



Identification, Care, and Storage of Audiovisual Materials

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Alaska & Polar Regions Collections

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University of Alaska Fairbanks

Alaska State Historic Records Advisory Board

June 14, 2011

Basics

- - Know what you have
- - Create documentation
- - Store appropriately
- - Extend original or reformat
- - Apply curatorial appraisal
- - Media and playback
- - Permissions and broadcast
- - Know it will all change





Analog / digital / magnetic

Analog film

A plastic sheet with a photosensitive emulsion that comes in various formats for still and video cameras. When exposed to light, plastic-based film creates an "analog" of the actual scene. Film was never called analog until digital cameras came on the scene.

Analog film has a greater resolution than most digital camera images. For example, a 35mm analog frame may resolve up to 6,000 lines. Although digital IMAX theater cameras reach 7,000 lines, consumer HD camcorders record only 1080 lines. The granularity of analog film is based on the emulsion molecule size. The granularity of digital images is based on the number of horizontal and vertical pixels in the sensor.

As a technology, analog is the process of taking an audio or video signal (in most cases, the human voice) and translating it into electronic pulses. Digital on the other hand is breaking the signal into a binary format where the audio or video data is represented by a series of "1"s and "0"s.



Analog / digital (2)

Analog- continuous wave (photography is a continuous tone process)

Digital- bits of data non continuous (in images we call this pixilated)

Digital recording: A recording in which binary numbers represent quantized versions of the voltage signals from the recording microphone or the video camera. On playback, the numbers are read and processed by a digital-to-analog converter to produce an analog output signal.

Analog recording: A recording in which continuous magnetic signals are written to the tape, representing the voltage signals coming from the recording microphone or the video camera.

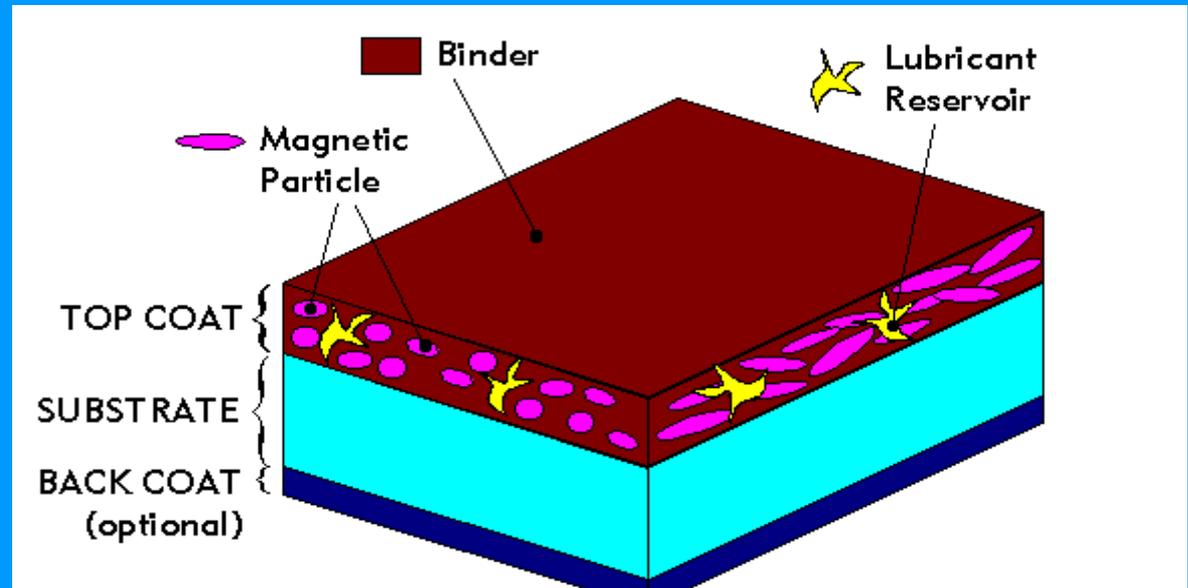
Visual clues to identification

- Cassette
- Open reel
- Cartridge
- Disc
- Wire
- Cylinder



Anatomy of media

- Content
- Media
- Format
- Base
- Emulsion
- Binder



Layers on magnetic tape

Image: Dr. John W.C. Van Bogart, Magnetic Tape Storage and Handling: A Guide for Libraries and Archives, National Media Laboratory, June 1995, available at http://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub54/2what_wrong.html

Deterioration of media collections

Images: Slideshow of Deteriorating Media at the University of Indiana Bloomington at http://research.indiana.edu/resources/media_preservation/slideshow/index.html



Lacquer disc delamination

Hi8 videotape playback

16mm film with vinegar
syndrome

Chamber of Horrors: Obsolete and Endangered Media

Tapes

Tape Media

Click for a larger view:



Cassette tape

Storage capacity: 20-30 minute tapes, ~300-440 KB

Approximate dates in use: 1975-1978

Comments: Most early personal computers such as the Altair, Commodore PET, TRS-80, and the [Apple I](#) came with an optional [cassette](#) tape drive. The Apple's cassette interface was initially included to allow BASIC to load faster, preventing the user from having to type for 30 minutes. Cassette storage became obsolete as inexpensive 5.25" floppy drives entered the PC market with the introduction of the Apple II in 1978. [Here is a brief tutorial](#) on migrating old cassette data.



9-Track Reel

Storage capacity: Recording densities of 800bpi, 1600bpi, and 3200bpi have been used in the past, with 6250bpi as the most common.

Approximate dates in use: 1964-present

Comments: Tape is 1/2" wide. In September 2003, Qualstar, the last remaining U.S. manufacturer of 9-track tape technology, announced that it would **no longer make** 9-track drives. Many institutions still have large repositories on [9-Track tape](#) that are in need of migration.



IBM 3480

Storage capacity: 200MB

Approximate dates in use: 1984-1994

Comments: 1/2" tape encased in a 4"x4" cartridge.

[Read more](#) about the IBM 3480 tape unit.



QIC DC600

Storage capacity: 60MB-10GB

Approximate dates in use: 1972-1995

Comments: 5 7/8" X 3 7/8." QIC tapes, popular in the eighties and early nineties, went through numerous variations in tape length and capacity. They were available in the standard sizes, DC600 and DC2000, and were later replaced by QIC-Wide and Travan (see below). [More on the QIC](#) (Quarter Inch Cartridge).



G2000 Tape

Storage capacity: 40MB

Approximate dates in use: 1990-1995

Comments: 3 1/8" X 3 7/8." G2000 (DC2000 compatible) QIC-40.



Travan

Storage capacity: 400MB-40GB

Approximate dates in use: 1995-present

Comments: 750 feet of tape, 0.315 inch tape width. Travan drives can also read QIC and QIC-Wide media.



8mmD-eight

Storage capacity: 2.5-5GB

Approximate dates in use: 1990-present

Comments: Sony 8mm data cartridge QG-112MB Still in use. Computer Grade, 112M/367Ft (2.5GB Native). When used in Hi8 video cameras, tape will provide a two hour recording, and in Digital8 cameras the tape will provide a one hour recording. For computer data storage, the tape holds from 2.5GB to 5GB depending on the system.



DG90M Tape

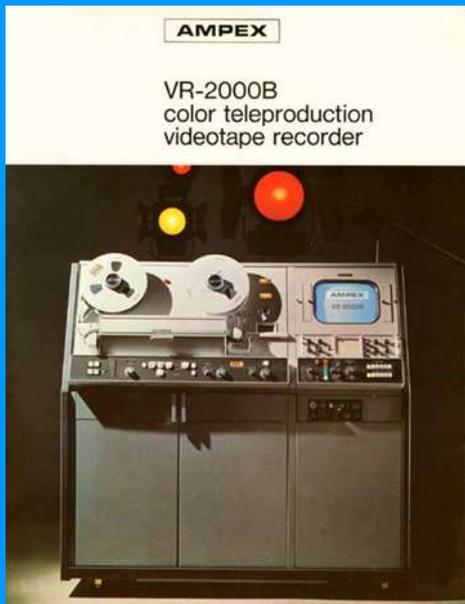
Storage capacity: 2.0 GB

Approximate dates in use: 1993-present

Comments: 4mm x 90 Meter. Fujifilm DG-90M DDS tape cartridge

Playback

- ❑ Maintaining equipment
- ❑ Maintaining skills to operate equipment without endangering originals
- ❑ Lack of industry support



for the Preservation

um/

Quad machine image: The Quad Videotape Group
<http://www.quadvideotapegroup.com/Group%20History.htm>



Survey Tools

Gather information in order to gauge scope, content, and value across collections

- May use sample or exhaustive review
 - Format /media
 - Duration
 - Content: who, what, when, where
 - Condition
 - Playback
 - Treatments (cleaning, respooling, repairs)
-

Sound Directions

Digital Preservation and Access for Global Audio Heritage

HOME PUBLICATIONS HARVARD TOOLKIT FACET PROPOSALS/PRESENTATIONS PEOPLE

FACET

The Field Audio Collection Evaluation Tool (FACET) is a point-based, open-source software tool that ranks audio field collections based on preservation condition, including the level of deterioration they exhibit and the degree of risk they carry. It assesses the characteristics, preservation problems, and modes of deterioration associated with the following formats: open reel tape (polyester, acetate, paper and PVC bases), analog audio cassettes, DAT (Digital Audio Tape), lacquer discs, aluminum discs, and wire recordings. This tool helps collection managers construct a prioritized list of audio collections by condition and risk, enabling informed selection for preservation. Using FACET provides strong justification for preservation dollars.

The FACET package consists of the following:

- FACET software
- FACET Procedures Manual. This is a guide to using the FACET software and an exploration of the selection for preservation process
- FACET formats document entitled *Format Characteristics and Preservation Problems* with 92 pages and 47 photographs detailing characteristics of, and preservation problems with, the various audio formats treated by FACET
- Sample FACET worksheets. Paper worksheets for gathering data before using the software. These are particularly useful when examining collections in their storage location

[FACET download page](#)

Problems with FACET? Suggestions for future versions of FACET?

Email us at soundir@indiana.edu

Sound Directions Best Practices For Audio Preservation

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PRESERVATION AND DIGITAL CONVERSION DIVISION

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Audio/Video Survey

Survey Instrument for Audio and Moving Image Collections

In 2005, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation generously provided support to the Columbia University Libraries to develop and test a survey instrument to inventory and assess the physical condition and intellectual control of audio and moving image materials. The survey instrument and instruction manual are available here for free download.

- [Download the Audio/Moving Image Survey Instrument \(Microsoft Access\)](#)
- [Instruction Manual for the Audio/Moving Image Survey Instrument \(Microsoft Word\)](#)

Sent comments and questions to: preservation@libraries.cul.columbia.edu

The survey instrument consists of a Microsoft Access relational database designed for use by librarians and archivists who are not experts in recording media. It is not necessary to be familiar with Access in order to use the instrument, nor is media playback equipment required.

Applicable either to an item-by-item inventory or a random-sample survey, the instrument allows for but does not require collection of a great deal of detail about each item. Most fields provide drop-down menus to minimize keying and to assure consistent use of vocabulary. Technical terminology is based on that used by the Audio Engineering Society, Association of Moving Image Archivists, and other relevant organizations.

The survey provides a mechanism for setting preservation priorities based on (1) quantities and types of audio and moving image materials, (2) the physical condition of the media and their housings based on visual inspection, (3) information about existing levels of intellectual control and intellectual property rights, and (4) the potential research value of each collection. A five-point scale is employed to rank items from high to low in each area.

Survey-wide reports and collection-specific reports can be generated, as well as

Preservation and Digital Conversion Division

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(212) 854-9825

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DISASTER RESPONSE
(In case of a disaster involving library materials, click here).

[Disaster Manual](#)



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BobCat Standard

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NYU Medical/Dental

Other Catalogs

NYU ViPIRS

//Visual & Playback Inspection Ratings System\\

In 2006, the Barbara Goldsmith Preservation and Conservation Department embarked upon a three-year project funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to 1) develop a rationale for and strategic approach to operational library preservation services for moving image and audio materials and 2) devise methodologies for assessing the condition of archival magnetic media based on visual and playback inspection in order to prioritize the relative need and appropriate pathways toward preservation. Results from this methodology aim to determine whether visual inspection alone is adequate to collect accurate data for video and audio, or whether playback inspection is necessary for informed preservation decision-making. In this latter project, we also are exploring the use of random sampling as a methodology for assessing archival audio/visual materials. A final goal of the latter project is to create a freely accessible database for the moving image and sound preservation community that will be structured to serve as a comprehensive archival audio/visual inventory, assessment, and preservation prioritization tool.

NYU ViPIRS is the Microsoft Access database tool designed to assist in the survey and preservation planning of audiovisual collections as part of Developing Principles and Methodologies for Moving Image and Audio Preservation in Research Libraries. ViPIRS is designed with a wide range of users in mind: from audiovisual novices to experts; from small institutions to large.

ViPIRS has been developed for magnetic media, which includes modules for videotape, audiocassettes, and 1/4" reel-to-reel. Each module posits a series of inspection points based on ISO 18933-2006 and AES 49-2005 handling and inspection standards. Each inspection point is numerically weighted in regards to its potential relation to or effect on the condition of the item, the item's ability to be played back, and the ease or difficulty of conserving/preserving/reformatting the item. The accumulated score at the end of the inspection generates a numerical rating that informs the user on what steps need next be taken in the preservation process.

A secondary component to the tool is a playback inspection. If through visual inspection the item is rated safe enough to run through a deck, a playback sample (one minute at the beginning of content and one minute in the middle of content)

MARC 583 \$2 Preservation and Digitization Actions**PART 3****Data Dictionary of Preservation and Digitization
Actions Terminology**

Term	Definition	Usage
acquired surrogate	Acquisition of another copy through external sources in the same format or another format. Generally this occurs when the original copy is too brittle or damaged to reformat and a copy is available commercially. The replacement copy often provides access to the content of the original without regard to the original collation or other visual qualities. It is not always possible to control the quality of the surrogate. <i>Examples: reprint; microfilm use copy; replacement copy obtained through antiquarian market</i>	\$a
box	Custom-fitted board stock enclosure, preservation quality materials & construction, often used for rare book collections. May be cloth-covered. <i>Examples: clamshell box phase box</i>	\$i, when \$a=housed

Is the media the message?

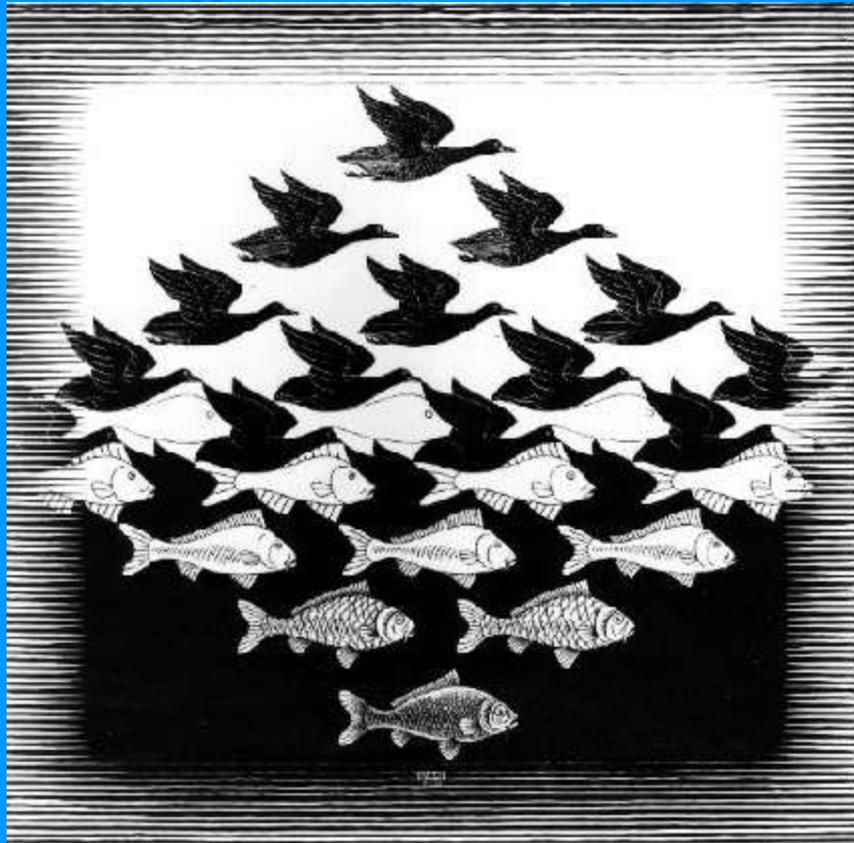
- ❑ preserve film
because the
content is visible
and the playbook mode has a
particular “feel”
- ❑ preserve magnetic tape? the media
has less inherent value
- ❑ migration captures content and
makes it accessible
- ❑ or keep magnetic media “just in
—case” a more faithful transfer—
becomes available in the future



Marshall McLuhan

Image: McLuhan Global Research Network
at <http://www.mcluhan.org/>

Migration and reformatting



M. C. Escher

- ❑ Best equipment, capture, and media you can afford
- ❑ Choose common, not exotic format
- ❑ Better to save 90% at adequate standards than 10% at highest
- ❑ Make conscious decisions about file formats, file naming conventions



Obsolescence or extinction?

- ❑ Libraries do not drive this—industry does
- ❑ An obsolescent format is no longer being produce, but playback equipment, though rare, is still available
- ❑ An extinct format is one where neither the media or playback equipment not are available except to specialists
- ❑ “most [media] require sophisticated, *purpose designed* machines ... to access information on the original carrier”
- ❑ Bipartite: equipment and carrier

Sony Betacam SP

- ❑ Preservation video format throughout the 1990s
- ❑ Sony discontinued in 2001
- ❑ Now a whole generation of obsolete formats that need to be migrated
- ❑ Will it ever end?



Storage

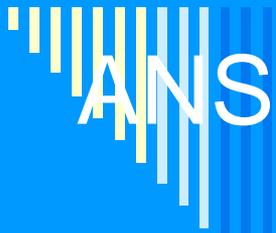
- ❑ Inert enclosures
- ❑ Non-reactive surfaces
- ❑ Store film flat, tape vertically
- ❑ Nitrate film in fireproof cabinets
- ❑ Separate master copies to off-site storage
- ❑ Cold storage
- ❑ Secure server with backup for digital files





Store separately

- ❑ Nitrate in fireproof cabinets
 - ❑ Vinegary acetate, moldy film, separate from uncontaminated film
 - ❑ Polyester film separate: chemically more stable but still prone to mechanical shrinkage
 - ❑ Use inert materials
 - ❑ Optimum storage is more cost effective than selected duplication
-



ANSI/ISO standards for film and tape

B&W silver gelatin film

Max 70F / 20-30% RH

Color film

36F / 20-30% RH

27F / 20-40% RH

14F / 20-50% RH

“the storage of videotape is complicated by the continuing debate about whether to save the artifact as long as possible or only long enough so that it can be migrated to another format to ward off obsolescence”*

68F / 20-30% RH

59F / 20-40% RH

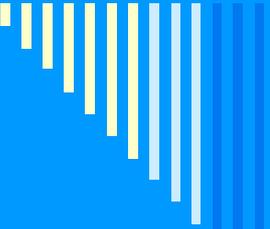
50F / 20-50% RH

*Obsolescence because of playback dependency

Monitoring

- ❑ Molecular sieves absorb moisture and off-gassing in sealed film containers
- ❑ A-D (Acid detection) strips monitor acidic vapor (“vinegar syndrome”)
- ❑ Prioritize needs for cold storage that will slow deterioration, or migration to new format





Curatorial issues: selection

“The decision to destroy material is irrevocable; the temptation to save all documentation is untenable” (NARA)

- Does the content have value or significance?
 - Is it unique: are there other copies in other collections?
 - Legal responsibility?
 - Is it within your mission & scope?
 - Do you hold the rights to give access, broadcast, or reproduce?
 - Is it culturally sensitive?
 - Condition: near loss? Obsolescence?
 - Do you have funding to preserve it?
 - Articulate a defensible policy that fits your institution
-

Rights Administration

sample from the Library of Congress

RELEASE FORM

I, _____, am a participant in the _____ project, (hereinafter "project"). I understand that the purpose of the project is to collect audio- and video-tapes and selected related documentary materials (such as photographs and manuscripts) that may be deposited in the permanent collections of _____. The deposited documentary materials may be used for scholarly, educational, and other purposes. I understand that the _____ plans to retain the product of my participation as part of its permanent collection and that the materials may be used for exhibition, publication, presentation on the World Wide Web and successor technologies, and for promotion of the institution and its activities in any medium.

I hereby grant to _____ ownership of the physical property delivered to the institution and the right to use the property that is the product of my participation (for example, my interview, performance, photographs, and written materials) as stated above. By giving permission, I understand that I do not give up any copyright or performance rights that I may hold.

I also grant to _____ my absolute and irrevocable consent for any photograph(s) provided by me or taken of me in the course of my participation in the project to be used, published, and copied by _____ and its assignees in any medium.

I agree that _____ may use my name, video or photographic image or likeness, statements, performance, and voice reproduction, or other sound effects without further approval on my part.

ACCEPTED AND AGREED

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed name _____

Address _____

Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____ - _____

Fax (_____) _____ - _____

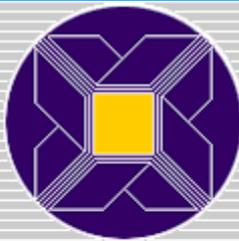
Email _____

Resources

- ❑ Professional archival organizations
- ❑ Local enthusiasts
- ❑ Successful projects at other institutions
- ❑ Outreach events



Visit the Chicago Film Archives for more information on "Home Movie Day" at <http://www.chicagofilmarchives.org>



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July 24-26, 2003

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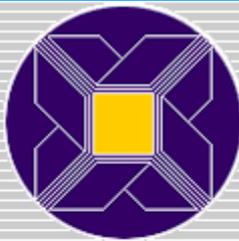
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Ellen Cunningham-Kruppa, Mark Roosa

Welcome

Dean Andrew Dillon (School of Information, UT Austin)

- [A Sound Education: Audio and the Next Great Leap in](#)



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IPI NEWS

Sustainable Preservation Pract

The Image Permanence Institute at Rochester Institute of Technology has received an Education & Training grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to provide a series of no-cost regional workshops and webinars for collections care and facilities staff in cultural institutions. Workshops will be presented in five locations between September 2010 and April 2011 by two nationally known experts in energy management—James Reilly, Director of Wheeler & Associates. Nine follow-up webinars on the application of sustainable preservation practices are designed to enable cultural institutions to avoid risks to collections while they support sustainability efforts and pursue opportunities for energy cost reduction.

Visit: www.ipisustainability.org to sign up or to learn more about the series.



Poster is available for \$50 from IPI



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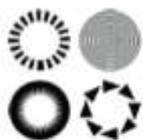
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AMIA the association of moving image archivists

Videotape Preservation Fact Sheets

Fact Sheet 1 — Magnetic Tape Preservation: An introduction

Since it was developed in the late 1930s, magnetic tape has served as a major means of recording, distributing and preserving information. It is an easy to use and versatile media for the storage of video, audio, computer and other data. Yet despite the substantial resources put into creating recordings and the historical, intellectual and financial assets they represent, tapes often are not perceived and treated as objects of value. Many important and unique recordings have been lost due to a lack of understanding and insufficient resources required to preserve magnetic tape.

Factors that contribute to and o
which can affect the physical int
recording media such as paper ;
readable and requires a machine
in order for the machine interpre
interface with the interpreting m

Though no test has been prover
expected. Therefore recorded ta



AMIA the association of moving image archivists

Fact Sheet 5 — Estimating Tape Life

Although there have been numerous studies about tape longevity and stability that have produced valuable information, such as the work conducted by the National Media Lab in the mid-1990s, an accelerated aging test that produces meaningful quantitative data about magnetic media longevity does not exist. Hence, no method is known which will indicate the life expectancy of various brands and formulations of magnetic tape. Some experts state that generally magnetic tape "lasts" anywhere from ten to sixty years. Taken alone, the polyester basefilm (also called substrate or carrier) of videotape is estimated to last hundreds of years when stored properly in archival environmental conditions. However other components of videotape, such as binder components, are far less stable and thus form the weak link in the chain. Furthermore, equipment and format obsolescence may pose a greater threat to the life of a tape than the media degradation factors.

The notion of "end-of-life" (EOL) for magnetic tape may be irrelevant. After all, some of the oldest magnetic tapes known to exist—German Magnetophon audiotapes recorded in 1943 currently held in a private collection—are in excellent playing condition.? Furthermore, how do you define EOL for tape when it can be treated by baking or drying and subsequently played over and over? Ampex engineers repeated this cycle with bad sticky-shed tapes many times over a three year period and the tapes were always playable.

Check dates!
Not all info on the
web is current!

The LIBRARY of CONGRESS PRESERVATION



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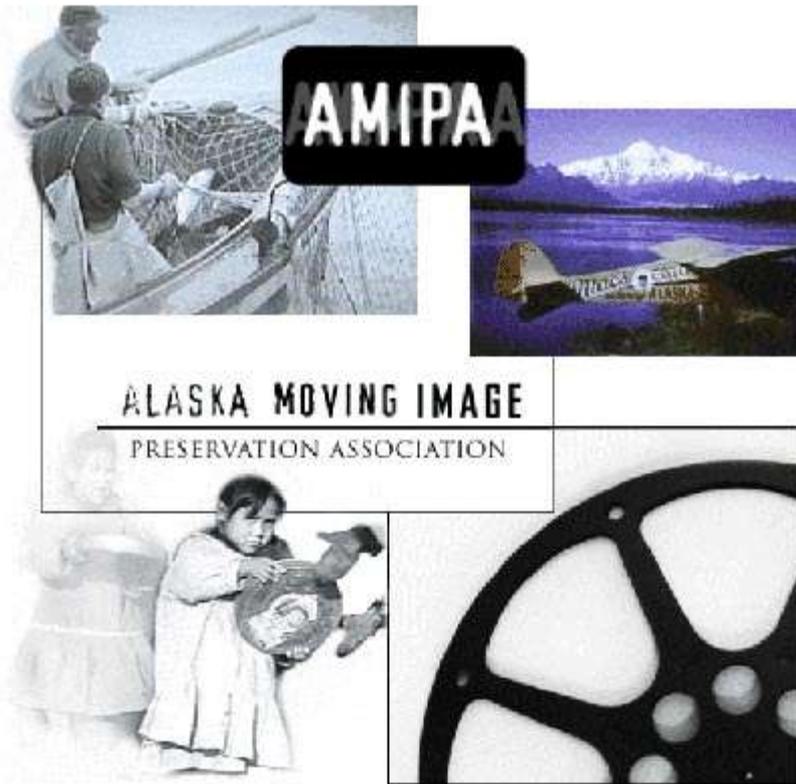
CARING FOR YOUR COLLECTIONS



Need advice on the care of books, photos, videos, and other media in your collections? These publications from the Preservation Directorate answer many questions about the care, handling and storage of your valuable collections.

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- ▶ [Care, Handling and Storage of Asian Bindings](#)
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AMIPAA

**ALASKA MOVING IMAGE
PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION**

Alaska has two film
preservation organizations

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



Alaska & Polar Regions Collections, Elmer E. Rasmuson
Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks



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