
Guide to the Southeast Asian Archive Vertical File Collection

Collection number: MS-SEA020

Special Collections and Archives

The UCI Libraries

University of California

Irvine, California

Processed by:

Julia Stringfellow

Date Completed:

2005

Encoded by:

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Southeast Asian Archive vertical file collection

Dates: 1975-ongoing

Collection number: MS-SEA020

Collection Size: Approximately 100 linear feet 96 digitized images

Repository: University of California, Irvine. Library. Special Collections and Archives.

Irvine, California 92623-9557

Abstract: The vertical file is an eclectic accumulation of thousands of miscellaneous items that document the life of Southeast Asian American communities. Here can be found information on a wide range of topics such as cultural events, pertinent issues of the day, organizations and businesses, student activities, local politics, health concerns, and family relations. Types of material include newspaper clippings, magazine and journal articles, unpublished student and conference papers, ephemeral items such as brochures, posters, flyers, event programs, and periodicals in English and Southeast Asian languages. California sources are best represented in the clippings file, but newspaper articles from other parts of the United States are included, as well as limited items from international papers.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: EnglishVietnameseLaoCentral KhmerHiri Motu

Selected digitized images from this collection.

Access

Collection open for research.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

Southeast Asian Archive vertical file collection. MS-SEA020. Southeast Asian Archive, The UC Irvine Libraries, Irvine, California.

Accruals

Acquisition of materials is ongoing.

Alternative Forms of Material Available

A selection of ninety-six images and texts from this collection has been digitized and is available in the Online Archive of California.

Processing Information

Processed by Julia Stringfellow, 2003-2005. Translation services provided by Quan Tran, Thu Huyen, and Dat Nguyen, 2003-2005. Processing was supported by a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant.

Organizational History

The Southeast Asian Archive of the University of California, Irvine Libraries was established in 1987 with the primary purpose of documenting the new Southeast Asian population in Orange County. After the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, California became home to over 400,000 refugees and immigrants from the former Indochina: Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. By the 1980s Orange County was the site of the largest Vietnamese population outside of Vietnam, as well as the residence of approximately 10,000 Hmong refugees from Laos. (Most of Orange County's Hmong population have since migrated to other parts of California and the U.S.)

The impetus for the formation of the Southeast Asian Archive did not come from the UCI Libraries, or as a response to the curriculum or to a faculty member's research. Instead the idea for an archive came from a member of the Vietnamese American community in Orange County, Dr. Pham Cao Duong, who first approached the Comparative Cultures Program at UCI concerning the need to document the growing Southeast Asian population in Orange County. As a result, the Southeast Asian Archive was established.

As there was no funding for the new collection, initial materials were acquired by donation. Response to articles in local newspapers, both English and Vietnamese, brought a variety of materials, including items which documented the donors' personal experiences as refugees and provided background information on the culture and history of their homelands. Other contributions came from people who had come in contact with the refugees through social services, church groups and the schools, and also American Vietnam War veterans.

As the Archive grew, it expanded to include the experiences of Southeast Asian refugees and immigrants all over the United States, including smaller ethnic groups such as the Cham, Khmu, Lu Mien and Lahu. However, the special focus on Orange County and California remains. It has become the mission of the Archive to preserve and document the social, cultural, religious, political, and economic life of Southeast Asian Americans, beginning with the exodus from Southeast Asia and continuing as their new communities develop in the future.

The Southeast Asian Archive's significance has been recognized by the receipt of prestigious grants from the California State Library in 2002 and the National Endowment for the Humanities in 2003.

1987	Southeast Asian Archive is established at the University of California, Irvine Libraries.
1993	Advisory Board created to enhance the Archive's outreach efforts and assist in obtaining materials.
1994	The Archive moves to its current location in Langson Library 360.
1997	Feature article on the Archive is published in the Los Angeles Times.
1998	"Documenting the Southeast Asian Refugee Experience" exhibit featuring materials from the Archive opens in the Muriel Ansley Reynolds Gallery at UCI Langson Library.
2001	The Archive joins the UCI Libraries Department of Special Collections.
2001	The Archive hosts a program featuring Dr. Franklin Odo, director of the Asian Pacific American Studies at the Smithsonian Institute.
2002	The Archive is awarded a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant from the California State Library.
2003	The Archive is awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.
2005	"A SEAA of Memories: Our Changing Southeast Asian American Communities" exhibit featuring materials from the Archive opens in the Muriel Ansley Reynolds Gallery at UCI Langson Library.

Collection Scope and Content Summary

The vertical file is an eclectic accumulation of thousands of miscellaneous items that document the life of Southeast Asian American communities. It includes information on a wide range of topics such as cultural events, pertinent issues of the day, organizations and businesses, student activities, local politics, health concerns, cultural events, and family relations.

Types of material include newspaper clippings, magazine and journal articles, unpublished student and conference papers, ephemeral items such as brochures, posters, flyers, event programs, and periodicals in English and Southeast Asian languages. California sources are best represented in the newspaper clippings. The clippings file also contains articles published from newspapers from other parts of the United States as well as a few items from international papers.

Topical strengths include California-based Southeast Asian American organizations and events, transnational connections of Southeast Asian Americans with their home countries, and student activities. An A to Z list of topics is available for patrons to search on a particular topic.

These materials have been collected by the Southeast Asian Archive since its creation in 1987. They come from a variety of sources: roughly half of the materials have been donated by individuals and organizations, while the other half has been gathered by Archive personnel at community events, academic conferences, and social services meetings. Some materials have been separated from archival collections. Materials are added on a regular basis.

Collection Arrangement

This collection is arranged in 2 series.

- Series 1. Topical files, 1975-ongoing.
- Series 2. Southeast Asian vernacular periodicals, 1975-ongoing.

Series 1 consists of clippings, ephemera, English language periodicals, articles, and conference papers. Topical terms are given to items that come from the Southeast Asian Thesaurus, an A to Z list that of terms that are Library of Congress of Subject headings, terms from the Asian American Thesaurus published by the University of California, Berkeley, and local terms. Folder headings are done in the following ways.

The folder heading for Newspaper Clippings has the following format: SEA Topical Term -- Clippings -- Date

The folder heading for Ephemera has the following format: SEA Topical Term -- Ephemera -- State of publication -- City of publication -- Organization. A spreadsheet for ephemera in the vertical file can be searched by SEA thesaurus term, by state and city of publication, and organization.

The folder heading for English language Periodicals has the following format: SEA Topical Term -- Periodicals -- State of publication -- City of publication -- Organization that published periodical -- Title of periodical. A spreadsheet for English language Periodicals in the vertical file can be searched by SEA thesaurus term, by state and city of publication, organization, and by title of periodical.

The folder heading for Conference Papers has the following format: SEA Topical Term -- Conference papers

The folder heading for Articles has the following format: SEA Topical Term -- Articles

For Series 2, the folder heading for Vernacular periodicals has the following format: Language of periodical -- Country or state -- City -- Publisher -- Title

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Cambodian Americans -- Archival resources

California -- Emigration and immigration

Hmong Americans -- Archival resources

Laotian Americans -- Archival resources

Political refugees -- Cambodia -- Archival resources

Political refugees -- Laos -- Archival resources

Political refugees -- Vietnam -- Archival resources

Refugees -- Asia, Southeastern -- Archival resources

Refugees -- California -- Archival resources

Refugees, Southeast Asian -- California -- Archival resources

Southeast Asian Americans -- California -- Archival resources

Vietnamese Americans -- California -- Orange County -- Archival resources

Vietnamese Americans -- Archival resources

Documents

Ephemera

Southeast Asian Archive