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# Guide to the Gerhardt Laves Papers 1916-1982



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## Table of Contents

Descriptive Summary	3
Information on Use	3
Access	3
Restrictions on Use	3
Citation	4
Biographical Note	4
Content Warning	5
Scope Note	5
Related Resources	7
Subject Headings	8
INVENTORY	8
Series I: Personal	8
Series II: Correspondence	9
Series III: Professional Life and Associations	9
Subseries 1: Materials related to Navajo Nation	9
Subseries 2: International Harvester Company	10
Subseries 3: Chicago Police Department	11
Subseries 4: Hyde Park and Kenwood Neighborhood Materials	12
Subseries 5: University of Chicago	12
Series IV: Publications by Others	13
Series V: Research on the Bardi Language	13
Series VI: Photographs	14
Series VII: Oversize	16

## Descriptive Summary

<b>Identifier</b>	ICU.SPCL.LAVESG
<b>Title</b>	Laves, Gerhardt. Papers
<b>Date</b>	1916-1982
<b>Size</b>	58.25 linear feet (14 boxes)
<b>Repository</b>	Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

**Abstract** Gerhardt Laves (b. July 15, 1906, d. March 14, 1993) was a linguist who conducted research on several Aboriginal languages in Australia, taught at Indian boarding schools in Navajo Nation, also known as Diné Bikéyah or Navajoland, and worked at various Chicago institutions. This collection contains materials from Laves' personal and professional life, including his linguistic notes on the Bardi language and photographs. Also included are language resources, publications, and maps from Laves' employment in Navajo Nation. The collection contains documents and photographs from Laves' work at the International Harvester Company and the Chicago Police Department, materials related to the Hyde Park and Kenwood neighborhoods, and documents related to Laves' involvement at the University of Chicago. Additionally, the collection includes Laves' photographs, film negatives, and glass slides documenting family and professional activities. Materials date between 1916 and 1982, with the bulk of materials dating between 1916 and 1949.

## Information on Use

### Access

This collection is open for research.

### Restrictions on Use

The note cards in Series V, Research on the Bardi Language, have suffered significant water damage and as a result are extremely fragile. Papers are brittle and should be handled with care.

Photographs in Series III, Subseries 3 related to the Chicago Police Department photographs are warped. The majority of the photographs and film negatives in Series VI, Photographs, are also warped.

## Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Laves, Gerhardt. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

## Biographical Note

Gerhardt Laves was born in Chicago on July 15, 1906. His father, Kurt Laves (1866-1944), a professor of mathematics and astronomy, was one of the University of Chicago's founding faculty members. His mother, Luise, née Moshagen (1872-1957), worked as a homemaker. Both Kurt and Luise Laves were born in Germany. Gerhardt Laves attended Ray Elementary School and the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools. He completed a bachelor's degree in history and anthropology in 1927 and a master's degree in anthropology in 1929, both at the University of Chicago.

Laves pursued further graduate education at the University of Chicago, where he worked with linguist Edward Sapir. From 1929-1931, he conducted linguistic research in northern and western Australian Aboriginal communities. In total, Laves studied six languages: Gumbaynggir (also Kumbainggar or Gumbangeri); Karajarri; Bardi; Koreng (or Goreng); Matngele (or Madngele); and Ngan'gimmerri (also Nangiomeri or Nanggumiri).

Following his fieldwork, Laves married Maxine Laves, née Lichtenstein (1910-1999), in 1932. They had four children: Jean Hellie (Laves), Barbara Beasley (Laves), Elizabeth Marcuson (Laves), and Edward "Ted" Laves. In 1933, Laves moved to New Haven to continue his doctoral studies in linguistics at Yale University, but never completed a PhD.

The family spent 1935 to 1939 in Navajo Nation, also known as Diné Bikéyah or Navajoland, in New Mexico, where Laves taught in at least three Indian boarding schools, prepared reports materials on Diné bizaad, the Navajo language, and researched soil conservation practices. Established and funded by the federal government, Indian boarding schools were designed to eradicate linguistic and cultural bonds within Indigenous communities by separating children from their families and forcefully assimilating them into settler colonial culture. Conditions at such schools were emotionally, physically, and sexually abusive and often involved forced child labor, rampant disease and malnourishment, and overcrowding. The schools where Laves taught include Wingate Vocational High School, Torreon School, and Shiprock Indian Boarding School.

When the family returned to Chicago in 1939, Laves worked for the International Harvester Company preparing instructional brochures and visual aids until 1961. From about 1961 to 1971, Laves worked for the Chicago Police Department writing copy and designing visual aids for CPD exhibits and brochures in the Public Information Division.

Gerhardt Laves died in Chicago on March 14, 1993 at the age of 86.

## **Content Warning**

This collection includes materials reflecting the attitudes, language, and stereotypes of an earlier time period. These materials are presented unaltered as historical resources in support of study and research. Inclusion of such materials does not constitute an endorsement of their content by the University of Chicago.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander users should be aware that this finding aid and materials in the collection may contain images and names of deceased persons.

Please contact us if you encounter problematic description of, or access to, materials about Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or Diné (Navajo) people by notifying staff in person or via the contact form on our website.

## **Scope Note**

The Gerhardt Laves Papers are organized into seven series:

Series I, Personal;

Series II, Correspondence;

Series III, Professional Life and Associations;

Series IV, Publications by Others;

Series V, Research on the Bardi Language;

Series VI, Photographs;

Series VII, Oversize.

The collection contains materials from Laves' personal and professional life, including his linguistic notes on the Bardi language and photographs; language resources, publications, and maps from Laves' employment in Navajo Nation; documents and photographs from Laves' work at the International Harvester Company and the Chicago Police Department; materials related to the Hyde Park and Kenwood neighborhoods; documents related to Laves' involvement at the University of Chicago; and Laves' photographs, film negatives, and glass slides documenting family and professional activities. Materials date between 1916 and 1982, with the bulk of materials dating between 1916 and 1949.

Series I, Personal, contains materials related to the Laves' family life, including Gerhardt and Maxine Laves' passports; daughters Jean and Elizabeth's wedding invitations; and two short plays written and performed by childhood friends of the Laves children. Materials are arranged chronologically.

Series II, Correspondence, contains Gerhardt Laves' correspondence with anthropologist Lester Hiatt, congressional representative Abner J. Mikva, and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. Materials are arranged roughly chronologically.

Series III, Professional Life and Associations, contains materials from various occupations, institutions, and organizations in Gerhardt Laves' professional life. Materials are divided into five subseries according to the organization and sorted roughly chronologically, following the trajectory of Laves' involvement.

Subseries 1, Materials related to Navajo Nation, contains documents from Laves' employment at Indian boarding schools in New Mexico during the 1930s, including language reference resources, reports on soil conservation practices, school bulletins, and several copies of The Navajo Service News.

Subseries 2, International Harvester Company, contains materials from Laves' employment at the company during the 1940s, including brochures, pamphlets, company publications, training manuals, and employee recruitment materials.

Subseries 3, Chicago Police Department, contains materials from Laves' work with the CPD from the 1960s and 1970s, including informational brochures and publications, as well as his photographic collection of police department activities, exhibits, and events.

Subseries 4, Hyde Park and Kenwood Neighborhood Materials, contains published materials related to the history of Hyde Park and Kenwood in the 1960s and 1970s, including a pamphlet on the so-called urban renewal years, information on Ray Elementary School, and Hyde Park Historical Society materials on the cable car station renovation.

Subseries 5, University of Chicago, contains materials from Gerhardt Laves' part-time employment at the University during the 1970s, possibly working as a typist or translator for scholarly work, as well as informational material on the Returning Scholars Program.

Series IV, Publications by Others, contains Laves' collection of published sociological studies and newspaper articles. Materials are arranged chronologically.

Series V, Research on the Bardi Language, contains Laves' notes from his linguistic research in the Bardi community in Australia during the late 1920s and early 1930s. Please note that while Laves used the term "Barda" in his documentation, the standard spelling for the language and the community is Bardi. Materials remain in their original groupings and order. Please note that the note cards have suffered significant water damage and as a result are extremely fragile. Papers are brittle and should be handled with care.

Series VI, Photographs, contains pre-1920s photographic glass plates by Laves' father, Ulrich; Laves' personal and research-related photographs from the 1910s-1930s; and Laves family and vacation photographs from the 1970s. Materials remain in their original groupings and order, and are arranged roughly chronologically.

Series VII, Oversize, contains oversize publications and maps. Materials are sorted according to size.

## **Related Resources**

University of Chicago. Department of Anthropology. Records

Current Anthropology Records, 1957-1987

Robert Redfield Papers, 1917-1958

Fred Eggan Papers, 1870-1991

Norman A. McQuown Papers, 1850-2004

Native American Educational Services. Rose Robinson. Papers, 1936-1993

Native American Educational Services Robert V. Dumont, Jr. Papers, 1942-2000

Walter Bartky Papers, 1940-1947

Century of Progress International Exposition Publications, 1933-1934

Fairfax M Cone Papers, 1947-1971

Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference Records, 1895-2011

Hyde Park Historical Society Collection, 1830-2009

See also the following resources at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Library:

Papers of Gerhardt Laves, MS 2188 and MS 2189

Laves' language sound recordings, accession no. A004068

AIATSIS Collection's AustLang Database

### **Subject Headings**

- International Harvester Company
- University of Chicago. Department of Anthropology
- 
- Anthropology--Australia
- Bardi language
- Boarding schools--United States
- Chicago (Ill.). Police Department
- Linguistics--Australia
- Navajo Indians--Education
- Navajo language
- Navajo Nation, Arizona, New Mexico & Utah
- Police--United States
- Urban renewal
- 
- Hyde Park (Chicago, Ill.)
- Kenwood (Chicago, Ill.)

### **INVENTORY**

#### **Series I: Personal**

Series I contains materials related to the Laves' family life, including Gerhardt and Maxine Laves' passports; daughters Jean and Elizabeth's wedding invitations; and two short plays written and performed by childhood friends of the Laves children. Materials are arranged chronologically.

#### **Box 1**

##### **Folder 1**

"Don't Crush" Kwikpak mailing labels, 1916

#### **Box 1**

##### **Folder 2**

Gerhardt and Maxine Laves transcripts, 1923-1943

#### **Box 1**

##### **Folder 3**

Maxine Laves Vassar College transcript, 1971



**Box 1**

**Folder 4**

Jean and Elizabeth wedding announcements and invitations, 1961

**Box 1**

**Folder 5**

Maxine and Gerhardt Laves passports, 1970-1976

**Box 1**

**Folder 6**

Gerhardt Laves University of Chicago Returning Scholar grades, 1975-1976

**Box 1**

**Folder 7**

School of the Art Institute of Chicago welcome brochure, 1977

**Box 1**

**Folder 8**

Two short plays "The Inca" and "Treasure in the Andes," undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 9**

Gerhardt Laves Blank Stationary, undated

## **Series II: Correspondence**

Series II contains Gerhardt Laves' correspondence with anthropologist Lester Hiatt, congressional representative Abner J. Mikva, and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. Materials are arranged roughly chronologically.

**Box 1**

**Folder 10**

Correspondence with Prof. Lester R. Hiatt, 1930-1982

**Box 1**

**Folder 11**

Correspondence with Congressman Abner J. Mikva, 1971

**Box 1**

**Folder 12**

Correspondence -- Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1979-1980

## **Series III: Professional Life and Associations**

Series III contains materials from various occupations, institutions, and organizations in Gerhardt Laves' professional life. Materials are divided into five subseries according to the organization and sorted roughly chronologically, following the trajectory of Laves' involvement.

### **Subseries 1: Materials related to Navajo Nation**

**Box 1**

**Folder 13**

Fellowship Application Materials, 1932-1934

**Box 1**

**Folder 14**

Laves Reports on Navajo Language and Soil Conservation, 1936-1939

**Box 1**

**Folder 15**

Reference Manual for Guide Book to the Navajo Country materials, 1937-1939

**Box 1**

**Folder 16**

Guide Book to the Navajo Country II c/2 A-C, 1939

**Box 1**

**Folder 17**

Guide Book to the Navajo Country II c/2 D-L, undated

**Box 2**

**Folder 1**

"Reference Data on Navajo Writing," 1939

**Box 2**

**Folder 2**

"Navajo and Hopi Directory," 1939

**Box 2**

**Folder 3**

"Navajo Consonants," circa 1939

**Box 2**

**Folder 4**

The Navajo Service News, vol. 2, no. 6, 1937

**Box 2**

**Folder 5**

The Navajo Service News, vol. 2, no. 8, 1937

**Box 2**

**Folder 6**

The Navajo Service News, vol. 2, no. 9, circa 1930s

**Box 2**

**Folder 7**

The Navajo Service News, vol. 2, no. 10, circa 1930s

**Box 2**

**Folder 8**

The Navajo Service News, vol./no. unknown, circa 1930s

**Box 2**

**Folder 9**

Navajo Service School Bulletin, no. 3, "Land Management in the Navajo Area," circa 1930s

**Subseries 2: International Harvester Company**

**Box 2**

**Folder 10**

Tractor Farming, 1940

**Box 2**

**Folder 11**

International Harvester Company brochures and pamphlets, 1940-1941 [1/2]

**Box 2**

**Folder 12**

International Harvester Company brochures and pamphlets, 1940-1941 [2/2]

**Box 2**

**Folder 13**

International Harvester speeches, 1945-1946

**Box 2**

**Folder 14**

International Harvester reports and pamphlets, 1946 [1/2]

**Box 3**

**Folder 1**

International Harvester reports and pamphlets, 1946 [2/2]

**Box 3**

**Folder 2**

International Harvester correspondence, 1944-1949

**Box 3**

**Folder 3**

International Harvester conference materials, 1948

**Box 3**

**Folder 4**

International Harvester course materials, 1949

**Box 3**

**Folder 5**

Recruitment of college graduates for International Harvester, 1949

**Box 3**

**Folder 6**

Instructor's Guide for Construction Equipment Division, International Harvester Company, circa 1940s

**Box 3**

**Folder 7**

International Harvester informational pamphlets, circa 1940s

**Box 3**

**Folder 8**

International Harvester Education and Personnel materials, circa 1940s

**Box 3**

**Folder 9**

International Harvester engine training manuals, circa 1940s

**Subseries 3: Chicago Police Department**

**Box 4**

**Folder 1**

Law and Disorder: the Chicago Convention and its Aftermath, 1968

**Box 4**

**Folder 2**

Chicago Police Department informational brochures and Laves résumé, 1968-1971

**Box 4**

**Folder 3**

Chicago Police Department tours – black and white photographs, circa 1960s

**Box 4**

**Folder 4**

Chicago Police Exhibit Cruiser – black and white photographs, 1964 [1/3]

**Box 4**

**Folder 5**

Chicago Police Exhibit Cruiser – black and white photographs, 1964 [2/3]

**Box 4**

**Folder 6**

Chicago Police Exhibit Cruiser – black and white photographs, 1964 [3/3]

**Box 4**

**Folder 7**

Police Department exhibits – black and white photographs, circa 1963 [1/2]

**Box 4**

**Folder 8**

Police Department exhibits – black and white photographs, circa 1963 [2/2]

**Box 4**

**Folder 9**

Chicago police in action – black and white photographs, circa 1963

**Box 4**

**Folder 10**

Photographs of Chicago police chief, circa 1960s

**Box 4**

**Folder 11**

Chicago Police Department – black and white photographs, circa 1960s

**Subseries 4: Hyde Park and Kenwood Neighborhood Materials**

**Box 4**

**Folder 12**

“The Hyde Park Kenwood Urban Renewal Years,” 1967

**Box 4**

**Folder 13**

Ray Elementary School Documents, 1972-1976 [1/2]

**Box 4**

**Folder 14**

Ray Elementary School Documents, 1972-1976 [2/2]

**Box 4**

**Folder 15**

Hyde Park Historical Society cable car station renovation and restoration, 1979

**Subseries 5: University of Chicago**

**Box 5**

**Folder 1**

Gerhardt Laves Hour Log Notebooks, circa 1972

**Box 5**

**Folder 2**

International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences Information for Authors 1973

**Box 5**

**Folder 3**

University of Chicago Returning Scholars Program information, 1975-1976

**Box 5**

**Folder 4**

Anthropology at Chicago brochure, 1979

**Series IV: Publications by Others**

Series IV contains Laves' collection of published sociological studies and newspaper articles. Materials are arranged chronologically.

**Box 5**

**Folder 5**

Published Book Review by Gerhardt Laves, reprint, 1935

**Box 5**

**Folder 6**

"Parenthood in a Free Nation," University of Chicago Parent Education Project, 1954

**Box 5**

**Folder 7**

H.G. Barnett, Being a Palauan, 1960

**Box 5**

**Folder 8**

"Vocabulary of 'A Decade,'" circa 1960s

**Box 5**

**Folder 9**

Sociology reprints, 1967-1977

**Box 5**

**Folder 10**

The German Tribune, 1977

**Box 5**

**Folder 11**

Philip M. Glick, "The Politics of Conservation," reprint, 1982

**Series V: Research on the Bardi Language**

Series V contains Laves' notes from his linguistic research in the Bardi community in Australia during the late 1920s and early 1930s. Please note that while Laves used the term "Barda" in his documentation, the standard spelling for the language and the community is Bardi. Materials remain in their original groupings and order. Please note that the note cards have suffered significant water damage and as a result are extremely fragile. Papers are brittle and should be handled with care.

**Box 6**

Bardi Notes, no.1 – no.3, circa 1929-1931

**Box 7**

Bardi Notes, no.4 – no.6, circa 1929-1931

**Box 8**

Bardi Notes, no.6 (continued) – unnumbered [1/3], circa 1929-1931

**Box 9**

Bardi Notes, unnumbered [2/3] – unnumbered [3/3], circa 1929-1931

**Series VI: Photographs**

Series VI contains pre-1920s photographic glass plates by Laves' father, Ulrich; Laves' personal and research-related photographs from the 1910s-1930s; and Laves family and vacation photographs from the 1970s.

Laves numbered and labeled many of his photographs and stored them in groups of ten. Not all prints and films encompassed by group labels are present. Though often separated between photographic prints and films, some prints and films are grouped together. Materials remain in their original order and groupings with their original labels, and are arranged roughly chronologically.

Handwritten captions on some print backings contain racist stereotypes about Aboriginal individuals and communities, as well as hypotheses about featured individuals' ethnic makeup. These materials are presented unaltered as historical resources in support of study and research. Inclusion of such materials does not constitute an endorsement of their content by the University of Chicago.

Box 10 includes photos of Laves family and friends; gatherings, holidays, and trips; the city of Chicago; University of Chicago; landscape photos; and photos from Laves' research trip to Australia. This box includes prints and postcards labeled "Odd Prints" from 1926-1931; prints and films labeled G1-G54; prints and films labeled 101-570; and prints and postcards filed under "Select Prints" and "Repeat Prints."

Names of individuals photographed during Laves' research in Australia and their print number in Box 10 include:

- Philip Shannon (466, 471, 517, 545)
- Lockland A. Macdonald; Myers Delaney; Mick Dougall; Billy Monklave (468)
- Jack Larry (466)
- Billy Monblond (471)
- Jack Cameron (520)
- George Yoke; Florence Shannon Macdonald (526)

Box 11 includes images from sea voyages in Australia; encampments and supplies; Australian plants, animals, and landscapes; churches; photos in and around Lagrange, Cape Leveque, Lombadina Mission (in contemporary Lombadina and Djarindjin); Albany; Ulgundahi Island, and Sandon; and group and individual photos of Aboriginal adults and children, including individuals identified as members of the Karajarri community (spelled in Laves' materials Karadjeri) and the Yawuru community (spelled in Laves' materials Yuwari). This box includes films and prints labeled 601-1280 and films and prints labeled "Unfiled Film."

Names of individuals photographed during Laves' research in Australia and their print number in Box 11 include:

- Arthur (615, unnumbered prints in "Unfiled Film")
- Timothy (615, 812, unnumbered print in "Unfiled Film")
- Father Augustin Spangenberg (667, 680, unnumbered print in "Unfiled Film")
- Anton; Malachy; Gerard; Agnes; Philomena (667)
- Joe, Martin (686)
- Mr. Porter; Miss Stirling (795)
- Plytie (831, unnumbered print in "Unfiled Film")
- Tommy (833, 853)
- Teddy, child of Tommy (853, 858, 859, 861)
- Sandy (853)
- Lucy, sister of Tommy (853, 859, 861)
- Frank (909)
- Peter (929, unnumbered print in "Unfiled Film")
- Sandy (940, unnumbered print in "Unfiled Film")
- Sam (944)
- Moses Waibog (1084)
- Annie, Mrs. Freddy Winmer (1099)
- The sister of Simon Williams (1104)
- Lockland A. Macdonald (labeled 467 under "Unfiled Film")
- Alpré; Yanie (unnumbered print in "Unfiled Film")

**Box 10**

Personal and Research Photographs and Negatives, 1916-1931 [1/2]

- See series description for more information.

**Box 11**

Personal and Research Photographs and Negatives, 1916-1931 [2/2]

- See series description for more information.

**Box 12**

Glass Slide Negatives, 1916-1932

**Box 12**

**Folder 1**

Empty Glass Slide Envelopes

**Box 13**

Glass Slide Negatives, 1916-1932

**Box 13**

**Folder 1**

Ulrich Laves pre-1920s glass negatives packaging

**Box 13**

**Folder 2**

Empty Photograph Envelopes, circa 1927

**Box 13**

**Folder 3**

Film Negatives and Photos, 1976 [1/4]

**Box 13**

**Folder 4**

Film Negatives and Photos, 1976 [2/4]

**Box 13**

**Folder 5**

Film Negatives and Photos, 1976 [3/4]

**Box 13**

**Folder 6**

Film Negatives and Photos, 1976 [4/4]

**Box 13**

**Folder 7**

Unfiled film, undated

**Series VII: Oversize**

Series VII contains oversize publications and maps. Materials are sorted according to size.

**Box 14**

**Folder 1**

International Harvester Dealer News, 1947

**Box 14**

**Folder 2**

“Corruption of Chicago Police,” LIFE magazine, 1968

**Box 14**

**Folder 3**

The New York Times Book Review, 1970

**Oversize Folder 1**

Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service Maps

**Oversize Folder 1**

Preliminary Base Map Navajo and Zuni Reservation, Navajo District, 1936

**Oversize Folder 1**

San Juan River Watershed in Colorado, Arizona, Utah and New Mexico, 1938

**Oversize Folder 1**

Little Colorado River Watershed in Arizona and New Mexico, 1938

**Oversize Folder 1**

Rio Grande Watershed, 1938

**Oversize Folder 2**

Department of the Interior Office of Indian Affairs Maps

**Oversize Folder 2**

Navajo Country: Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico, 1937

**Oversize Folder 2**

A Historical and Geographical Map of the Navajo Country, 1938

**Oversize Folder 2**

A Historical and Geographical Map of the Navajo Country, 1938