

“What’s in the Box:” Collection exploration for instruction

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Abstract: This lightning talk will focus on the collaborative efforts of University of Denver faculty and students with Special Collections and Archives faculty and staff in using Special Collections materials for primary source instruction and exhibitions. These partnerships have provided greater understanding of our collections and allowed us to expand instruction into more varied and diverse subjects.

In the last two academic years, Special Collections and Archives faculty and staff have worked to increase the use of collections through collaborative instruction sessions. Our most fruitful collaborations have resulted in multi-session courses that continue to bring a deeper understanding of our collections and the university’s history. We have used our collections to explore a variety of diverse subjects including: World War II and domestic policy, racial ideology in 1920s folk culture, the appropriation of Asian cultures in American modern dance, gender representation in popular media, and Colorado labor relations history. The research we’ve done for instruction and exhibit preparation has been used by faculty in academic scholarship and led to repeat instruction bookings each academic quarter. Many of these findings have helped us to guide faculty in framing their classes and provided a grounding, in a given subject, to the students’ real-world experiences at the University of Den

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