

Carnegie Institution of Washington Archives

Reading Room Rules

The objects housed in these collections are non-circulating materials. Some of them are in fragile condition and to a great extent irreplaceable, hence certain precautions are necessary.

1. All briefcases, purses, coats, and other personal articles are to be deposited outside the reading room.
2. Please sign in and out in the daily visit log each day when entering and departing. All papers must be inspected upon departure.
3. No food, beverages, or pets are permitted in any area of the Archives. No loud or disruptive behavior is permitted. Any disruptive individual will be asked to either moderate their behavior, or leave the premises. As a courtesy to others please silence all pagers and cell phones while in the archives.
4. Hands should be clean for the handling of materials. Please avoid applying creams or lotions to your hands immediately before handling materials as the oils can transfer and cause considerable damage.
5. Use gloves when handling photographic materials.
6. Use only pencils when taking notes.
7. Do not lay paper or cards on an object when writing notes. This practice leaves an impression that will shorten the life of the material.
8. Please have only one box of documents on the table at a time.
9. Use the proper book supports if supplied by the Archives staff to support volumes. Use a “snake” or other approved means of holding an item open.
10. Do not lay books open face down, or employ harmful bookmarks such as pencils, rulers, other books, etc. Broken spines and torn pages are the result of such treatment.
11. If paper slips must be used as bookmarks, please take extra care to remove all of them before returning the material. If left inside, they put a strain on the spine and can eventually cause discoloration of the paper.
12. Do not attempt to open uncut pages in a book. Please consult the archivist in each case.
13. Do not rearrange the order in which materials are delivered to you. No marks may be added to or erased from any material.
14. Do not make tracings or rubbings of archival material without specific permission and assistance from the archivist.
15. While material from these collections is in your hands, it is your responsibility. Please respect it and handle it with care.
16. Please ask for help when handling oversized materials.
17. Do not photocopy material without first asking the Archives staff. Some material is too fragile to be photocopied or requires special handling.

18. Any use of digital cameras or personal scanners within the archives MUST be approved by the archivist.
19. The Archives reserve the right to inspect all research material and all personal articles before a patron leaves the area.
20. Use and photoduplication of materials may be restricted by donor request, if in poor physical condition, to protect personal privacy or legitimate proprietary rights, to maintain reasonable administrative confidentiality, or if unprocessed.
21. Any exceptions to the above rules are at the discretion of the archivist.