

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Manuscripts section of the Department of Archives and Special Collections acquires, preserves, processes, and makes available for research and classroom use manuscript collections in their original format (in short, primary sources). In particular, the major collecting focus is on Los Angeles and Southern California history. For our general collection development policy under which the Manuscripts section operates, please go [here](#).

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF COLLECTING AREAS

Below is a summary description of the collecting area.

Los Angeles and Southern California History Collecting Areas

The principal collections in this area consist of the personal papers of families in Southern California. Examples include the Venegas Family Papers (099), Margaret Tante Burk Papers (084), and the Workman Family Albums (100).

This collecting area supports scholarly research in Los Angeles and California history and correlative areas, such as the history of the entertainment industry and Roman Catholicism in Southern California, and course instruction at Loyola Marymount University in such departments as History, Theology, and Spanish. To foster continued growth in this collection area that supports both scholarship and teaching, the following directions are suggested:

- The department will continue to acquire personal papers of persons or families important for the history of our region or else whose surviving records testify the history and culture of Los Angeles and Southern California. Personal papers is a term broadly defined to include correspondence, business records, log books, photographs, speeches, photograph albums and scrapbooks, diaries, and memoirs. These records may be textual, photographic, or electronic.
- The department will acquire organizational records also relevant in this area. Materials of interest include business records, meeting minutes and agendas, organizational histories, annual reports, press releases, directories, newsletters, and office memoranda. These records may be textual, photographic, or electronic.

Other Collecting Areas

Besides Los Angeles and Southern California history, we have holdings in many areas; over the past five years, certain collecting strengths (or perhaps better said, emphases) have emerged, both naturally and by administrative choice. Collection development policies emphasize continued acquisitions in areas of collecting strength to increase the research value of a repository's holdings, a practice we should continue in these areas, below.

- **Entertainment Industry:** This area, of course, relates to Los Angeles and Southern California history, but because of the special niche that the industry holds in this area, it merits its own collecting area. Departmental holdings now include The Samuel Z. Arkoff Papers, the Sefton Laurel and Hardy Collection, the Arthur P. Jacobs Collection, the Film and Television Screenplay Collection, and the Hal Pereira Film Sketches Collection. Materials range from textual materials, eg, typewritten scripts; to lobby cards; to storyboards. With administrative approval, the Department should continue to collect in this area, using the holdings in these collections as guidelines for materials of interest.
- **Civil War History:** The Manuscripts Section contains several collections in this important area of United States history. The Department continues to acquire materials in this area, particularly for Collection 103, which is specifically designed for continued acquisition of materials for classroom instruction.

CRITERIA FOR ACQUISITION OF COLLECTIONS

The specific criteria below apply to the acquisition of manuscript collections. The Department of Archives and Special Collections reserves the right to accept or to reject materials based on the criteria outlined below. If the Department chooses to reject a donation, we will make the effort to find a repository suitable for the materials, if the donor wishes. Also, please see our [general collection development policy](#), which provides the general guidelines for the acquisition of manuscripts.

- A. Books or Serials.** Books and serials are not archival in nature and should not be collected, unless such materials are intimately tied to the person or party responsible for the creation of a collection. Books or serials in a donation are to be separated and then turned over to the departmental head and rare book cataloger for consideration for inclusion in the department's rare books holdings. The archivist in charge of accessing the collection will record the separation in the appropriate form, and will keep one record in the accession file (both the paper file and that on the G:drive) and give one to either the departmental head or rare books cataloger.
- B. Single Items.** Single item collections are normally not acquired, unless of unusual research value.
- C. Public or Governmental Records.** Acquisitions of records and materials from public officials and agencies will conform to all public and legal statutes governing their disposition.
- D. Appraisal and Deeds of Gift.** Per our departmental collection development policy, all donations must be appraised and come with signed deeds of gift.

ASSESSING RESEARCH VALUE

O'Hara Conway and Proffitt in their 2012 RBM article provide a scale for rating the value of a research collection, both scholarly and in terms of its quantity.

DOCUMENTATION INTEREST		DOCUMENTATION QUALITY	
very high	5	very rich	5
high	4	rich	4
moderate	3	moderately rich	3
slight	2	incidentally rich	2
Negligible or none	1	slight	1

Conway O'Hara and Proffitt define the scholarly value of a collection (documentation interest) in this way. These values below are reproduced directly from their article.

- Contributes to the overall understanding of the subject
- Substantially reinforces or complements important collections already held
- Includes material on topics that have long been of significant interest to scholars
- Includes material on topics that are currently receiving high attention from scholars
- And/or includes material on topics in which scholars are just beginning to take interest

The pair defines the depth of the material in the following fashion. These definitions, again, are taken directly from their article.

- Contains material that affords unique insight into the topic
- Provides thorough (as opposed to sporadic or fragmentary) documentation of the topic
- And/or consists primarily of original/manuscript materials (as opposed to transcripts, photocopies, or published materials).

Conway O'Hara and Proffitt suggest that the scores from the two ranges be combined to create a rating of a collection. This is the policy of the Manuscripts Section of the Department of Archives and Special Collections. The scores below provide a guide for assessing the value of an acquisition.

- 2-4: Minimal or no research value
- 5-6: Average research value
- 7-9: High research value
- 10: The collection possesses unique value because of its subject matter and the depth of its holdings.

DEACCESSIONING MATERIALS

The Department reserves the right to deaccession materials once in its possession; please see the departmental **deaccessioning policy**. The Department of Archives and Special Collections will follow the accepted professional archival practice of keeping only a set number of duplicate materials during the processing of collections or to restrict any part of a collection that it is legally required to do so. The latter case includes, for example, social security numbers or medical records.

DEPARTMENT: Manuscripts Section, Department of Archives and Special Collections,
William H. Hannon Library

PHONE/EMAIL: 310-338-5710

DATE WRITTEN: 5 February 2013; revised 13, 16 December 2013; 28 August 2014; 4
September 2014; 2 December 2014; 26 May 2016