manual is part of the Catalogers' Reference Shelf. It is a free online cataloging resource based on the manual of the same title compiled by Wendy White-Hensen, Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division, Library of Congress; Cataloging Distribution Service, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; 1984. It provides instructions for describing (cataloging) materials held by film and television archives, as reflected in Chapter 7 of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2nd edition (AACR2)*. Subject access to the material is not addressed, nor are most aspects of name/title access; the emphasis instead is on the description of the material that makes up part of the catalog record for it. The archival materials covered include motion pictures and other theatrical releases, home movies, news reels, shorts, and unedited film.
<http://www.tlcdelivers.com/tlc/crs/arch0332.htm>

CATALOGING PHOTOGRAPHIC OR FILM MATERIALS, ITEM OR COLLECTION LEVEL

All basic cataloging rules and principles can be found in *AACR2*, *APPM*, or in our *Technical Services Manual*. Below are listed only the fields that may require different handling for visual materials. Most of the cataloging in RBMSCL is collection-level, therefore the focus of this guide will be collection-level records.

FIELD NAME WITH MARC NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
Statement of Responsibility [100 or 110]	Person who had a major role in creating the item or forming the collection. Enter name of photographer, film maker, director, or studio, if known.	100 1* Kwilecki, Paul, \$d 1931- 110 2* Matthew Brady Studio.
Title [245]	Supply the title, if known. Many photographs have no titles. In this case, supply artificial title in brackets. For the GMD (General Mat Designation) always use "graphic." Collection-level titles: see APPM for fullest guidelines.	245 00 Filmstrips, \$f 1931-1949. 245 00 [Chaco Canyon Landscape] \$f [195?] 245 00 Photographs, \$f 1946-1991 and n.d. 245 00 Gen. Grant on Lookout Mt., 1863, \$ f [1863 Nov.] \$ h [graphic].
Physical Description [300]	Give number of items and format. Give the height and dimension in inches (individual item). Give the color (color, b&w, sepia). For moving images, give extent of footage if possible, and film gauge (8 mm, 16mm, etc.).	300 ** 25 photographs : \$b b&w, col. ; \$c 8 x 10. 300 ** 1 filmstrip : \$b col. ; \$c 16 mm. 300 ** 250 photographs : \$b b&w ; \$h salt prints.
Organization and Arrangement [351]	Add any notes here about how the collection is organized.	351 ** Organized into the following series: Masters, Use Copies, Contracts.
Restriction Note [506]	Only if access is restricted in any way. Do not use for general visual materials collections that are open for research.	
Scope and Content [520]	Should follow format for any scope and content in Tech. Services manual. Be sure to specify formats and photographic processes represented, and subject content.	520 ** Informal group portrait. Grant is standing at left, facing the other men, who are seated. The cliff is surrounded by trees and there is a wooden building in the distance. Emulsion-paper print from a Brady negative, late-19th or early-20th century.
Notes [500]	Add source of title if not from the photo itself. Add running time for motion picture films, if known.	500 ** Title from text on verso. 500 ** Running time, 281 mins.
Alternate repository [544]	If we hold copies of originals kept elsewhere, note the location of the originals here.	544 ** Image also available in the National Archives.
Publication note [581]	Use for publication notes. See example.	581 ** Published in: Frost, Lawrence A., U.S. GRANT ALBUM (New York, 1966), p. 91.
Subject Added Entries [6xx]	Use the fullest description possible to describe what the materials are about, and what they represent. You may use as many as 30 entries under 6xx. Do not use the free-floating subdivision "Pictorial works."	650 ** Migrant laborers \$z United States \$z North Carolina. 650 ** Monuments. \$z Alabama. 651 ** California \$z San Francisco.
Genre Terms [655]	List all terms that represent important or valuable formats in the collection. These terms may also be useful for preservation needs. Use either AAT or GMGPC for terms. We do not use the 755 field.	655 Landscape photographs \$z Nepal. \$2 aat 655 Home movies. \$2 gmGPC 655 Photograph albums. \$2 aat 655 Group portraits. \$2 gmGPC

NOTES:**BEFORE CATALOGING**

Before starting, cast an eye on the archivist/processor's finding aid, from which all catalog records are created. Is there any information missing which must be supplied by looking at the collection? It may be necessary to contact the processing archivist; he or she can go back to the collection to ensure that proper format terms are being recorded in the finding aid (for example, the format of moving image film) so that they may be added to the catalog record. This goes back to the principle that there should never be information in the catalog record that is not in the finding aid (but not vice versa!).

PUBLISHED WORKS

In general, collection-level cataloging of film or photographic material rarely requires any publishing information in the catalog record. However, in the future we may encounter instances more frequently where publishing information needs to be added to the catalog record (MARC field 250). In these cases the AACR2 contains the most complete description of the rules governing this field. In addition, the cataloger may do well to consult with the A/V catalogers in Perkins Library Technical Services.

CATALOGING AT ACCESSIONING

Cataloging film or photographic materials at accessioning will offer less complete information about a collection than full level cataloging. First, subject access may not be as well developed. However, it will be crucial to the preservation of the materials that an accurate assessment of the formats in the collection be made, and that unstable formats in particular be noted both in the preliminary inventory and in the catalog record.