

# Conducting Research in the National Anthropological Archives & Human Studies Film Archives:

Online Search Guide and Information Packet

*Last updated November 2019*

# ANTHROPOLOGY ARCHIVES

The National Anthropological Archives and Human Studies Film Archives collect and preserve historical and contemporary anthropological materials that document the world's cultures and the history of anthropology.

## FUN FACTS ABOUT THE NAA

- Holds collection relating to the four fields: cultural/social anthropology, archaeology, physical/biological anthropology, and linguistics.
- Is the oldest archives in the Smithsonian, dating to the 1879 founding of the Bureau of American Ethnology and its archives.
- Holds 13,000 cubic feet of collections, including over **1,000,000** photographs, **4000** sound recordings, over **5000** works of art, and over **7000** collections of anthropological manuscripts, personal papers, and organizational and institutional records.
- Holds the world's largest archival collection of Indigenous North American linguistic materials.

## FUN FACTS ABOUT THE HSFA

- Holds 7,050,000 feet (**over 3,000 hours**) of archival original film, 1,500 hours of video tape, 250,000 still images—if you count frames of film, it's more like 14 billion.
- Oldest film: Dixon-Wanamaker Expedition to Crow Agency, 1908.
- Most unusual video format: 9.5mm - widely used in Europe as an amateur film format.
- Biggest single collection: John Marshall Ju/'hoan Bushman Film and Video Collection, 1950-2000, 714,405 feet (332 hours) of archival original film and 391 hours of original video.

## LOCATION

The NAA & HSFA are located in the Smithsonian Institution's Museum Support Center in Suitland, Maryland, the primary collections and research center for the National Museum of Natural History.

## VISITING

The NAA & HSFA are open to researchers by appointment Tuesday-Friday from 9:00am to 4:30pm, and staff are available to assist researchers remotely via email and telephone.

National Anthropological Archives  
4210 Silver Hill Road  
Suitland, MD 20746

## CONTACT US

**Email:** [naa@si.edu](mailto:naa@si.edu)

**Website:** <https://naturalhistory.si.edu/research/anthropology/collections-overview/anthropology-archives>

### Phone:

NAA General Inquiries	301-238-1310
HSFA General Inquiries	301-238-1330
Photograph Inquiries	301-238-1322
Film, Video, & Audio Inquiries	301-238-1315
Rights and Reproductions	301-238-1315

## Tips for searching our online catalog: [collections.si.edu](https://collections.si.edu)

Try searching for keywords: individual names, places, regions, cultural groups, etc. When you find records you're interested in make sure to note the **"Cite As"** field shown in the image on page 6)—this is the most important piece of information for our archival staff.

# Visiting the NAA and HSFA

The NAA and HSFA welcome visitors by appointment only. Please submit appointment request forms at least 10 business days in advance and complete separate forms for each visitor in your group.

More information about visiting the collections is available at:

<https://naturalhistory.si.edu/research/anthropology/collections-and-archives-access>

The screenshot shows the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History website. The header includes the Smithsonian logo and navigation links: VISIT, EXHIBITS, RESEARCH, EDUCATION, EVENTS, ABOUT, JOIN US, DONATE, and a search icon. The main banner features the text 'NATIONAL MUSEUM of NATURAL HISTORY' and 'DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY Collections and Archives Access' over a background image of four people silhouetted against a sunset. Below the banner is a breadcrumb trail: Home / Our Research / Anthropology / Collections and Archives Access. A paragraph states: 'We strive to make our vast national collections accessible, both online and in person, to anyone with a research question related to our collections. Visiting researchers include anthropologists, artists, students, historians, descendant families and communities.' A section titled 'Search the Collections' contains three image-based links: 'Object Collections' (a peacock feather), 'National Anthropological Archives' (a map), and 'Human Studies Film Archives' (a camera). The 'Visit the Collections' section includes the text: 'Access to the collection is provided by appointment only. We have a limited number of staff members to assist researchers. Therefore, we suggest that you book an appointment at least a month in advance.' A red circle highlights the link 'Request an appointment'. Below this is the 'Location and hours' section with the following text: 'Our collections are housed at the Museum Support Center (MSC), at 4210 Silver Hill Road, Suitland, Maryland.' and 'Appointments are available Tuesday through Friday, 9 am to 4:30 pm, excluding federal holidays.' A link for 'Additional Visitor Information for MSC' is also present. The 'Visitor Agreements' section is partially visible at the bottom. An image on the right shows a person using a handheld device to examine a specimen in a tray.

# Visiting the NAA and HSFA

Research appointments for the NAA and for the HSFA can be made using this form:

<https://naturalhistory.si.edu/research/anthropology/collections-and-archives-access/anthropology-collections-appointment-request>

Once an appointment request has been submitted, you will receive a confirmation email from NAA/HSFA staff within 3 business days.

The screenshot shows the Smithsonian website's navigation bar with links for VISIT, EXHIBITS, RESEARCH, EDUCATION, EVENTS, ABOUT, JOIN US, DONATE, and a search icon. The main header features the Smithsonian logo and the text 'NATIONAL MUSEUM of NATURAL HISTORY'. The page title is 'Anthropology Collections Appointment Request Form'. Below the title is a breadcrumb trail: Home / Our Research / Anthropology / Collections and Archives Access / Anthropology Collections Appointment Request Form. The form itself is titled 'Contact Information' and includes the following fields: 'Your Name' (with sub-fields for 'First Name \*' and 'Last Name \*'), 'Position / Job Title' and 'Affiliation \*' (with a note: 'e.g. University, Business, First Nation/Tribe, Museum'), a question 'Are you a Smithsonian employee, intern, fellow, or volunteer?' with radio buttons for 'Yes' and 'No', 'City \*', a 'Country \*' dropdown menu (currently showing 'United States'), a state dropdown menu (currently showing '- Select -'), a 'Region/Province' text field, a 'Zip/Postal Code' text field, an 'Email \*' field (pre-filled with 'none@no.com'), and a 'Telephone Number \*' field (pre-filled with '+1 201-555-0123'). A note at the bottom of the form states: 'An email address is needed to confirm your appointment request.'

# Conducting NAA and HSFA Research Onsite: FAQ

## **How do I get to the NAA?**

The NAA is located at the Museum Support Center (address on page 2 of this guide) in Suitland, MD. You can reach the MSC by car (free parking onsite), Metro (it's about a 15 minute walk from the Suitland metro stop on the Green Line), or complimentary Smithsonian shuttle from the Natural History Museum in DC (about a 25 minute ride; contact us for a schedule and shuttle pass).

## **Do I need to check in when I get to the Museum Support Center?**

Yes, tell the front gate guard (if you're driving or walking from the metro) that you're here to research at the NAA at MSC (it is the gray building straight and to the left). You'll then need to check in with the front desk guard at MSC. You'll need to present an ID to receive your visitor badge, and you'll need to sign in any electronics or cameras you bring with you. The guard will then call staff at the NAA to come meet you.

## **Is there a place to eat at the MSC?**

Yes. MSC has a cafeteria that is usually open from 8:00am-2:00pm. Microwaves and a refrigerator are also available if you would like to bring your own lunch.

## **What should I prepare before my research visit?**

It's always a good idea to come prepared with a research question and a general idea of the materials you'd like to see (you may have already provided this information in your appointment request form). Sending this kind of information ahead of time will allow NAA staff to check on any access restrictions, request offsite materials, and gather additional information on related collections. See pages 7-12 this guide for online searching tips.

## **Are all NAA archival materials open to research?**

No. Some of the NAA's collections hold varying levels of access restrictions based on a number of factors: privacy concerns, cultural sensitivity, legal restrictions, copyright issues, preservation concerns, etc. Catalog records and finding aids will note if and how a collection is restricted, but NAA staff will also discuss any relevant access restrictions with researchers. Please contact the NAA for further information.

# Conducting NAA and NAFC Research Onsite: FAQ

## **What can I bring with me? Is there a place to store my things while I'm re-searching?**

There are lockers in the NAA's research room for your belongings. You can bring notes, notebooks, cameras, cell phones, pencils, and laptops to the research table, but pens, bags, cases, tripods, scanners, highlighters, post-it notes, and food and drink are not allowed. These restricted items can be stored in your locker while you're researching.

## **Is there a research orientation or required researcher forms?**

Yes. Once your belongings are stored in a locker, the NAA's Reference Archivist will meet with you to go over regulations and research procedures, including the items you can and can't have at the research table, what materials are available to you in the research room (scrap paper, magnifying glasses, book cradles, etc.), and how to fill out request forms for archival materials. There are also 2 forms that the Reference Archivist will give you to read and sign before beginning your research: the NAA's *Visitor Agreement Form* and the *Digital Camera Use Form*. These forms outline rules and regulations for conducting research in the NAA, handling materials, taking digital pictures, and using/sharing reproductions. The Reference Archivist is also available to discuss your research project in depth, suggest related NAA holdings, and assist with navigating collections.

## **Can I take pictures of archival materials?**

Yes. As long as the collection you're interested in carries no reproduction restrictions (NAA staff will alert you if this applies) and you read and sign our Digital Camera Use Form (which outlines rules and regulations for taking and sharing digital photographs of archival materials), researchers are encouraged to take pictures of archival materials.

## **Can I make photocopies of archival materials?**

No. The NAA does not allow researchers to scan or photocopy archival materials themselves. Researchers can request low-resolution pdf scans (no physical photocopies) of the NAA's collections. PDF scans are \$0.50/page, with a maximum page count per request of 150 pages. Contact NAA staff for more information or for questions related to high-resolution or audio-visual reproductions.

# Searching ONLINE for Collections in the NAA and HSFA

The Smithsonian's millions of books, manuscripts, museum objects, artifacts, artwork, photographs, sound recordings, and film are searchable online through two online databases: **Collections Search Center (CSC; collections.si.edu)** and the **Smithsonian Online Virtual Archive (SOVA; sova.si.edu)**. Searching online is a great place to start, as it can give you a sense of what materials are available, if they are available digitally, where they are physically located, and who to contact to learn more information.

**Collections Search Center :** [collections.si.edu](http://collections.si.edu)

Enter desired keywords (collection names, individuals' names, cultural groups, region, etc.) and hit "search".

**TIP:** start broad, and then use the menu bar on the left side of the results page (see the next page of this handout) to narrow down your results.

The screenshot shows the Smithsonian Collections Search Center website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'New Search', 'Items on Exhibit', 'Browse', 'Blog', 'Tutorial', and 'About'. A search bar is located on the right side of the navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, the main content area features a large blue search box on the left with a red arrow pointing to the search input field. The search box contains the text: 'Search over 9.6 million records of museum objects, archives and library materials including more than 1.4 million online media files.' Below the search box is a 'Search' button and a 'help' link. To the right of the search box, there are two tabs: 'Browse by Category' and 'Items on Exhibit'. Below the tabs, there is a section titled 'Art & Design' with a list of record types and names. The list includes: Paintings (550891), Exhibition catalogs (137040), Sculpture (visual work) (119442), Drawings (82737), Prints (57521), Photographs (40646), Outdoor sculpture (39145), Decorative arts (33086), Archival materials (31973), and Still lifes (22737). Each record type has a 'see all' link. The names listed are: Freer, Charles Lang (9985), Herzfeld, Ernst (7654), Washington, George (4766), Sully, Thomas (4735), Catlin, George (4410), Singer, Paul (4295), Sargent, John Singer (4153), Muller, Robert O. (4054), Inness, George (3481), and Stuart, Gilbert (3259). Below the list, there are two expandable sections: 'History & Culture' and 'Science & Technology'. At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with links for 'About', 'Terms of Use', 'Privacy', and 'Contact'.

# Searching ONLINE for Collections in the NAA and HSFA

Search results will be from all Smithsonian museums, libraries, archives, and research centers, so you can limit them to the "National Anthropological Archives" or the "Human Studies Film Archives" by selecting the repository name in the "catalog record source" tab in the left bar menu (shown below). You can also limit your results by type (photographs, documents, etc.), date, culture, place, etc. Your search path will show above the results list.

The screenshot displays the Smithsonian Collections Search Center interface. The search term is "National Anthropological Archives" and the results are sorted by Relevance. The search path is shown as "All Records" with filters for "catalog record source: 'National Anthropological Archives'" and "type: 'Documents'".

**Modify Your Search**

Search Term: "National Anthro" apply

Search Options

Narrow By

- online media
- type (selected) ←
- topic
- name
- culture
- language
- place
- date
- catalog record source ←

5826 documents - page 1 of 262

Sorted by Relevancy | View as List | Print Results | Expand All | Share

**Online Finding Aid**

- John Peabody Harrington papers: Alaska/Northwest Coast, 1910, 1933-1957**
  - CREATOR: Harrington, John Peabody 1884-1961
  - PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 28.88 linear feet (76 boxes)
  - TYPE: Field notes
  - DATE: 1910
  - LOCAL NUMBER: Accession #1978-05
  - DATA SOURCE: National Anthropological Archives
- John Peabody Harrington papers: Plains, 1916-1951**
  - CREATOR: Harrington, John Peabody 1884-1961
  - PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 12.5 linear feet (34 boxes)
  - TYPE: Field notes
  - DATE: 1916
  - LOCAL NUMBER: Accession #1978-05
  - DATA SOURCE: National Anthropological Archives
- Digital Content (PDF format)**
- Fragments of Lakota texts by George Bushotter, 1887**
  - CREATOR: Bushotter, George 1884-1892
  - PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 17 pages (1 folders)
  - TYPE: Folklore
  - DATE: 1887
  - LOCAL NUMBER: NAA MS 4800: (3.1.1.3) [103, 2832]
  - DATA SOURCE: National Anthropological Archives
- Online Finding Aid**
- John Peabody Harrington papers: Southwest, 1907-1957**
  - CREATOR: Harrington, John Peabody 1884-1961
  - PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 58.75 linear feet (128 boxes)
  - TYPE: Dictionaries
  - DATE: 1907
  - LOCAL NUMBER: Accession #1978-05
  - DATA SOURCE: National Anthropological Archives
- Online Finding Aid**
- John Peabody Harrington papers: Northeast/Southeast, 1907-1957**
  - CREATOR: Harrington, John Peabody 1884-1961
  - PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 11.33 linear feet (35 boxes)
  - TYPE: Vocabulary
  - DATE: 1907
  - LOCAL NUMBER: Accession #1978-05
  - DATA SOURCE: National Anthropological Archives



# Searching ONLINE for Collections in the NAA and HSFA

If you are interested in learning more about a particular item or collection, it's best to note down the information located in the **"Cite As"** field of the catalog record, along with the title of the material (in blue). These are the most useful pieces of information needed for staff at the NAA to locate the materials you are interested in:

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying search results for 'MS 1384'. The page title is 'MS 1384 / catalog record source:"National Anthropological Archives" / type:"Documents"'. The search results are sorted by Relevancy and show 2 documents on page 1 of 1.

**Document 1: Lakota vocabulary 1874**

- CREATOR: Corliss, A.W
- ANNOTATOR: Dorsey, James Owen 1848-1895
- PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 54 pages
- CULTURE: Lakota Teton
- TYPE: Archival materials  
Collection descriptions
- DATE: 1874
- SUMMARY: In Schedule of John Wesley Powell's Introduction to the Study of Indian Languages 1877, transcribed from an original Manuscript by Corliss, from data collected among the Brules at White River. Some words added from Stephen R. Riggs' Dakota Language and Dictionary, Washington, D.C. 1852, by the (anonymous) transcriber. Includes list of personal names with note by James Owen Dorsey.
- CITE AS: Manuscript 1384, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution
- TOPIC: Names, Personal  
Language and languages--Documentation
- LOCAL NUMBER: NAA MS 1384
- SEE MORE ITEMS IN: [Numbered manuscripts 1850s-1980s \(some earlier\)](#)
- DATA SOURCE: National Anthropological Archives

**Document 2: English-Alabama and Alabama-English dictionary 1906-1913**

- CREATOR: Swanton, John Reed
- PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 5400 cards
- TYPE: Dictionaries
- DATE: 1906-1913
- LOCAL NUMBER: NAA MS 2435

The 'Cite As' field for the first document is highlighted with a red arrow, and the title 'Lakota vocabulary 1874' is also highlighted with a red arrow. The 'Add to My List' button is visible for both documents.

# Searching ONLINE for Collections in the NAA and HSFA

The “local number” field and blue record title are the most useful pieces of information needed for staff at the **HSFA** to locate the moving image materials you are interested in:

The screenshot shows a search results page from collections.si.edu. The search term is 'crow, H'. The results are displayed on page 1 of 1. The main record is titled 'Dixon-Wanamaker Expedition to Crow Agency, 1908 [supplied]' with a local number of 83.6.1 1908. A red arrow points to the title. The record details include:

- CREATOR:** Dixon, Joseph Kossuth; Chief Plenty Coups; "Curly" scout of General Custer
- PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 1,128 ft (31 min) silent b&w video
- TYPE:** Projected media; Collection descriptions
- PLACE:** Wolf Mountains; North America; Montana; Little Bighorn River (Mont.); Custer's Battlefield
- DATE:** 1908
- NOTES:** Supplementary materials
- SUMMARY:** Outtakes of a film shot during an expedition to Crow Agency, Montana, sponsored by department store magnate Rodman Wanamaker. Included are scenes of a mission school where young women were educated, a giveaway in which young men are honored with gifts, a Crow Fair encampment where people come together to observe and participate in various activities, a horse procession in which the horses and riders are adorned with headdresses, and 19th- and 20th-century Crow leader, Chief Plenty Coups. A reenactment of the Battle of Little Big Horn at Custer's battlefield is filmed in which some of the participants were also present during the actual battle.
- TOPIC:** Settlement--rural; Procession--horse procession; Costume--bridge cloth; Ceremonies--"giveaway"; Stores--general store; School--Catholic girls school--mission school; Bathing--men bathing; Racing--horse racing; Battles--reenactment of Battle of Little Big Horn; Infants--infant carried on cradle board
- LOCAL NUMBER:** HSFA 83.6.1 (highlighted with a red arrow and underline)
- DATA SOURCE:** Human Studies Film Archives

On the left side, there are search options and filters. The 'catalog record source' filter is set to 'Human Studies Film Archives'. A red arrow points to the 'Record Link' icon.

# Exploring SI Collections Online through SOVA: Smithsonian Online Virtual Archive

[sova.si.edu](http://sova.si.edu)

Results in SOVA are from Smithsonian archival units only (not object collections or libraries). In SOVA, researchers can search within finding aids for archival collections. Enter desired keywords (collection names, individuals' names, cultural groups, region, etc.) and hit "search." You can also explore digitized material (either generally or within each collection) by clicking on the blue box icon in SOVA and within each collection.

You can also view all the finding aids available online at an individual SI repository by clicking the name of the archive from the list below (see red arrow for the NAA).

SOVA: Smithsonian Online ... x +

sova.si.edu

Search

NAA & HSFA Home Staff Only Search Scre... Appointment Request... BHL Biodiversity Heritage L... DAMS Find a THPO | NATHPO ArchivesSpace | Resou...

Smithsonian Institution  
Smithsonian Online Virtual Archives

Search SOVA



About

Explore Archival Collections

Access 9537 descriptions of personal papers, manuscripts, photographs, oral histories, films, works of art and organizational records. [Read more...](#)

Search

SEARCH

Explore Digital Collections  

Dive into digital content, including images, audio files, video files, and many others.

Featured

Sports Music Seed Industry Engineering Oral History American Southwest

Browse by Archival Repository

Anacostia Community Museum Archives (149)


Archives Center, National Museum of American History (1998)

Archives of American Art (859)

Archives of American Gardens (10)

Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives, National Museum of African Art (11)

Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives (21)

National Anthropological Archives (691) 

National Museum of African American History and Culture (5)

National Museum of the American Indian Archive Center (129)

National Portrait Gallery (4)

Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections (66)

Smithsonian American Art Museum, Research and Scholars Center (9)

# Exploring SI Collections Online through SOVA: Smithsonian Online Virtual Archive

[sova.si.edu](https://sova.si.edu)

Once you initially search for materials in SOVA, the next results page will allow you to narrow your findings further. Using the left blue menu bar, you can limit your results by culture, name, topic, geographic name, or archival repository. The large blue bar at the top will allow you to limit your results to "Collections" (meaning collection-level records), "All" (meaning both collection-level records and materials catalogued at the item level), or "Digital" (meaning only digitized content).

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Smithsonian Online Virtual Archive (SOVA) search results for the query "Seneca". The page features a blue header with the Smithsonian Institution logo and the text "Smithsonian Online Virtual Archives". A search bar contains the query "Seneca". Below the header, a navigation bar includes a "SEARCH AGAIN" button, a "Collections" button (highlighted with a red bracket), and "All" and "Digital" buttons (also highlighted with red brackets). A left sidebar contains a "SEARCH AGAIN" button and a list of filters: "Only records with digital assets", "Culture", "Name", "Topic", "Geographic Name", and "Archival Repository". The main content area shows the query "Seneca" and a pagination bar indicating "84 records - Page 1 of 9". Two search results are displayed:

- Richard Hill photographs of American Indians**
  - Creators: Hill, Richard W., Sr.
  - Dates: circa 1972-1978
  - Size: 25 prints (silver gelatin)
  - Collection ID: NAA.PhotoLot.83-35
  - Repository: National Anthropological Archives
  - Description: Informal photographic portraits depicting Iroquois, Seminole, and other American Indians. Images document the preparation of fry bread, a lacrosse player, a corn-husk doll maker, an Iroquois dancer, a longhouse wedding party, a Seneca wood carver making a water drum, a Seneca basketmaker, and a Seneca flute maker.
- Joseph W. Keppler, Jr. negatives and photographs**
  - Creators: Keppler, Udo J., 1872-1956
  - Dates: 1899-1939
  - Size: 50 photographic prints (black and white)  
127 negatives (photographic) (black and white)
  - Collection ID: NMAI.AC.001.016
  - Repository: National Museum of the American Indian Archive Center
  - Description: Images depict the Seneca Iroquois Indians on the Cattaraugus Reservation in New York.

## Use Guidelines: Can I Share This?

Please observe the following rules for file **sharing of scans or digital photographs** of archival materials. These rules are intended to help protect the integrity of the material and associated information.

- Do not incorporate material into a publicly accessible database or website without checking with the National Anthropological Archives (NAA).
- Do not post whole manuscripts to a social media site, such as a blog, Facebook page, Twitter feed, etc.
- Do not modify or obscure the source information or copyright notice included in the material.
- If you deposit the material in a tribal library or resource center, make sure that the library or resource center knows the source of the original material and is aware of these rules. Please let the NAA know where material is deposited so that we can guide community members to it.

Material found in the **public domain** (i.e. images digitized and found online in Collections Search Center or SIRIS), can be shared as long as a proper citation is included. Please use the following citation format: *Item Name, Folder Title (if applicable), Box # (if applicable), Collection Name, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.*

When in doubt, ask an archivist at [naa@si.edu](mailto:naa@si.edu) or 301-238-1310.

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