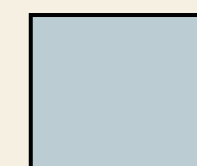
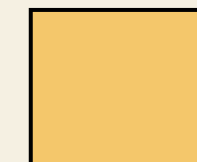




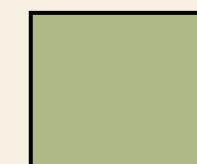
No Reading Room Required



**Teaching With
Local History**



**Collections Outside
of the Archives**



LOEX Fall Focus 2025



Cecelia Parks



Haley Gillilan

Undergraduate Student Success Librarians,
University of Virginia



Overview

- Collaboratively developed instruction sessions with local history primary sources for first-year general education courses
- Primary sources used were accessible in our regular collections:
 - Bound volumes of student newspapers
 - Government documents
 - Newspaper clippings
 - Books from the circulating collection
 - Magazines
 - Maps
 - Digitized primary sources from library databases

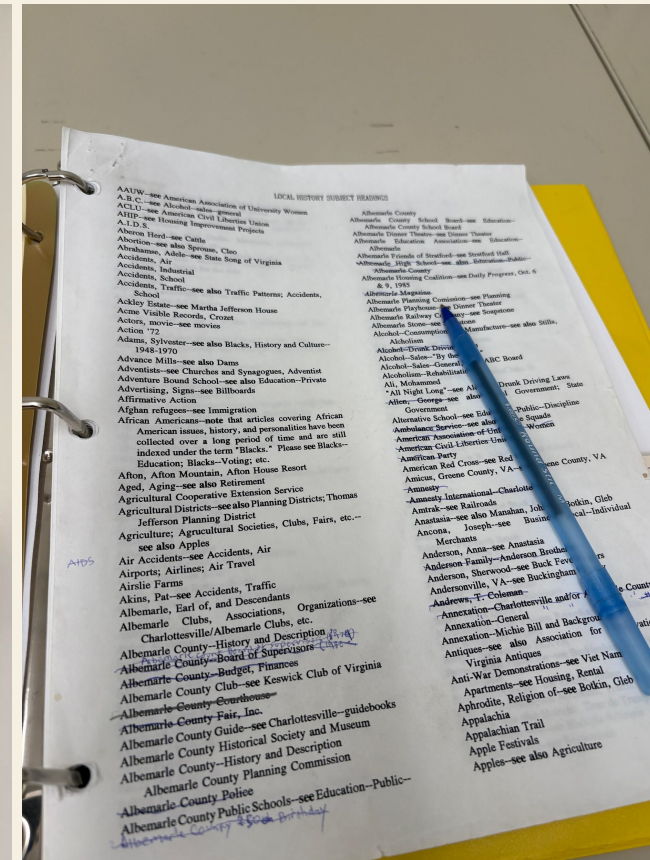
An abstract line drawing of a city map, featuring a dense network of black lines on a light beige background. The lines represent streets and building footprints, with some areas showing more complex grid patterns and others being more irregular.

What do you wish
students understood
better about
researching with
primary sources?



The Clippings Files

- large collection of local newspaper clippings and ephemera
- filed by topic, separated into "UVA history" and "local history"
- 1930s-1990s
- currently being indexed
- accessible to anyone



Renovations & New Projects

New attention paid to the clippings files, while other primary sources were more accessible at the end of a major renovation project.

Curriculum Changes

Our version of a first-year seminar was completely revamped, which led to a decline in research writing assignments and an increase in class sizes.

Special Collections Collaborations

Our Special Collections team experienced a huge influx of instruction requests and we needed another option that allowed students to engage with primary sources.



Why these materials, and why now?

Collaborative Development Process

- ***Instructor interest*** in doing something local and tactile with primary sources related to their course topics
- ***Librarian interest*** in using these materials and reaching these students with some kind of library instruction
- ***Reference support*** for accessing materials
- ***Preservation support*** for fragile/old materials

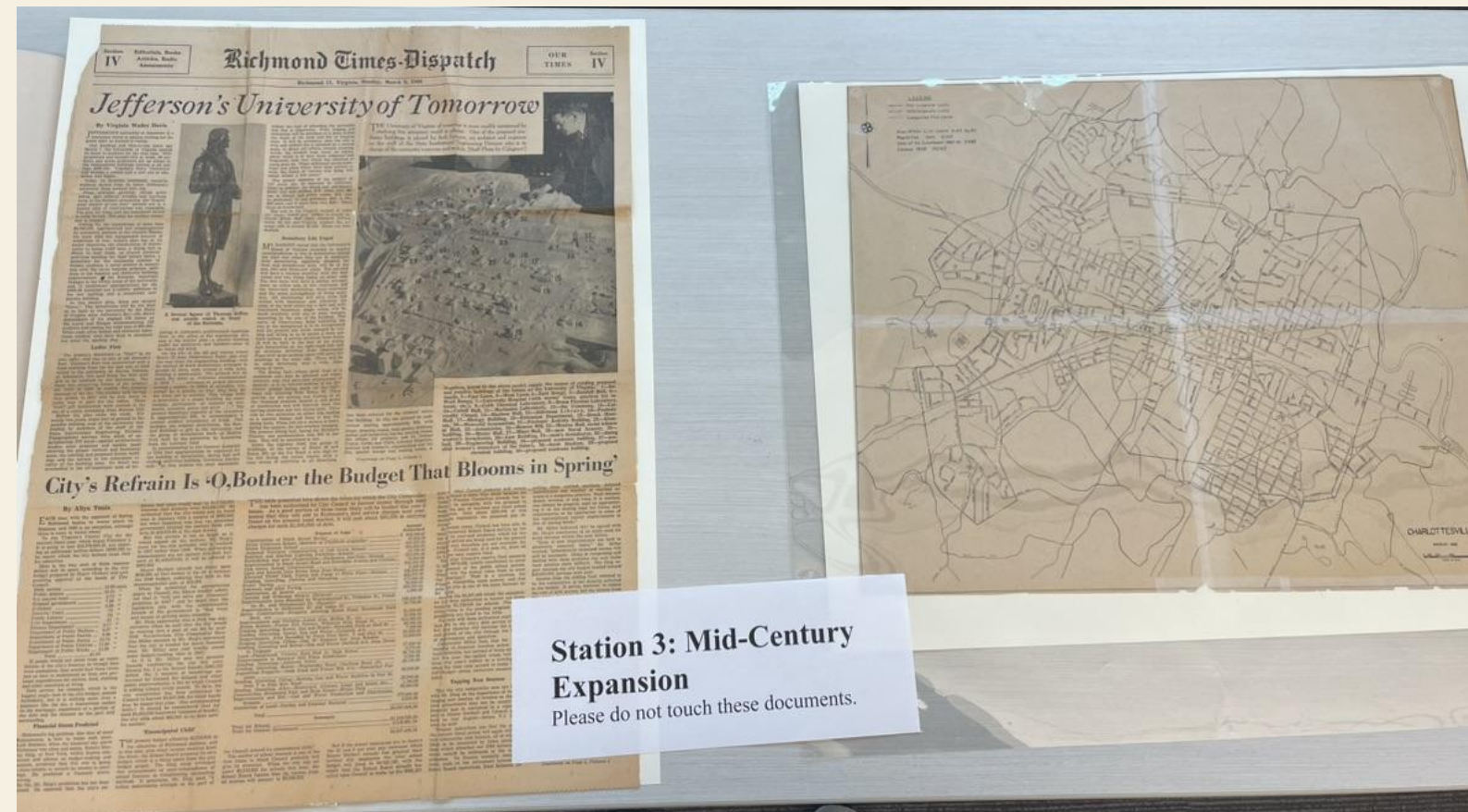


Examples of Classes

The Secret Life of Maps

Materials

- bound *Cavalier Dailys*
- maps from clippings files
- articles and other ephemera from clippings files
- map from library database (on iPad)
- digitized newspaper article (on iPad)
- digitized documents (on iPads)
- regional equity dashboard (on iPad)

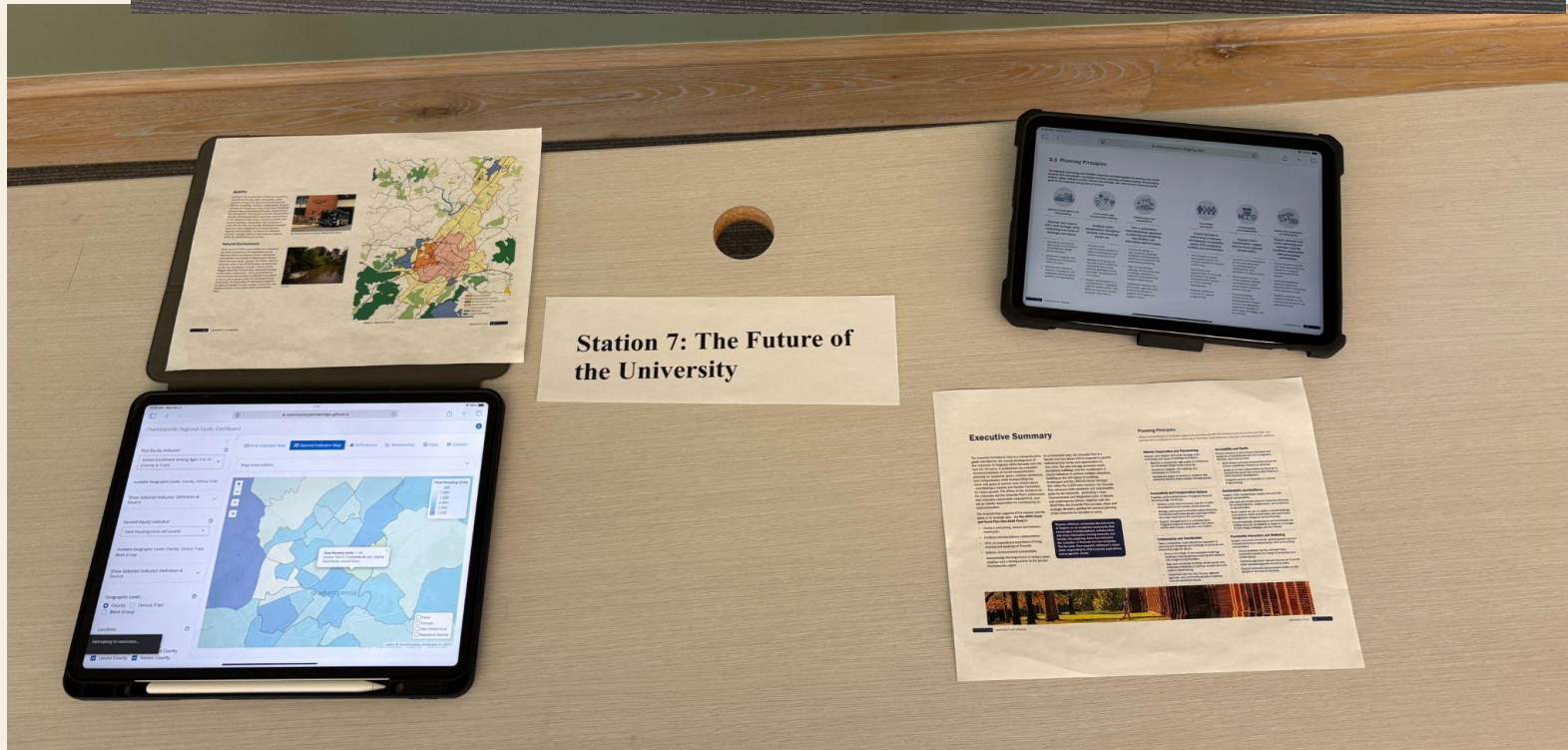
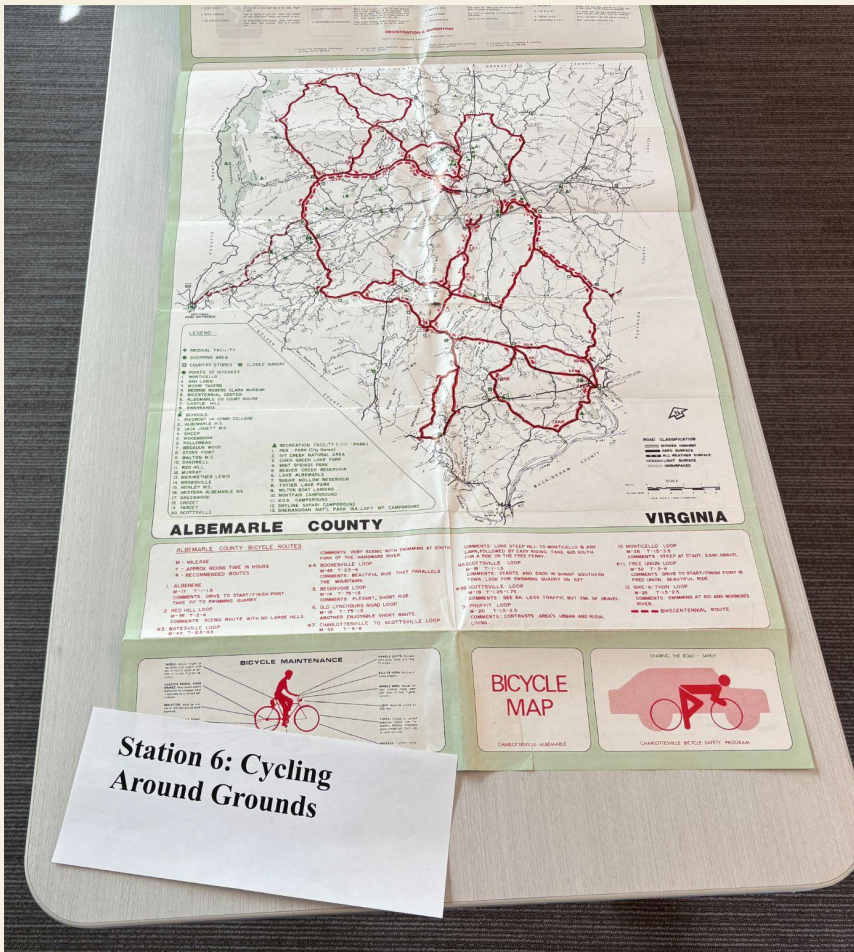
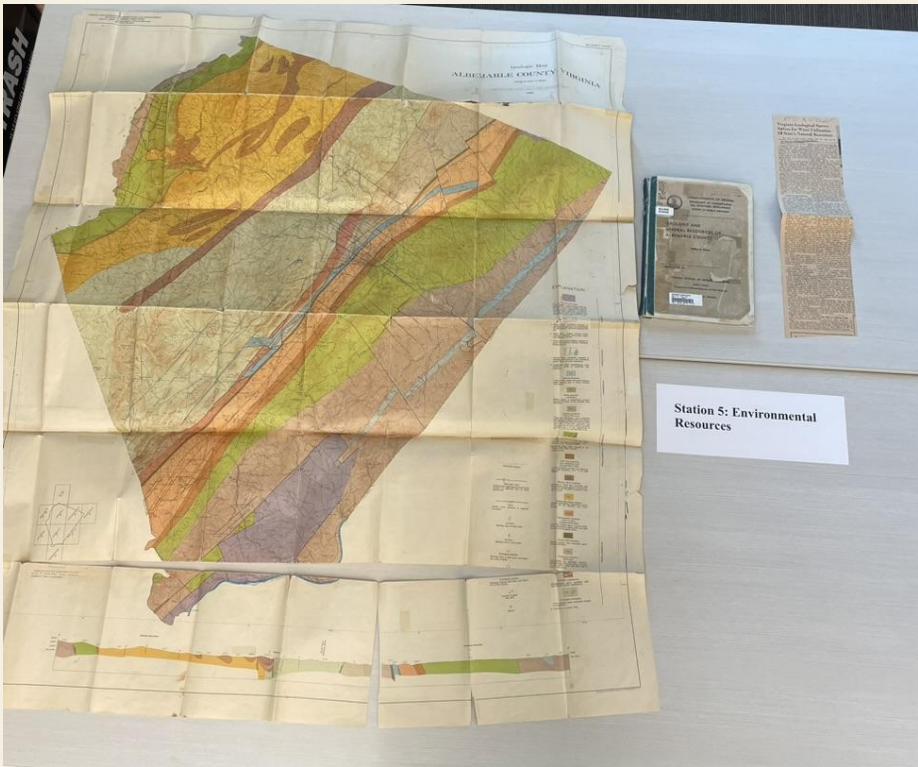
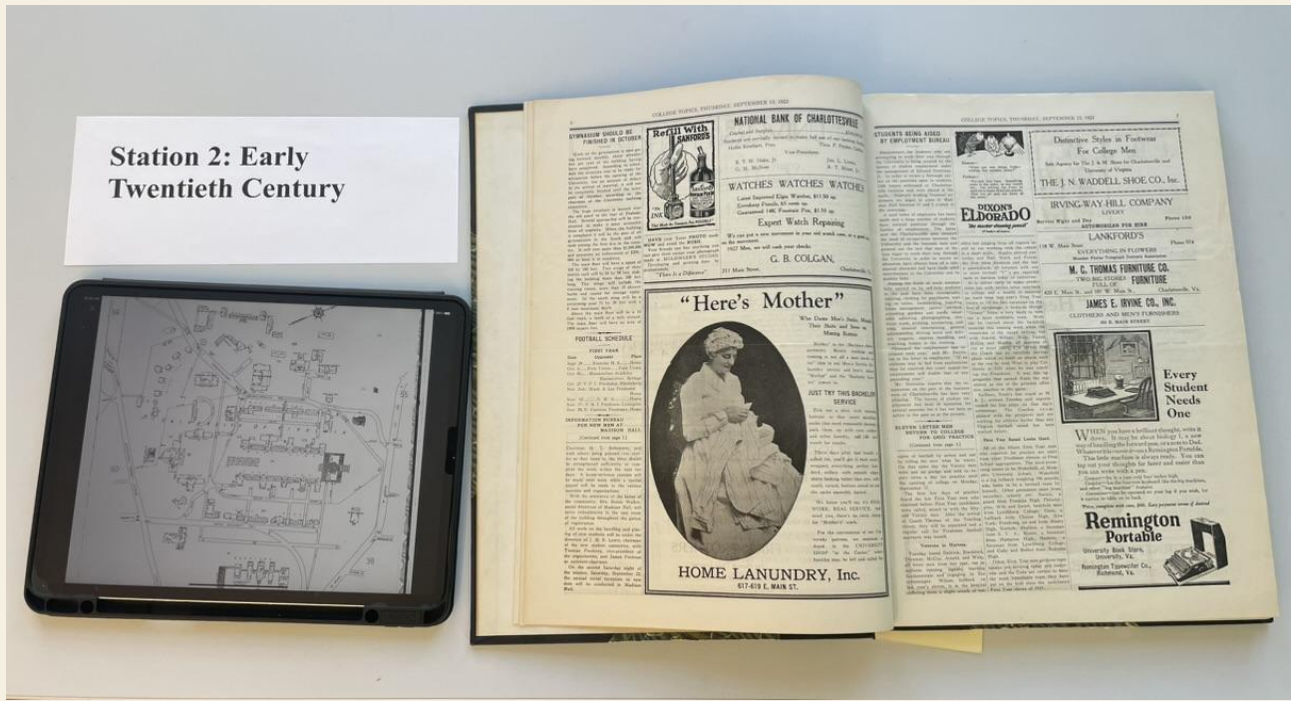
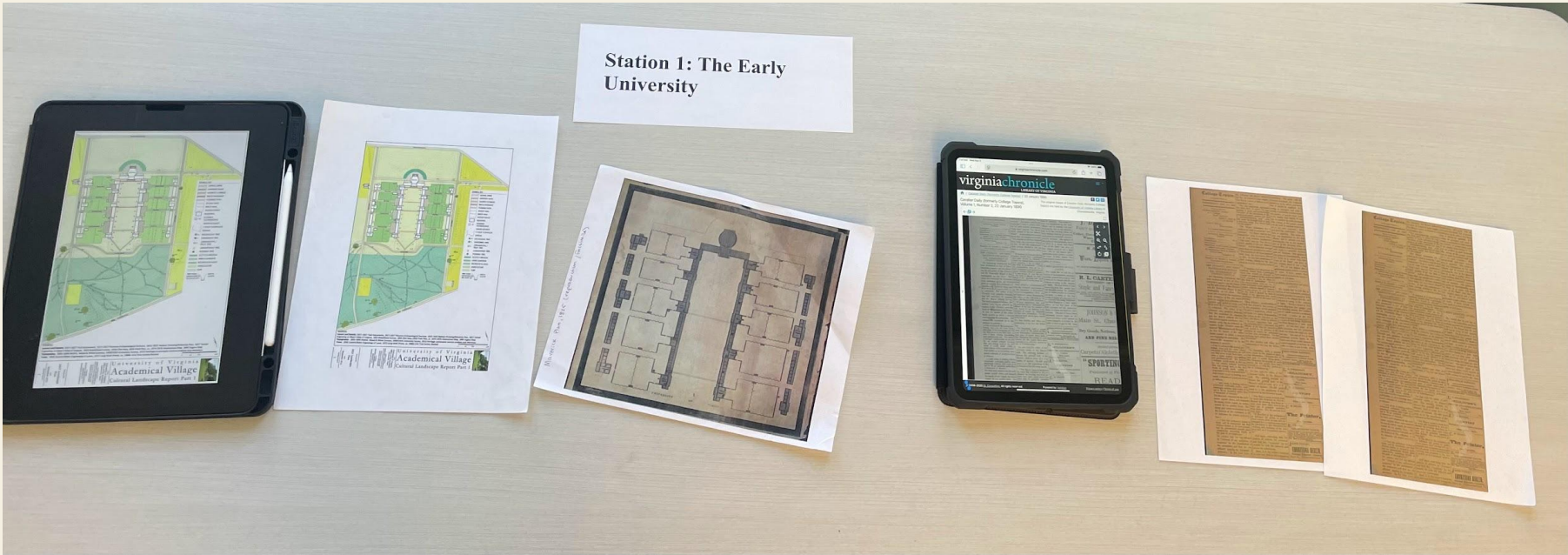


Basic lesson plan

- introduction to the UVA Library based on student questions
- students work through 7 stations, each with a map and an article, and answer worksheet questions
- discuss in small groups + report out
- final written reflection

Sample worksheet questions

- Does the map support the article's argument about the need for UVA to expand? Why or why not?
- What are some characteristics of neighborhoods close to the university today? How might those characteristics affect relationships between the university and Charlottesville now and in the future?

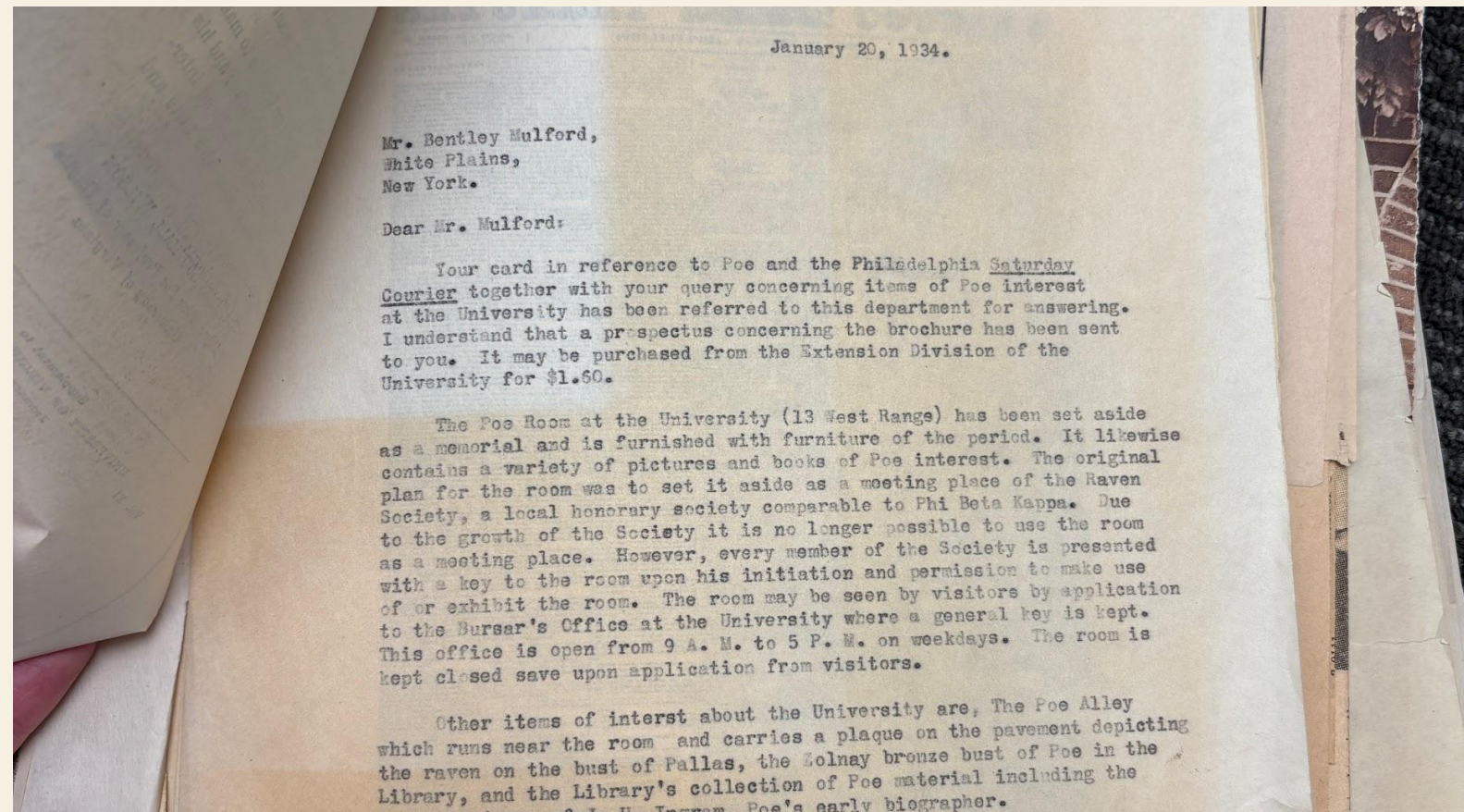


More Examples



Materials

- Indian film magazines
- published reports
- government documents
- books from our collections
- maps of the university
- papers and ephemera related to well-known university affiliates (Poe, Faulkner, Dove, etc)



Other classes

- The Slums
- Advanced Topics in Digital Writing and Rhetoric: Mapping
- Reading UVA
- Bollywood Pleasures
- The Politics of Absence: Memory in Ghost Towns and Ruins

Sample worksheet questions



- Based on your reading of these sources, what do you think these observers thought a house or neighborhood had to have (or be missing) to be classified as a slum?
- Look through one of the magazines on your table. Find something about the film or related to the issues raised by the film.
- Now that you've generated some sample keywords, find a resource in the clippings file that's related to your topic.

Responses



Instructors

- Appreciate hands-on activity, local focus, collaborative process, and materials tailored to specific course content and goals



Students

- Really engage with materials
- Ask thoughtful, complex questions
- Write about the session in course evals



Librarians

- Fun for us
- Highlight underutilized collections
- Different way to teach information literacy and critical thinking skills

Challenges



Preparation

These sessions take significantly more prep time than regular info lit sessions.



Representing diverse views

The easily accessible sources generally represent the dominant viewpoint on contentious issues.



Preservation

Many of these materials are fragile and do not hold up to lots of handling. They don't traditionally "circulate" and they sometimes get misplaced.

An abstract line drawing of a city map, featuring a dense network of black lines on a light beige background. The lines represent streets and boundaries, with some thicker lines indicating major roads or rivers. The drawing is partially cut off on the left and bottom edges.

**What kinds of primary
source materials do
you have available
outside of a special
collections unit?**



Questions?



Thank you!



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