



Icon Chantry Library Subject Bibliography

Nº 1 Conservation of Photographs

A select bibliography of references about the Conservation of Photographs, compiled by Susie Clark.



THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

All items in this bibliography are available at the Chantry Library.

The aim of the Chantry Library Subject Bibliographies is to support the work of Icon members, by providing an up-to-date list of the most relevant source material on a topic in conservation with annotations giving information about the relevance, accuracy and quality of the sources cited, making it easier to evaluate the literature on a given subject.

The Bibliographies have been compiled by recognized specialists, who have selected the key works in their field of specialism.

Literature about the conservation of photographs is highly specialized and reflects the challenges and concerns facing conservators working in this rapidly evolving field of expertise. Drawing on specialist knowledge, this second bibliography in our series presents the reader with a wide range of sources of information, which cover many of the key issues in the conservation of photographs, including preservation techniques, photographic processes, identification, care of photographic collections, and digital imaging.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

1. *Care of Photographic, Moving Image and Sound Collections, Conference Papers, 20–24 July 1998*, ed. S. Clark (Leigh: Institute of Paper Conservation, 1999).

This publication contains a variety of papers covering most aspects relating to photographic conservation as well as digital issues. It would be of interest to conservators and anyone with the responsibility for the care of collections.

Reference: MAG Chantry: Conf/IPC - 1998

JOURNALS

2. American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, *Topics in Photographic Preservation* 1–13 (1986–2009).

Topics in Photographic Preservation is produced biennially and contains many very useful articles. These may range from informal tips to detailed research and the information provided is often of very practical benefit to photographic conservators. It is not peer reviewed, but the authors are often well known in the field.

Reference: MAG Chantry: J/AIC - P

MONOGRAPHS

3. Coote, J.H., *The Illustrated History of Colour Photography* (Surbiton: Fountain Press, 1993).

Good clear books describing and explaining colour photographic processes are not easy to find and this is one of the best. It covers predominantly the twentieth-century proprietary processes. There is relatively little information about the main pigment processes, the carbon print and gum bichromate, but that is more readily available elsewhere.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/Coo

4. Frey, F.S., and J.M. Reilly, *Digital Imaging for Photographic Collections*, 2nd ed. (Rochester: Image Permanence Institute, 2006).

This is a useful publication for anyone planning a digitization project. A professional digitization project is about much more than buying a scanner and setting to work. This publication outlines the sort of technical, operational, ethical and aesthetic decisions that need to be made before embarking on a project. Without such forethought, a digitization project can be a waste of money and a series of missed opportunities.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/Fre

5. Hendriks K.B., Thurgood, B., Iraci, J., and G. Hill, *Fundamentals of Photographic Conservation: A Study Guide* (Toronto: National Archives of Canada and Lugus Productions, 1991).

This book was written by conservation scientists and the main author was a towering figure in the field, latterly as Director of the Canadian Conservation Institute, until his untimely death. Anyone who knew him will remember his sharp, rigorous and intellectual mind. The approach of this book reflects that, as it is arranged clearly as a set of experiments and discussions which are designed to develop the same approach in a student. It would be useful for students of conservation or those wishing to further their scientific studies. He was particularly interested in the behaviour of silver in black and white prints.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/Hen

6. Jürgens, M., *The Digital Print: A Complete Guide to Processes, Identification and Preservation* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2009).

Many conservators have struggled over the years to find information relevant to the conservation of particular photographs in many disparate publications. In recent years, books have finally started to appear which bring lots of information together specifically for conservators. Martin Jürgens showed an early interest in digital prints and was encouraged by many conservators and institutions mindful of past experience with photographs to produce such a volume on digital prints. He has produced an excellent publication for conservators and others with an interest in digital prints. There is a very useful illustrated fold-out identification chart at the back of the book.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/Jur

7. Lavédrine, B., with the collaboration of Gandolfo, J-P., and S. Monod, *A Guide to the Preventive Conservation of Photograph Collections*, trans. by Sharon Grevet (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2003).

This is a beautifully written and presented book. Credit should also go to the translator. Illustrations, diagrams and explanations are very clear. It covers all the issues concerning the preservation of photographic collections in sufficient depth to be of interest to conservators and others caring for photographic collections alike. This is one of a relatively few publications which is specifically aimed at conservators as part of its audience and is essential reading for any student of photographic conservation.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/Lav

8. Bertrand Lavédrine., with Gandolfo, J-P., McElhone, J. and S. Monod, *Photographs of the Past: Process and Preservation*, trans. by J. McElhone (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2009).

This is also a beautifully written and presented book which has been well translated. Illustrations, diagrams and explanations are also very clear. The major part of the book is devoted to detailed descriptions of the processes and their deterioration. It is one of the most comprehensive publications for its process descriptions. The information on care and preservation is relatively short, and conservators looking for more detail would be better reading the other book by Bertrand Lavédrine et al.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/Lav

9. McCabe, C. ed., *Coatings on Photographs: Materials, Techniques and Conservation* (Washington DC: American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, 2005).

This large volume is the result of a substantial collaborative project involving many conservators who have written the individual articles. Prior to this publication much attention (quite rightly) had been focused on photographic emulsions. However, very little had been written about coatings leading to an impression that coatings were not so widespread. This volume rectifies that with very detailed accounts of the coatings that have been employed with photographs. A large part of the volume is also devoted to case studies and there is a helpful glossary at the end. This is a very useful book for conservators which will alert them to the possibility of certain coatings with particular processes. Unfortunately many are not always discernible by the human eye and further scientific tests may be necessary to confirm their presence. None the less this book contains a wealth of information and represents how far the field of photographic conservation has advanced.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/McC

10. Norris, D.H., and J.J. Gutierrez, *Issues in the Conservation of Photographs* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2010).

This volume is part of a series and brings together seminal texts in the field of conservation covering history, philosophy and methodology. It is therefore an extremely useful reference source. It includes articles from the earliest days of photography and some of these would otherwise be hard to find. It also has helpful additional notes about each article to put it in context. The texts do not necessarily describe procedures which conservators would wish to follow today (although many texts do) but they illustrate the development of the field.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/Nor

11. Reilly, J.M., *Care and Identification of 19th-Century Photographic Prints*, Kodak G-2S (Rochester NY: Eastman Kodak Company, 1986).

This publication is by the founder and director of the Image Permanence Institute. It is a clearly written book with many useful illustrations. Despite being published in 1986 it remains a key text for those interested in photographs, their history and care. It also has a very helpful illustrated pull-out chart for identification purposes. It does not cover conservation techniques.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/Rei

12. Ware, M., *Mechanisms of Image Deterioration in Early Photographs: The Sensitivity to Light of W.H.F. Talbot's Halide-fixed Images 1834–1844* (London: Science Museum and National Museum of Photography, Film and Television, 1994).

The author of this book is the modern day version of the Victorian polymath, being a chemist, photographer and photographic historian. This book is the result of his research to establish the sensitivity to light of WHF Fox Talbot's halide-fixed images (1834–44) and then to provide parameters for the display of the material. This may sound narrow as not many people will have to care for Talbot material, but the core of Talbot's processes carry through to the present day and the book is of much wider interest. It is also a very good example of a beautifully written comprehensive study which serves as a model for anyone conducting a thorough investigation in photographic history, conservation or preservation.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/Wa

13. Wilhelm, H., and C. Brower, *The Permanence and Care of Color Photographs: Traditional and Digital Color Prints, Color Negatives. Slides and Motion Pictures*, (Grinnell: Preservation Publishing Company, 1993).
<http://www.wilhelm-research.com>

This book contains the results of a substantial amount of research about mostly proprietary colour materials. It was a pioneering book when it was produced as the claims of manufacturers had not previously been so widely independently assessed or compared and the information published. The most useful part of the book describes the ageing properties of the commercial products and there is still much information that is not readily available elsewhere. Further information about the testing of more recent products can be found at Henry Wilhelm's website above.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/Wil

PAMPHLETS

14. Clark, S. *Preservation of Photographic Material* (London: Preservation Advisory Centre, British Library, 1999, revised 2009). <http://www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/photographic.pdf>

This booklet brings together the essential basic information for conservators and others responsible for the care of a photographic collection. It provides an introduction to history and identification of the most common processes and advice about how to care for them, including sections on storage and the environment.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/Cla

STANDARDS

15. *Standards in the Museum Care of Photographic Collections 1996* (London: Museums and Galleries Commission, 1996).

This is still the most comprehensive set of standards available in one single source and is a good starting point for anyone responsible for a photographic collection. It is in two parts: 'Managing Collections' and 'Protecting Collections'. Although it was produced some time ago, it has largely stood the test of time. It was pioneering in some of its environmental recommendations which have since been much more widely adopted.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/Mu

16. *Standard for the Storage and Handling of Cellulose Nitrate Film 40* (Quincy, MA: National Fire Protection Association, 2011).

This is the most detailed comprehensive standard dealing specifically with cellulose nitrate film in both roll and sheet format, still and motion picture film. It makes clear recommendations for different sizes of collections.

Reference: MAG Chantry: RP/NFPA

WEB RESOURCES

17. *Image Permanence Institute*, Rochester, NY, USA <https://www.imagepermanenceinstitute.org/> (accessed 24 June 2011)

The Image Permanence Institute is a university-based, non-profit research laboratory devoted to scientific research in the preservation of visual and other forms of recorded information. It is based in Rochester, NY, USA. Its strength has been to take more complex areas of science, distill them down and present them in very understandable ways. These often involve interactive tools which can be related to the user's own circumstances. Their material is published in a variety of media. The Image Permanence Institute website acts as a portal, that includes links to the following useful websites: –

<http://www.graphicsatlas.org/>

This website is a sophisticated but simple to use aid to identification of print processes. It has a number of interactive tools, for example allowing the viewer to rotate images of photographs to see how the surfaces appear from different angles. This is effective at creating a real life experience.

<http://www.dp3project.org/>

This is the Digital Print Preservation Portal which describes in sequence the major digital print processes, their identification, deterioration and preservation.

<http://www.dpcalc.org/>

This is the Dew Point Calculator website which has an interactive tool enabling the effects of altering temperature, relative humidity or dew point to be observed.

<https://www.imagepermanenceinstitute.org/imaging/storage-guides>

 IPI Media Storage Quick Reference Guide

 IPI Storage Guide for Acetate Film

 IPI Storage Guide for Color Photographic Materials

These guides are primarily for those with professional interest in the care of photographic collections. They include interactive wheels which enable the user to observe the interactive nature of different environmental factors.

IPI also produce a series of consumer guides for people working with family history collections: Traditional and Print Stability; Recovery of Water-Damaged Traditional and Digital Prints; Modern Photo Papers; Understanding Permanence Testing; Materials for Preservation Framing and the Display of Photographic Images.

Biography

Susie Clark

Susie Clark ACR qualified in paper conservation at Camberwell School of Art and Craft in London in 1985. She began her career as the conservator for a collection of approximately 20 million photographs at the BBC Hulton Picture Library. In 1990, she became a freelance paper and photograph conservator and consultant, working throughout Britain and abroad on public and private collections of both archival and photographic material. As well as interventive conservation work, Susie also carries out conservation surveys of collections and lectures on paper and photographic conservation. She works primarily for institutions, including national and regional museums, libraries, and archives, the National Trust and English Heritage. Her other area of specialisation is the conservation of dried mounted herbarium specimens. In 1996, Susie won the Museums and Galleries Commission Jerwood Conservation Award for Research and Innovation for her work on wet collodion positives.

All the references are available for access either electronically, or in hard copy, via the Chantry Library, where original documents will be held.

For further details.contact

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