Scope Note

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The Marjorie Grant Whiting papers present an interesting dilemma for the archivist(s) processing the materials. Her papers contain valuable information on several topics, collected into various formats. Moreover, she often gathered data on more than one of her research subjects simultaneously, sometimes even recording such data on the same item. Intellectually, her papers contain four general series of materials. The first series deals with Cycad research that Dr. Whiting conducted in various places throughout the tropics. The second series contains research materials on carcinogenicity, likewise conducted in various locations around the world. The third series documents her research materials on other pathologies beyond cycad poisoning and carcinogens. In this series are some materials on cardiovascular disease, including blood serum cholesterol, and Lathyrism/Odoratism among other diseases. The fourth series is correspondence, letters which do not fit neatly into any one of the above series. A researcher should refer to the appropriate series as well as to this fourth series. Research on nutrition also filled an important part of Dr. Whiting's work, but her research on nutrition seems to permeate all other series and therefore could not be separated into a series of its own.

It is difficult from a preservation point of view to house materials of varying formats together. As a result, archival staff has usually kept the writings Dr. Whiting recorded on 5 x 8" papers together in spite of the intellectual series arrangements above. The first two record center boxes as shipped contained materials written on 5 x 8" papers, supposedly falling into two parts: bibliographic references and research notes. Reality is that there is no complete separation of these two functions among the materials in these boxes. These notes have now been stored in six acid-free "shoe boxes" 5 x 8 x 12" in size. The inventories of the two groups offer some subject matter notes. Whiting's research notes, often taken in the field, sometimes reference more than one bibliographic source, and frequently have information useful for more than one of her research topics. After the box numbers were assigned to the remainder of the papers, it was noted that box seven also contains 5 x 8 papers. The contents of this box may also be reboxed into shoe boxes, probably three in number, and will be numbered 7a, 7b, 7c, as needed. A separate accession of Whiting research material was sent to the Archives from Lyon Arboretum where Dr. Whiting spent time writing and synthesizing her research. These materials now consist of boxes 20-23 of the Whiting papers.

Because the remaining boxes contain research materials overlapping the various series, one should carefully read through the inventory of the finding aid to exhaust completely the resources in the Whiting papers.

The date ranges of the research materials are heavily in the post-World War II era into the 1970s. Occasional information from WWII time and prewar time inform the notes, especially during Dr. Whiting's research in Guam. In addition there is some material from the early 1980s.