

Report on SCAR 1196-1198, Unknown Home Video 1&2
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A Note on the Archival/Material Condition Resources

Michael Fishbach

Each of the film strips were analyzed for signifiers that indicated the year of its production, type, and the archival condition. For these analyses, the *Film Preservation Handbook* proved to be the most useful resource. By referring to the edges of the film-strip, we were able to determine the year the film-strip was manufactured and whether this was initially a negative or positive.

To test for the year, we referred to a chart in Appendix A that indicated a set of symbols that corresponded to a given manufacturing year in twenty-year cycles for 16mm (and 35mm) film stocks which was the gauge of each of SCAR_1196, SCAR_1197, and SCAR_1198.

To determine the type of film that was used, the resource indicated that the color of the film-stock edges would indicate whether these were initially negatives or reversal, or positive, film-strips. Clear indicates that the film-strip is a negative and black indicates that it is a reversal film-strip.

The process of determining the archival condition of the film was enabled by a slow-motion setting for the digital media player for playing back each film. Each frame was analyzed for large and medium-sized aberrations seen on the film-stock.

SCAR-1196

Sydney Crabaugh

Although this home movie clip remains in a single room of a house, multiple objects are on display to help determine a rough date for the footage. Thanks to Michael's research on the film material used, we were able to begin with a general idea of the footage date. As previously mentioned, the Kodak film strip would have either been manufactured in 1940, 1960, or 1980. By examining items in the frame, it is apparent that 1960 is the only logical date. With this in mind, my time period hypothesis was narrowed down from the late 50s- early 60s to simply the early 60s. Due to the quality of the picture, not all items are immediately discernible, but upon closer inspection and fact checking through primary source material, I would venture to date this footage as being filmed around 1962-1963.

Objects:

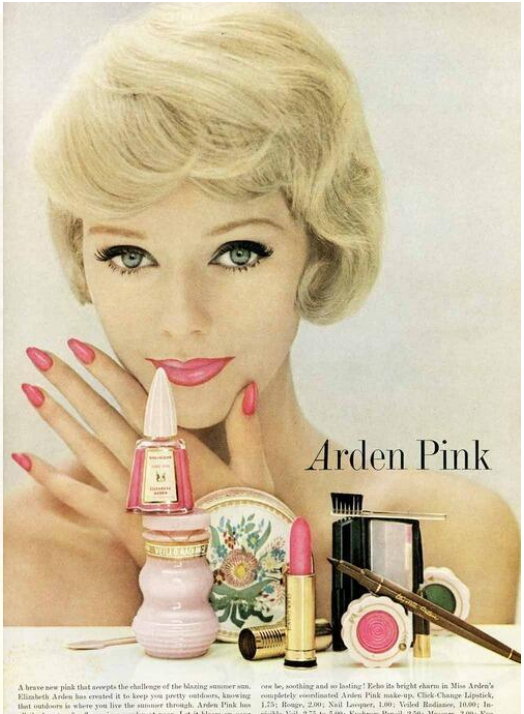
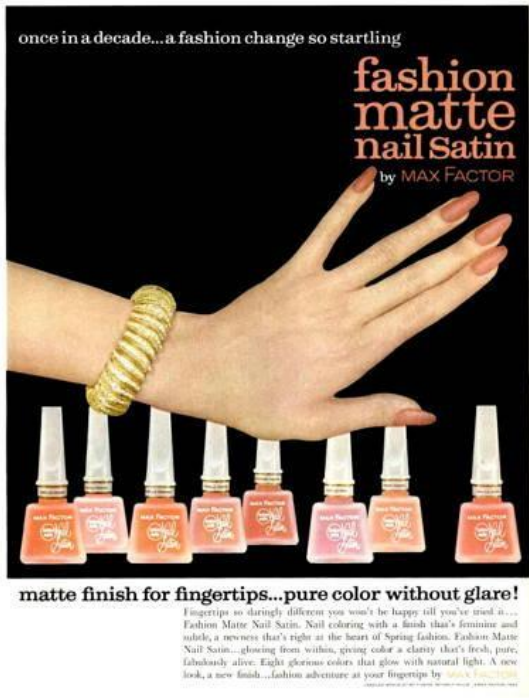
The beer can: Possibly the most helpful object was the Schlitz beer can sitting on top of the vanity (2:00-2:07). In the 1950s, this beer brand had a red rim around the top and bottom of the can. The earliest photo I found of the beer can in the style that's visible here is dated 1962. This style carried into the sixties for a couple more years.

ITEM NUMBER 1629
Old Schlitz Beer Tab Top Beer Can | US Beer Cans #119-25



The can shown here that was for sale online is dated 1962, visible in the far right photo. This style of can matches the one in the video (pictured right) perfectly.

Nail polish: Other items on the vanity help date the footage. In the center-right of the frame, there is an assortment of lipsticks, nail polish, and other cosmetic products. The nail polish bottles were easy to identify because of the shape of the top. In the 1950s, most nail polish caps had a particular shape, which is not represented here. Instead, the slightly pointed tops to some of the bottles lead me to believe that they are Max Factor nail polishes, which were produced in the early-to-mid 1960s. The Max Factor ad below is dated 1962. The shorter bottles are likely Elizabeth Arden polishes; the ad below (not dated, but presumably from the early/mid sixties due to the style of the model) displays the shape of these bottles.

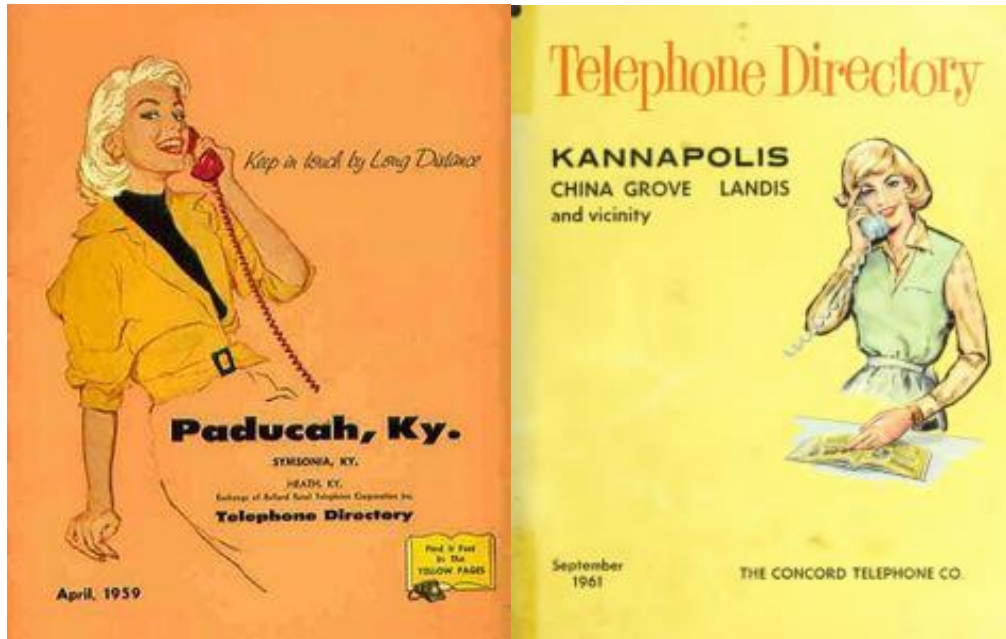


The shoe: There is a brief shot of a woman's shoe standing upright on the corner of a crib (1:47-1:53). The shoe appears to be somewhat elaborate, with a pointed toe and jewels arranged in a circular fashion around the front. Upon further inspection, I believe this shoe to be a woman's slipper. While the camera pans, the interior fabric of the shoe has a subtle shine, implying that it's some form of silk or satin, which would be far more likely in a house shoe than something worn out of the house. Women's slippers in the 1950s and 1960s were often adorned like this, tending to be much more fashionable than contemporary slippers. Although I could not find an advertisement for this exact slipper, I found multiple ads dating from 1958-1964 that depict similar women's slippers. The ad

pictured below is from 1959. It is important to note that while the film may be shot in approximately 1962, it does not mean that all the items pictured on screen will be *from* 1962. More likely, and as is visible here, items that aren't quickly disposable (such as cosmetic products and consumable goods) will typically be a few years old. Therefore, it is more sensible to look at advertisements dated a few years earlier in conjunction with ads around the time period in question.



The directory: There is a substantial sequence in the clip that focuses on a square object sitting in the center of the bed (0:46-1:27). Because of the size, I initially believed this to be a record, but after much scrutiny, the words on the left hand side seem to say “Telephone directory.” Above the words is an illustrated image of a blonde woman talking on the phone in the foreground, and a dark haired man smiling in the background. It is interesting to note the man and woman’s physical attributes, as they somewhat resemble Doris Day and Rock Hudson. Perhaps this is reading too deep into the image, but the Rock Hudson-Doris Day films would have been widely popular in the early sixties, thus making an allusion to the pair of them wouldn’t have been so far-fetched. In addition, this cover-style of telephone directories was common for the era, which is reinforced by these two examples below, dating 1959 and 1961, respectively.



Archival/Material Condition

Michael Fishbach

The analysis of the film-strip helped us to determine that this film was a 16mm black-and-white reversal safety film that was manufactured most likely in 1960. The year was determined by two squares that were on the edge of the film stock, which pointed to a 1940, 1960, or 1980 manufacturing year. Using information from Sydney, we were able to determine that the film was produced in the 1960s, which eliminated the possibility of 1940 and 1980 being the manufacturing year as the products seen in the films were more contemporaneous with the 1960s.

The side of the film-strip edge was black in color which indicated that this was reversal film with “safety film” also labeled on the edge. We also double-checked to

make sure that this was not Lenticular film masquerading as black-and-white film, which it wasn't, as Lenticular film is traditionally labeled as "Kodacolor" on the film edge.

In terms of condition, there appears to be a preponderance of light scratches, however they do not detract from the overall film.

At 0:04, there are large, white spots on the right edge of the film-strip that indicate several potential hazards include growth of mold or fungus or even potentially vinegar syndrome. This should be further assessed if the original film-stock including isolating this film from others to prevent this problem to affect neighboring films. A key point to make is that these symptoms indicate that this is an acetate-based film, which are much more susceptible to these types of degradation than polyester.

There is also a line that appears on the left side of the frame that appears throughout the film appearing initially at 0:09 and being more prominent starting at 0:20 until the end of the film. It is believed that this was a mechanical problem with the film camera and thus a non-reversible problem.

There also appears to be degradation of the film-stock due to a foreign substance of sticky nature. Between 2:10-2:13 there are spots that cover the frame that appear to have been an adhesive tape. Without having personally inspected it, it cannot be verified, but it is most probably tape residue that degraded these frames.

Lastly, there is an under-exposed frame at 2:02 prior to a cut to another location. This indicates that this camera was turned-off but continued to expose a tiny bit of light to raw film stock. This could be fixed, but would probably not be worth the money or time as it is an extremely minor problem.

An interesting discovery was that Southeastern Film Processing co. is written on the leader of the film, which gives us a possible location of where the film was developed and processed. Our searches on Google yielded no results, however this clue may be further explored with disciplined searching.

Overall, this film has maintained its integrity except for the potential foreign substance or degradation explained above.

Content-Activity:

Rui Zhang

Time:

The design of the Kleenex Tissues that appears at 02:03 matches both a print ad from 1953 and a television ad from 1965. Considering the film's manufacture date (1940, 1960, or 1980,) the image is more likely to have been filmed in the 1960s.

Location:

"Omera Nesses" is written on the film cans, since the identifier SCAR stands for SC regional films, the location is Neeses, Orangeburg County, South Carolina.

Content-People:

If Neeses as in “Omera Neeses” is the location, Omera is likely to be the name of the girl in the video.

SCAR-1197

Sydney Crabaugh

The SCAR-1197 video has been more challenging to glean any certain information from. There are few objects on screen to begin with- primarily foregrounded are the baby, the poodles, and the crib. The clear indicator of the time period comes from Michael’s identification of the manufacturing year either being 1945 or 1965, with our final conclusion being 1965. The film clip is was likely recorded sometime shortly after 1965, which is further emphasized by the two identified objects of the inflatable Santa toy, and the fish tank.

Objects:

Inflatable Santa: The inflatable Santa toy is pictured to the left of the screen on and off throughout the clip. These small toys were inexpensive, widely popular gifts in the mid 1960s and the 1970s. The inclusion of the toy in this film, along with the child’s wool, long sleeve outfit suggest that the footage may have been record sometime shortly after Christmas (there are no other decorations to be seen, so I don’t think this was shot beforehand).

Fish tank: From 2:05-2:42, there is a rectangular fish tank discernable in the background. While I didn’t find many noteworthy advertisements or other images that depicted 1960s fish tanks, I did find an interesting video from the Kinolibrary archive that follows a boy in the 1960s cleaning his fish tank and caring for his fish, linked here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-VTDr6pNpVE>

Archival/Material Condition:

Michael Fishbach

The analysis of the film-strip helped us to determine that this film was a 16mm color reversal safety film that was manufactured most likely in 1965.

The year was determined by a square and circle that were on the edge of the film stock, which pointed to a 1945 or 1965 manufacturing year. The largest indicator of these being the years is the labeling of this film as “Kodachrome” on the edge, which is a color film that was introduced to the public in 1935. This film is characterized with long-term stability in its vivid color landscape due to improvements in the emulsions introduced to the public in 1938. Using information from Sydney, we were able to determine that the film was produced in the late 1960s, which eliminated the possibility of 1945 from being the manufacturing year as the products seen in the films were more contemporaneous with the 1960s.

The side of the film-strip edge was black in color which indicated that this was reversal film and that it was further labeled as safety film as well.

In terms of condition, the stability of the color scheme shows that this film was stored in a healthy environment, however there are indications to the contrary found in several areas of the film-strip

At 0:06 and 0:07, there is what appears to be a foreign substance on the bottom-left sprocket hole and above the bottom-right sprocket hole which could be mold or fungus, or it could be a sign of vinegar syndrome degrading the emulsion. Without having inspected the film, it cannot be determined what the substance is, however, if it any of the three problems mentioned, this film needs to be segregated from other films and inspected for the best treatment--most likely lower temperature and less humidity in the storage area.

At 0:19, there appears to be a black spot in the center of the frame, which can be best assumed as a scratch in the emulsion. If it is a scratch, there is nothing that can be done from a conservation standpoint, however it may be fixed in a preservation setting if there are funds available to allocate it. Seeing as this does not affect the full integrity of the film, this would require no further action.

Overall, this film has maintained its integrity except for the potential foreign substance or potential degradation as explained above.

SCAR 1198

Group

Objects:

The objects and images were not investigated enough to identify them. Further study will be required.

Archival/Material Condition:

Michael Fishbach

The analysis of the film-strip helped us to determine that this film was a 16mm black-and-white reversal safety film that was manufactured most likely in 1958. The year was determined by a triangle on the edge of the film stock, which pointed to a 1938, 1958, or 1978 manufacturing year. Our guess of 1958 was determined by the manufacturing years of the previous two films, however there is a strong potential of this being incorrect as no objects depicted in the film-stip were used to determine a year. This point is very important as we understand the shakiness of the foundation of this assumption.

The side of the film-strip edge was black in color which indicated that this was reversal film. We also double-checked to make sure that this was not Lenticular film masquerading as black-and-white film, which it wasn't, as Lenticular film is traditionally labeled as "Kodacolor" on the film edge.

The condition of the film was determined to be mostly in good shape with a few interesting issues. From 0:00-0:06, there were phantom sprocket holes on the film-strip edge that made for an experimental film look (though non-purposeful). According to Hannah, 16mm film strips had raw stock on both sides of the film where the emulsion can be exposed. According to her sources, this usually can be found in the beginning, middle, or end of the films as those are the front and tail areas of the two sides of the film-strip.

Between that same time period, the images vacillate between under and over-exposed causing the images to be difficult to discern. We could not conclude the most likely issue or set of issues that may have caused this, but there are theories that the raw film-strip was not aligned correctly into the camera or there was a problem with the camera shutter. Both of these questions have not been answered, but it may be another reason that we have not explored.

On successive frames at 4:28, there are black spots on center of the frame and bottom, center-left of the frame. It appears that these are scratches in the emulsion, which cannot be conserved or repaired.

Overall, this film has maintained its integrity except for the non-critical issues stated above.

Content-Activity:

Rui Zhang

Since South Carolina “has no crude oil/natural gas reserves or production (Energy Information Administration),” and figuring also from the pipes attached to the machine, the people in the video could be drilling for water.

Unknown Home Movie 1

Group

Objects:

The objects and images were not investigated enough to identify them. Further study will be required.

Archival/Material Condition

Hannah Peck

This film, which appears to be a recording of some couple’s wedding, is an standard 8mm black and white reversal film based on the size of the image frame and

perforations. Due to the darkened area around the perforations, it is likely that this is a reversal film manufactured by Eastman Kodak company according to the triangle edge code as Kodak introduced the standard 8mm format to the market in 1932. It could've been manufactured in 1939, 1958, and 1977. It is known that Kodak discontinued selling standard 8mm films by the early 1990's, but they continued selling these to the independent film stores. There are also different keycodes found throughout the entire film roll: TA M (A: open triangle with a dot in the center) L F N O N Z T U R E P (triangle) 1A. As we weren't provided with the actual film, it is difficult to discern what these codes signify from our limited knowledge. At 00:07 signs of significant film gauge shrinkage and warping along the edges are found and we also identified softened emulsion lifting between the perforations. Multiple scratches on emulsion along the perforations, right side edge, and straight white scratch (emulsion) on the left edge were found throughout the roll.

In general, it could be determined that this film wasn't stored in proper condition as most images appear faded with granular quality and multiple scratches and residues are found on the film with general perforation wear. At 00:02, there are traces of film splicing as tape residues are found within perforation and the image frames are not aligned properly. From the beginning of this film roll, we could identify light leak and silhouettes of perforations printed in different areas, which are common mistakes found in amateur films. Standard 8mm films are actually 16mm film with twice the number of perforation before it is developed so after it is passes through the camera at first, only half of the film width is exposed that a filmmaker has to open the camera and flip the spools to expose the other side. "When you load it into the camera the first foot or so of the film is exposed to light and appears in the image as white or as a flare in. Since the sprocket holes are clear, the light passes through them and exposes the film on the layer below them on the spool. Sometimes the sprocket holes line up but usually not, so you see an impression of the sprocket hole where the light leaked through (Colloton 2016)." At 00:07 signs of significant film gauge shrinkage and warping along the edges are found and we also identified softened emulsion lifting between the perforations. Multiple scratches on emulsion along the perforations, right side edge, and straight white scratch (emulsion) on the left edge were found throughout the roll. There is a noticeable damage at 00:56, where large scratch on emulsion and another scratch on the base near the perforation appears along with signs of warping. We could suspect that this film roll was stored in high humidity condition with moisture in the air. After 04:00, the film footages are very dark and we could assume that it was either shot too dark or darkened as it aged.

Content-Activity

Rui Zhang

Time:

The year is 1964, as proven by the newspaper ad of Motorola Color/65 TV that appears at 14:07.

The specific date can be first narrowed down to September and October, since ads for this product appeared multiple times in LIFE magazine in these two months.

It is most likely September for the headline of the newspaper reads “US Jet Bombards (?) Jungles in South Viet Nam” while similar content is covered in a Sept. 13, 1964 The New York Times article “Closeup of the Vietcong in Their Jungle.”

Location:

The design of the license plate of the car that appears at 00:14 is matched by both South Carolina plates from 1955 and Ontario plates from 1964. Thus, even though the film is preserved in South Carolina, the possibility of Ontario, Canada as filming location cannot be easily ruled out.

Content-People:

The house is roomy though not luxurious. The light above the writing desk looks exotic and the mistress shows off her kimono embroidered with mixed Japanese and Chinese. Extensive party and travel scenes are filmed. The family is probably middle-class.

There seems not to be any equipment for children in the house. Unless future evidence proves that the book *The Elephant Boom* that appears at 05:39 is a children’s book, the family is possibly childless.

Unknown Home Movie 2

Group

Objects:

The objects and images were not investigated enough to identify them. Further study will be required.

Archival/Material Condition

Hannah Peck

This film is a 8mm KODACHROME II SAFETY FILM, which was introduced in 1961 with sharper images and faster ASA speed. The circle after S in the keycode indicates that this film was manufactured in Rochester, New York and the triangle and square code tells us the manufacturing year 1964. As one of our group members identified the evidences within the film, it is was recorded in 1965. The leader is spliced as we could examine the tape residues falling apart. It is also dark along the left edges, indicating that this is a reversal film. Different edge codes are found throughout the roll so we could suspect that some frames were spliced together later on. Similar to the black and white film above, some frames are very dark to the point that it is black and we also witnessed general perforation wear possibly occurred during projection, debris and scratches on the base and emulsion, color fading and some areas are magenta as cyan and

yellow faded. There are also traces of perforation repair (tape residue and debris) and light leak effect caused by light striking unexposed film along the edges and several other areas. Identical to the film above, most edges have burned in silhouettes of perforations along the left edge of the frame. As it was difficult for amateur filmmakers to flip the film spool in correct ways, many home movies are found with such traces of perforation burns and flares.

Assessing the current material condition, both films need remedial and preventive preservation treatment such as digitization by scanning the films. These films are simply depiction of people's everyday lives in early to mid 1900's, and they are also first-hand recordings of history and culture at the time. We often tend to remember and rely on the official records and history of renowned figures, but the everyday accounts of ordinary people may provide us with something completely unknown, something not recorded in the history. People may consider archiving and preserving these collection to be meaningless and wasteful, but home movies capture the rare and exclusive moments within different parts of the social structure, communities and regions as well. These collections should be preserved for us and the future generations to acquire wide array of knowledge of the past.

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