Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: The Bancroft Library
Title: Leslie Spier Papers
creator: Spier, Leslie, 1893-1961
Identifier/Call Number: BANC MSS 79/7 c
Physical Description: 3.3 linear feet, 6 boxes, 1 carton
Date (inclusive): 1924-1961
Abstract: Material documenting Spier's work as an anthropologist, primarily relating to American Indians. Includes correspondence on his research on Indian cradles; comparative notes on ethnography; field notebooks, mainly on the Plains and Klamath Indians; and material relating to Salish Indian weaving. Also includes research conducted for his book *Growth of Japanese Children Born in America and Japan* and course materials for a class he taught on California Basin Plateau Indians.

For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

Access
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Leslie Spier papers, BANC MSS 79/7 c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

Related Materials
Cylinder recordings of Modoc and Klamath songs and phonograph discs transcribed from the cylinders have been transferred to the Department of Anthropology.

Material relating to Spier's work on the Southwest was donated by his son to the University of Arizona at Flagstaff.

Spier's extensive collection of books was donated to the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Immediate Source of Acquisition
The Leslie Spier papers were given to The Bancroft Library by Professor Robert F. G. Spier on July 19, 1978.

Biographical Note
Leslie Spier, anthropologist, was born on December 13, 1893, in New York City where he grew up, graduating with an engineering degree from the College of the City of New York in 1915. After meeting Franz Boas, however, he went on to obtain a doctorate in anthropology from Columbia University in 1920. While still a graduate student he was named Assistant Anthropologist at the American Museum of Natural History, a position he retained until 1920, when he came to Berkeley as lecturer and acting curator at the Museum of Anthropology at the University of California.

Spier's first field trip, during his stay with the American Museum, took him to the Southwest, an area he was to explore in much greater depth during ensuing years. He also assisted in intensive field studies of the Plains Indian tribes, analyzing and summarizing the data of all the field workers.

Upon leaving California where he stayed only one year, Spier went on to the Universities of Washington, Oklahoma, and Chicago and then to Yale, resigning from Yale in 1939 to accept a professorship at the University of New Mexico. After his retirement in 1955 he returned to Berkeley in 1960 as a research associate. He died of a heart attack on December 3, 1961.

Spier wrote numerous carefully organized monographs, meticulously documented by extensive field trips. He also served as editor for many important anthropological publications.

Scope and Content
Material documenting Spier’s work as an anthropologist, primarily relating to American Indians. Includes correspondence on his research on Indian cradles; comparative notes on ethnography; field notebooks, mainly on the Plains and Klamath Indians; and material relating to Salish Indian weaving. Also includes research conducted for his book *Growth of Japanese Children Born in America and Japan* and course materials for a class he taught on California Basin Plateau Indians.

American Museum of Natural History (4 letters, 1961, by Harry L. Shapiro and Stanley A. Freed, re Indian cradles in the museum’s collection.)

Amoss, Harold Lindsay, 1918- (Letter, Sept. 6, 1947. See also his notes and a paper on Utes in Box 2.)

Brew, John Otis, 1906- (See: Harvard University, Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology)

Colorado. State Historical Society (Letter, July 18, 1961, by Orian L. Lewis re cradles in the Society’s collection.)

Davis, Mary Aileen (3 letters, 1924-1945. See also paper and notes by her relating to Indian weaving in Box 2.)

De Laguna, Frederica (Letter, [Nov. 1961])

Ellis, Florence May (Hawley) (Letter, Aug. 9, 1959 re cradles)

Freed, Stanley Arthur (See: American Museum of Natural History)

Harvard University. Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (3 letters, 1961 re cradles in the museum collection. One letter by John O. Brew.)

Idaho State College, Pocatello. Museum (Letter, July 14, 1961 re cradles in the museum’s collection.)

Indiana University (2 letters, 1956 re Spier’s collection of Klamath and Modoc music.)

Kelley, Vincent Cooper, 1904- (See: New Mexico University.)

La Barre, Weston, 1911- (Letter, July 7, 1936)


Nettl, Bruno, 1930- (6 letters, 1956 re his work with Spier on Klamath music. See also his paper on that subject in carton)

New Mexico University (Letter, Sept. 4, 1956, by Vincent C. Kelley.)

Shapiro, Harry Lionel, 1902- (See: American Museum of Natural History)

Speck, Frank Gouldsmith, 1881- (3 postcards, 1939 re cage traps.)

Stern, Theodore (Letter, Feb. 20, 1952 re Klamath Indians. Three articles by him on Klamath Indians also included.)

Thompson, Dorothy (Burr), 1900- (Letter, Dec. 7, 1961 re antique Greek cradles.)

Utah University. Dept. of Anthropology (2 letters, 1961, by Gordon L. Grosscup, re cradles in the collection.)

Vermeule, Cornelius Clarkson, 1925- (Postcard, [Nov. 15, 1961])

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Anthropology

Cradles

Ethnology

Indian textile fabrics—North America

Indians of North America

Indians of North America—Music

Weaving

Spier, Leslie, 1893-1961

Spier, Leslie, 1893-1961—Archives

**Correspondence**

**box 1**  

**Letters written by Spier 1924-1961**

Content/Description

Mainly carbon copies, relating to his work on the Klamath Indians and their music and to his research on cradles. (One folder)
box 1 Letters written to Spier
Content/Description
Contain descriptions of Indian cradles in various museums. Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent. A list of correspondents is appended at the end of the report.

box 1

Obituaries for Spier

Subject Files
Scope and Content
Primarily field notebooks and notes, all relating to American Indians.

carton 1 Comparative notes A-Z
Content/Description
These are arranged by subject, containing comparative data for various tribes. (6 folders)

carton 1 Cradles
Content/Description
Notes, text and illustrations. (6 folders)

carton 1 Kalispel 1923
Content/Description
Field notebook, 1923. Also includes notes for Wishram, 1924.

Klamath

carton 1 Field notebooks. 7 v. 1925-1926

carton 1 Field notebooks. 2 v. 1935
Content/Description
Some Modoc material in the first 1935 notebook

carton 1 Notes - miscellaneous

carton 1 Shamans

carton 1 Songs (Include paper by Bruno Nettl)

carton 1 Tales: abstracts, copies of tales collected by Alfred Samuel Gatschet, texts for tales collected in (5 folders) 1925, 1926, 1935 1925-1935,

carton 1 Nisqualli: Field notebooks 1922

carton 1 Paiutes: 2 printed works by Omer C. Stewart, annotated by Spier

Plains Indians

carton 1 Field notebooks on Parfleche decorative designs. 3 v. 1923

carton 1 Maps of the area inhabited by the Plains Indians. Mainly photocopies. Some annotated by Spier to show linguistic families, population distribution, etc.

box 2 Bibliographical material

box 2 Examination questions

box 2 Notes

box 2 Shoshoni
Content/Description
Printed work by Julian H. Steward, annotated by Spier

box 2 Utes
Content/Description
Paper and notes by Harold L. Amoss

box 2 Weaving: Notes

Weaving - Salish (2 folders)
box 2  Paper by M. A. Davis with annotations by Spier; notes by Miss Davis.
box 2  Miscellany
box 3-4  Comparative notes on tales
box 5-6  Growth of Japanese Children Research 1921-1923
Scope and Content

box 6  California Basin Plateau Indians- course illustrations