The Albert B. Sabin Digitization Project: Reconstructing a Collection on the Web while Balancing Privacy, Restrictions, and Access

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Before We Begin...

- **Disclaimer:** The information contained herein represent the opinions of the Sabin project staff and should not be construed to be the opinions of the University of Cincinnati, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee or National Endowment for the Humanities. The author of this presentation is not a lawyer and nothing contained herein is to be considered as the rendering of legal advice or consultation. The audience is responsible for obtaining such advice form their own legal counsel. Do not take action in specific cases without full knowledge of the facts, and competent legal advice from your attorney. This presentation is intended for educational and informational purposes only.
Who is Albert Sabin?

- Best known as developer of the oral, live virus polio vaccine
- Professor at University of Cincinnati from 1939-1969
About the Sabin Archives

- Received collection in 1993 from Heloisa Sabin
- 1995 John Hauck Foundation grant to organize collection
- Over 400 linear feet of correspondence, photographs, and more
Hauck Center for the Albert B. Sabin Archives

- Collection spans from 1930-1993
- Bulk of collection from 1939-1969

- Highlights:
  - Poliomyelitis research
  - Sabin’s military career
The Sabin Digitization Project

- 3 year NEH grant
- “We the People” project
- Digitize
  - 50,000 pages of correspondence
  - 1000 photographs
- Available on Digital Resource Commons
Two Main Issues with Collection

**Military Service**

- Collection contains material marked “Restricted,” “Confidential,” and “Secret”
- How do we deal with “Classified National Security Information”?

**Medical Research**

- How to we provide access to materials while protecting the privacy of those mentioned in Dr. Sabin’s medical research?
Project Workflow

1. Identify materials for pre-publication review
2. Review and edit documents as necessary
   • Redact digitized document
   • Edit metadata
3. Upload edited documents to SAN
4. Rebuild submission packages
5. Retest batch load on non-public repository
6. Upload reviewed documents to public DRC
Military Service
Classified National Security Information

• “Classified information should never leave authorized control to begin with, but, historically, scientists, congresspeople, and senior government officials occasionally took copies of classified documents home with them upon leaving their official position. When these individuals donate their papers to a manuscript repository, that institution finds itself in possession of classified information and a significant access problem.”

Classified Information

- Contact National Archives and Records Administration’s Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO)
Restricted Documents

- “Restricted” no longer in use

- Strikethrough classification stamp on document in digital collection

- Indicate document is unclassified in metadata
  - Using a dc.description field
Example of Restricted Document

Dear Colonel Sabin,

I have been thinking over your letter of 5 March about colonel guins' request for reports and reports of your investigations of dengue, and how we might comply with his request. As you have not published any papers on your work, there are no reprints to be sent. I doubt if it would be desirable to send copies or photocopies of your several reports, but this could be done. I had thought of making you now you would feel about summarizing the studies when colonel guins had suggested that perhaps you are even now doing that for the report of the commission on yellow fever virus. Is that so, could you let me have an advance copy to send to colonel guins? If so, when do you think it will be ready?

Colonel Dwight W. Dumas is the Commanding Officer of the 19th Medical General Laboratory which was sent to the Southwest Pacific area last fall. He is located in New Guinea. Colonel phillips also worked on scrub typhus in the area in which this laboratory is situated. General stimson visited the 19th Medical general laboratory in February when he was on his WPA trip and discussed dengue problems with colonel guins. It seems certain that dengue is going to be a constantly important problem from New Guinea in the Philippines, and on up. We would like to do everything possible to get colonel guins the best information we have.

I am sorry you do not know him personally. He is a very able laboratory chief, full of ideas and energy, and is already doing a great deal of research at the 19th Medical General Laboratory and through field parties which he has sent out.

Sincerely yours,

R. BERNHARD
Capt. General, USA

cc, Dr. Paul
Dr. Blake
Confidential & Secret Documents

- Notify Information Security Oversight Office

- Send samples of documents by fax or mail
Example of Confidential Document
Code of Ethics for Archivists

• Access and Use
  • Recognizing that use is the fundamental reason for keeping archives, archivists actively promote open and equitable access to the records in their care within the context of their institutions’ missions and their intended user groups.
  • They facilitate the continuing accessibility and intelligibility of archival materials in all formats.
  • When repositories require restrictions to protect confidential and proprietary information, such restrictions should be implemented in an impartial manner.
  • In all questions of access, archivists seek practical solutions that balance competing principles and interests.
Code of Ethics for Archivists

• **Privacy**
  • Archivists recognize that privacy is sanctioned by law.
  • They establish procedures and policies to protect the interests of the donors, individuals, groups, and institutions whose public and private lives and activities are recorded in their holdings.
  • As appropriate, archivists place access restrictions on collections to ensure that privacy and confidentiality are maintained, particularly for individuals and groups who have no voice or role in collections’ creation, retention, or public use.

• See [http://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-core-values-statement-and-code-of-ethics](http://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-core-values-statement-and-code-of-ethics) for more information on the SAA Code of Ethics
Balancing Access and Privacy

• “Ethical standards call upon special collections professionals to collect and provide access openly, while protecting individual privacy.”

• “Special collections professionals can establish guidelines that preserve the historical record and maintain collection integrity and access, while adhering to privacy legislation and ethical concerns.”

Risk Management

• Met with UC General Counsel
• Marked parts of collection as needing a “Pre-publication Review”
  • Approximately 1/3 of scanned documents
About Medical Records

• “The acquisition of health care records, or documents with medical information, brings immediately with it the responsibility of controlling access to protect the confidences implied or articulated in the record-making environment. Archives [...] may preserve the anonymity of people in the records before permitting use, establish research protocols to govern access, and convene research committees to authorize access to records and to determine conditions for access.”

• Craig, Barbara L. “Confidences in Medical and Health Care Records from an Archive Perspective.” In Privacy and Confidentiality Perspectives: Archivists & Archival Records (2005), p. 252.
The Albert B. Sabin Archives

Go To Sabin Archives

Albert B. Sabin Digital Collection Redaction Policy

The Henry R. Winkler Center understands the value of privacy, especially related to the topic of health. In order to protect the privacy of the individuals who may be identified within Dr. Albert B. Sabin’s correspondence, we have redacted documents that contain personal health information, such as:

- Medical records found within the collection
- Letters to and from Dr. Sabin that request medical advice
- Material (letters, notes, etc.) related to research studies conducted by Sabin and his colleagues

This redaction only occurs in the digital collection made available online. The Center redacts the minimal amount of information to keep the integrity of the correspondence, while also providing protection for the individuals. Identifying information includes, but is not limited to: name, address, phone number, birth date, and social security number. The Winkler Center retains the original paper copy and an original scan without any redaction. You may request to see the original documents by contacting the Director of the Winkler Center. The Director will determine if the materials can be used based on research need and topic. At that time, you are responsible for complying with any privacy laws that may apply.

The Albert B. Sabin Archives are available on the OhioLINK Digital Resource Commons (DRC). Click here to go to the Sabin Archives.
What to Redact?

- Identifiers:
  - Names
  - Geographic subdivisions
  - Telephone numbers
  - Social Security numbers
  - Medical record numbers
  - Other unique numbers
**Sample of Redacted Document**

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**Feldman, Harry A. -- 1952-53 -- Correspondence, Toxoplasmosis -- letter, 1953-03-24**

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**March 24, 1953**

Dr. Harry A. Feldman  
University Hospital of the Good Shepherd  
150 Marshall Street  
Syracuse 10, N. Y.

Dear Harry:

Enclosed you find a serum specimen on [redacted]. This has been suffering from an ill-defined illness in the last couple of months and among other ill-defined things, presents some enlargement of the liver and spleen. I would appreciate it very much if you could carry out tests for toxoplasma antibodies.

With many thanks and kindest personal regards.

Sincerely yours,

Albert B. Sabin, M.D.
When Not to Redact?

• Maintain links and connections between the Sabin collection and previously published research

• Example – Mahoney strain of polio

Dr. Jonas E. Salk
The Municipal Hospital
Pittsburgh 11, Pennsylvania

Dear Jonas:

Enclosed you find approximately 10 ml. of Mahoney virus, kidney passage 3, which I promised to send you. This is an aliquot of the material that was tested intracerebrally and intramuscularly in cynomolgus monkeys, the results of which I showed in Detroit last Saturday. Using 1/10 ml. as an inoculum in cynomolgus kidney culture tubes this material had a titer of 10^7.6, yielding a value of 10^7.8 TCID50 per ml. I shall look forward with great interest to the results that you may obtain.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Albert B. Sabin, M.D.

AB5/fcs
Encl: vacuum bottle containing virus.

P.S.: It would be greatly appreciated if the stainless steel vacuum bottle and the container could be returned by the next AIR Express.
The Results (So Far...)

• Through the “pre-publication review,” we have:
  
  • Redacted over 1000 documents
  
  • Found 36 documents determined to be unclassified
For More Information

- Please visit:
  
  - Sabin Project Blog - [http://www.libraries.uc.edu/liblog/topics/albert-b-sabin-archives/](http://www.libraries.uc.edu/liblog/topics/albert-b-sabin-archives/)
  
  - The Hauck Center for the Albert B. Sabin Archives website - [http://sabin.uc.edu/](http://sabin.uc.edu/)
  
  - The Finding Aid for the Albert B. Sabin Papers - [http://rave.ohiolink.edu/archives/ead/OhCiUWC0012](http://rave.ohiolink.edu/archives/ead/OhCiUWC0012)