

University of Wyoming
American Heritage Center
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
2017

INTRODUCTION: For more than twenty years, professional best practice in archives administration has included creation, dissemination, and implementation of a formal collecting policy for manuscript repositories such as the American Heritage Center. It is important that our collecting policy is available to all donors and potential donors. Also, everyone should be aware that the AHC seeks to document all narratives within each of its defined areas of its collection policy. We seek to collect the written, visual, and audio narratives that show the varied spectrum within all aspects of identity, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, social class, ability/disability, religion, and citizenship. The AHC's intention is to produce a holistic historical record that shows the variation of experiences across the social spectrum.

Collection development is a set of activities and associated criteria that shape the acquisition of archival or other documentation; collection development may also inform non-custodial efforts to preserve and promote resources that foster shared knowledge about the past. The *Collection Development Strategy* of the American Heritage Center supports collection development that is planned, realistic, and tied to institutional goals, while also, and importantly, licensing our ability to act opportunistically and seek non-traditional content. This policy recognizes that successful and innovative documentary work must be careful but nimble, must deploy curatorial knowledge, and must incorporate forms and areas of inquiry yet uncodified by traditional definitions based on purely acquisitive or extractive models.

This *Collection Development Strategy* recognizes that archives are, by definition, records created for one purpose but used for another: the archives of one disciplinary activity transcend boundaries and become cross- or inter- disciplinary depending on the query at hand. A topical approach to collection development activities is one path to identifying people and organizations and assessing their likely records. We retain a topical framework with an understanding that topics are intertwined: mining and environmental history, entertainment and journalism, energy and transportation are activities that overlap, and our audiences use the one to study the other. Archives are fixed and permanent records; archives are also and inherently dependent on interpretation by the audiences who use them, and by the questions those audiences ask.

The value of archives lies in revealing the past as it happened, but also the roads not taken, the alternative views, and the people and ideas less visible. The American Heritage Center has excelled at preserving the records of the obvious and mainstream across a range of topics and disciplines, and will continue to do so; these serve an important function as evidence of prevalent values and activities. The AHC has had

more modest success in documenting less dominant activities and views. In seeking to represent the under-documented, we acknowledge that not all communities create records that align with traditional archival appraisal values and that the scope, format, and extent of an individual's or organization's records are determined by their access to leisure, technology, and literacies, and by cultural norms about documentation, privacy, ownership, etc. Building collections around under-documented communities and near-contemporary events requires a creative and flexible approach to appraisal.

Whereas the companion document titled "*Collection Development Policy*" describes the AHC's collecting areas in broad terms, the following document is intended to provide specific guidance regarding the types of material generally collected and focuses on particular aspects of each collecting area to target for future acquisition.

PRIMARY COLLECTING AREAS SPECIFIC ACQUISITION GUIDELINES:

University Archives

The University Archive in the AHC is responsible for documenting the history of the University of Wyoming; other public educational institutions are the responsibility of the State Archives. Except for the papers of teachers and the recollections of students regarding public schools, or other materials as they might reasonably be included under "public affairs," below (e.g., organizations formed to lobby for changes to state educational standards), the AHC will not usually accept collections related to education.

Wyoming and the American West

Wyoming

The AHC will actively consider any and all aspects of Wyoming history. Areas of emphasis include politics and papers of elected officials; various aspects of the agriculture industry including ranch records and organizational records; national forest and national park use with special emphasis on Yellowstone – the nation's first national park, and Grand Teton National Park; tourism, including dude ranching; rodeo including Cheyenne Frontier Days and the papers of individual cowboys and cowgirls; sports and recreation including mountaineering, hunting and fishing; business and commerce; transportation including aeronautics, railroad, and highway; religion; native culture including history of the Wind River Indian Reservation; World War II and its impact within the state including the Heart Mountain Relocation Center; and various industries within the state including mining, timber, and energy development.)

This is a core collecting area and a major strength. It will continue to be the AHC's single highest priority after the University of Wyoming.

The American West

Beyond Wyoming, the AHC will collect certain aspects of the West. Though the AHC may consider any number of topics related to the region, the AHC will collect in two major areas. The first is the phenomenon of the nationally-created “Western Image.” Topics related to the image of the West include writers of Western fiction and Western travel; historians of the Western image; tourism in the West, including dude ranching and rodeo; and artists, photographers, and filmmakers of the West. The second area of focus relates to select aspects of the livestock industry and range management. This includes regional and national organizations as well as large ranch businesses.

Labor

Records of labor unions and of working men and women. The sole exception to the requirement that there be a strong Wyoming connection is that labor material relating to the Union Pacific Railroad will be considered.

Military History

Material documenting the service of Wyomingites in the military and the service of soldiers in Wyoming; material documenting military on the Western frontier; the personal papers of select career military personnel of all ranks and all services (and any US geographic origin) that includes personal descriptive documentation by military personnel and others present at historically notable events in U.S. military history, or engaged in unique or uncommon military service.

Out West in the Rockies

This collecting area was initiated in 2014, and focuses on documenting the lives and work of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender) individuals and organizations with connections to the Rocky Mountain West.

Wyoming Politicians and parties

Collect the papers of members of Wyoming’s congressional delegation and certain members of the Wyoming State Legislature. Also collect the records of the major Wyoming political parties.

Western Writers

The AHC holds one of the nation’s strongest collections relating to Western fiction and poetry and this will continue as an active collecting area. The AHC will also collect the papers of Wyoming writers. In these areas the AHC will attempt to build holdings representing the breadth of such writers, through acquiring a small number of collections representing niche authors, unsuccessful authors, etc.

Geographical Areas:

- **Wyoming** – Wyoming and nationally as it relates to Wyoming.
- **The American West** – Regional; national only in the area of the “Western Image”.
- **Labor** – Wyoming

- **Military History** – Wyoming – citizens who served in the military; military personnel serving in the state. National – military personnel; observers and participants in historically significant events in U.S. military history, or engaged in unique or uncommon military service.
- **Out West in the Rockies** – Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, New Mexico, Idaho, Utah, Nevada and Arizona.
- **Wyoming Politicians and parties** – Wyoming
- **Western Writers** – National – writers of Western fiction and poetry.

Book History (Toppan Rare Books Library)

The history of the book and, more broadly, the history of printing includes an emphasis on book arts such as illustrations and decorated bindings. Focus has been on examples for teaching. Topical strengths include diverse religions, world travel and exploration, British and American Literature (including popular literature), women authors, Native American, children’s books, fishing and hunting books, and natural history. The Toppan Library differs from the Chisum Special Collections at the University of Wyoming Libraries in two major ways: that library collects printed books related to Wyoming and the West; and Toppan houses the University’s books dated before 1850.

Geographical Area – International

Conservation and Environment

In all the subcategories of this topic, collections that encompass national and even international material will be considered particularly if the collection has a strong connection to Wyoming or the region, as applicable. Specific attention will be given to collections documenting the period 1970 and later.

Limits on Formats: Will not collect the papers of faculty strongly identified with universities other than UW unless faculty have ties to Wyoming or have worked extensively in Wyoming or the Rocky Mountain West. Will not usually collect scientific data unless it provides context to manuscript material.

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Conservation

Will focus on public policy, natural resources, and soil conservation.

Environment/Ecology

This area particularly targets the papers of scientists who have worked in the Great Plains, Rocky Mountains, and Intermountain basins of the West; will evaluate potential acquisitions on collections’ own merits; collections hold heightened value if they have

applications to non-scientific research use. Scientific data may be accepted if it provides context for the collection as a whole.

Environmental Advocacy

This collecting area seeks to document all sides of environmental issues in pursuit of presenting researchers with a balanced perspective. The papers of advocates, lobbyists, and opinion-leaders will be the target, both “extreme” representatives of particular viewpoints as well as more “moderate” voices.

Land Use

Sub-topics include public land management, preservation, and development.

Water

Sub-topics include conservation, use, reclamation, pollution, hydro-electric, and political/legal, water resource development.

Wildlife

Will focus on range and wildlife management.

Architecture and Civil Engineering

Collect the records of Wyoming and nationally significant architects and city planners who are noted for their social activism or for their work in making the built environment more amenable to human life and society. Also accept records of architects and city planners responsible for architectural or planning landmarks in Wyoming.

Geographical Area – National for all subcategories

Entertainment Industry

The AHC collects materials related to motion pictures, film, television, radio, and popular music. Because most individuals involved in film, TV, and radio moved freely among the venues, it is more practical to categorize sub-topics by type of work performed. The exception is popular music, though here again the composers and performers often worked across venues. There are two genres of film, radio, TV, and their related music that stand out as broad strengths of the AHC’s holdings: Westerns and soap operas.)

Actors

The AHC’s main interest is in the papers of actors strongly associated with soap operas and Westerns, as well as those whose work has had a clear and lasting impact on the industry and/or on US popular culture. Actors associated primarily with theater will not be acquired unless there is a strong Wyoming connection (UW alum, etc.).

Comic Book Editors and Writers

While several other repositories collect the comic books themselves, and a few collect the artwork of comic book artists, the AHC is alone in documenting the editors and writers of this industry increasingly recognized by scholars as having a significant

impact on the nation's popular culture. The goal of this collecting area is to document the business behind the final products, though inclusive of the creative writing process. Focus is on editors and writers thus artwork will not be actively solicited however, it will be accepted if a writer is also an artist, or an artist has had a significant impact on the genre.

Directors and Producers

These individuals' papers are the most likely to provide the full context for the shows they are associated with, and therefore have the highest importance. Directors and producers strongly associated with soap operas and Westerns will be of high priority, as will others whose work has had a clear and lasting impact on the industry and/or on US popular culture.

Music

The AHC's music collection can be divided into film, television, big band, and classical. Primary interest is in composers and the creative process, rather than finished published recordings.

Screenwriters

The AHC's main interest is in the papers of screenwriters strongly associated with soap operas and Westerns, as well as those whose work has had a clear and lasting impact on the industry and/or on US popular culture.

Geographical Area – National for all subcategories

Journalism

The AHC's Journalism collections document the business and practice of journalism on a local, regional, and national scale. Our collections encompass different aspects of journalism including broadcast, radio, and print, and reflect the evolution of how we access information.

In addition to documenting the business and practice of journalism in Wyoming, the AHC will seek to document journalism regionally in the areas of western tourism, and nationally in the areas of war correspondents, "adventure travel," world travel, entertainment, and coverage of national politics. To be considered for AHC collections, journalists must have spent a significant portion of their careers in the areas specified, but need not have worked exclusively in those areas.

Geographical Area – International

Mining, Petroleum, & Energy

Collect the records of Wyoming and regional businesses and business people and collections from South America and South Africa in the areas of hard mining, petroleum, and alternative energy along with the collections of private geologists.

Hard Mining

Collect the records of Wyoming and regional businesses and business people, and will seek to document the business, rather than scientific, history of mining—with the specific exception that scientific records related to location and mechanics of extraction/refinement will be acquired for Wyoming mines to assist in study of post-extraction clean-up and development. In addition, because of strong existing collections and extensive use, material relating to mining in South America and South Africa will be considered.

Petroleum

Collect the records of Rocky Mountain businesses and business people, to document the business, rather than scientific, history of petroleum extraction/refining.

Alternative Energy

Collect the records of Wyoming and regional businesses and business people to document the history of wind and solar energy.

Geologists

The AHC has a strong collection of papers of geologists who have conducted mining surveys internationally. We will continue to collect the personal papers of geologists.

Geographical Area – International for all subcategories

Transportation

Will collect materials to document the areas of aviation and aerospace, western railroads, and the many highways and byways which crossed Wyoming.

Aviation and Aerospace

Collections—of individuals, companies, and trade groups--that contribute to the broader interpretation of the history of aviation and its impact on the US and/or the state of Wyoming. Avoid highly technical construction, maintenance, or operations material.

Railroads

Collections relating to construction and economic/social impact of and travel on railroads that traversed Wyoming; so long as there is a clear and significant connection to Wyoming in the content of the collection.

Road Transportation

Collections relating to construction of and travel on trails and roads that traversed Wyoming; so long as there is a clear and significant connection to Wyoming in the content of the collection.

Geographical Area:

- Railroads and Road Transportation – Wyoming
- Aviation and Aerospace – National

U.S. (post 1950) Conservatism

Since conservatism is a broad and diverse system of beliefs rather than a focused industry or profession, particular attention will be paid to collections which either complement similar AHC collections, or relate to any of the AHC's topical areas in such a way that they enrich the diversity of perspective for scholarly inquiry.

Geographical Area – National

Related Collections

Will continue to carefully acquire collections that have a clear and direct connection to existing collections if that connection enhances the existing collections with contextual substance. Additionally, the AHC will be open to suggestions and proposals by UW faculty regarding collecting topics which enhance a particular teaching curriculum.

TYPES OF MATERIAL GENERALLY COLLECTED

| Personal Papers for Individuals | Records from Organizations and Institutions |
|---|---|
| While it is important that AHC staff be permitted to survey papers or records in order to determine which materials have enduring historical value, listed below are types of material that are often valuable to a researcher. This list, which is suggestive and not definitive, illustrates the wide range of documentation sometimes useful for historical and administrative research. | Many of the records produced by an organization have long-term value. The AHC is interested in the records that best illustrate the purpose, activities, and policies of an organization. Such documents usually represent an “end product”- a final report, for example, instead of a draft. We are more interested in related groups of material rather than individual items. Records should be inactive – that is, no longer regularly used for routine business. |
| Letters | Annual financial records |
| Memoirs / reminiscences | Architectural records |
| Diaries | Articles of incorporation, charters |
| Scrapbooks / photo albums | Audio recordings |
| Professional Papers | Budgets |
| Genealogical information | Bylaws and revisions |
| Speeches / lectures | Clippings (about the organization) |
| Business records | Constitution and revisions |
| Final drafts of unpublished works Legal Documents Minutes / reports | Correspondence of officers |
| Visual materials produced by the donor such as posters, designs, blue prints, etc. | Directories |
| Publications, scripts, music, or other materials written by the donor. | Handbooks |
| Brochures and flyers | Legal documents |
| Photographs (labeled) | Memoranda |

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| Films / videos / audio tapes (labeled) | Minutes of meetings |
| Files relating to the individual's civic, business, religious, political, and social activities may also be of interest. | Membership lists |
| | Motion picture film and videotape (labeled) |
| | Newsletters and other publications (generated by the organization) |
| | Organizational charts |
| | Pamphlets, brochures, fliers, etc. |
| | Photographs (labeled) |
| | Planning documents |
| | Press releases |
| | Reports (annual, committee, etc.) |
| | Rosters |
| | Scrapbooks |
| | Speeches |
| | Topical files |

TYPES OF MATERIAL GENERALLY NOT COLLECTED

While there may be exceptions, the following types of material are usually not accepted by the AHC as collections or parts of collections.

- Art and artifacts (unless they have some direct and obvious connection which enhances the research value of the collection)
- Day-to-day financial records such as bank statements, cancelled checks, receipts, invoices, and daily balances.
- Duplicates
- General readership books, periodicals, or other printed material not written by the donor. (Rare books or special collections of books, periodicals, or pamphlets, of unique historical interest may be collected by the AHC)
- Material with binding restrictions or legal issues which would render the collection unavailable or otherwise unusable to our patrons.
- Personnel time cards, payroll documents, and confidential files.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

DEFINITION OF MANUSCRIPTS: The Society of American Archivists' A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology (2005) defines "manuscripts collection": "Although manuscript literally means handwritten, 'manuscript collection' is often used to include collections of mixed media in which unpublished materials predominate. They may also include typescripts, photographs, diaries, scrapbooks, news clippings, and printed works." Manuscripts collections at the AHC also include maps, sound recordings, moving images, oral histories, music scores, reminiscences, research files, interview notes, and many other forms of material. Manuscripts collections may contain some printed/published material, but generally speaking printed/published material is collected and cataloged by libraries. Manuscripts collections include those created by individual and families, and those created by organizations such as businesses, fraternal groups, and non-profits. Manuscripts collections are also often referred to as "papers" (when discussing material generated by individuals and families) and "records" (when discussing material generated by organizations).

TOPICAL AREAS: The topical areas selected are neither objective nor mutually exclusive. The AHC has chosen to use these particular topics (borrowed in part from the Wisconsin Historical Society) because they provide a workable and reasonable division of our holdings for purposes of planning and external communication (to researchers, prospective donors, granting agencies, other repositories). Because the topics overlap—e.g., a collection can be considered both "aviation" and "military history"—the AHC will consider all topical areas into which a collection falls in determining whether to seek and/or accept it.

ACTIVE SOLICITATION: Topical areas that will not be actively solicited in general may still have particular collections solicited when it seems warranted, for example when an unforeseen but likely lead turns up. The limitation on active collecting in some areas is a reflection of limited human resources matched to judgments of collecting priorities.

GEOGRAPHIC AREAS: It is a long and honored tradition for special collections—at both land grant and private universities—to pursue national collecting in well-defined areas. As one of the nation's premier research universities, UW can and should remain part of this broad humanistic tradition. A strict regional collecting policy would sacrifice the AHC's current curricular support for UW's efforts to counterbalance the distinctive culture of the Mountain West with the rich array of cultures that characterize both the global community of scholars and the broader world that our students will enter. The AHC can and should play a judicious role in effecting that balance. Additionally, the diversity and breadth of the AHC's collections encourage visitation by national and international scholars thus encouraging discourse, communication, and an exchange of ideas with the larger scholarly community. Therefore, while the principal collection and preservation endeavors of the Center will focus on Wyoming and West, the AHC believes it is important for select areas of national collecting to remain.

GOVERNMENT RECORDS: It will be true for all topical areas and sub-topics that the AHC will not collect the publications or records of state or federal agencies. The only

exception to this policy will be instances where relatively small amounts of government records are contained within someone's papers, the bulk of which are private, or where government and private papers are inextricably intermixed. Government records are generally the property of municipal, state, or federal archives, even when in the possession of an individual. Federal government publications and Wyoming state publications are collected at the UW Libraries and the Wyoming State Library.

ACCESS, USE/REPRODUCTION, AND COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS: Collections will not be acquired with onerous access or use/reproduction restrictions. Recent Congressional actions extending copyright protection for both published and unpublished material, combined with some circuit court decisions that narrow the scope of the Fair Use exemption in copyright law, have had a chilling effect on the use of archives and manuscripts materials by scholars and other researchers—in effect creating the perception of onerous use restrictions. To date this has not had an effect on use by students for curricular work. It is possible that further changes in law or judicial interpretation will influence the AHC's willingness or ability to acquire some types of material across most of the topical areas listed below.

USER GROUPS AND USE PRIORITIES: It is impossible to accurately predict future use of collection material, but there are only sufficient resources available to acquire, process, and preserve a tiny fraction of the documentary collections in (or eventually to be in) existence—therefore these scarce resources can only be expended on collection material that has the highest likelihood of being useful to and used by a repository's highest priority groups of users. For the American Heritage Center, the highest priority group of users is students at the University of Wyoming, both undergraduate and graduate. Following close behind—in some respects indistinguishable from—UW students are UW faculty. The AHC is charged with working closely with UW faculty to integrate the Center's primary sources into the university curriculum. Among other means to that end, the AHC sponsors annual grants to support faculty development of new courses based on the repository's holdings (both manuscripts and rare books). In addition, the AHC seeks to support the faculty's own research.

Because UW is a land grant institution committed to serving the broad educational needs of the state, other important constituent groups are Wyoming's K-12 students, and members of the public. Other user groups—external scholars and non-Wyoming students, etc., are next on the priority list.

While any collection (indeed any item in any collection) has "conceivable" uses, the archivists at the AHC must apply their knowledge and experience—supported by conversations with UW faculty—to make educated assessments of what is most likely to be used most successfully by the most members of our priority user groups. These are decisions that are, by their very nature, subjective and susceptible to reasoned disagreement. On the one hand it is the professional responsibility of the AHC archivists to make such decisions; on the other hand it is our professional responsibility to listen to disagreement and reconsider our collecting policy on a regular basis.