

Frequently Asked Donor Questions

Archives of the History of American Psychology

Bierce Library
The University of Akron

1. **How does the Archives acquire material?** Individuals and organizations often contact the Archives of the History of American Psychology (AHAP) when materials become available and are ready to be donated to an appropriate recipient. The director accepts or declines materials based largely on the AHAP collection development policy (summarized below). The director will occasionally solicit individuals or organizations to request the deposit of historically relevant materials.

2. **How is selection of materials made?** Selection criteria is guided by efforts to ensure that the historical record of psychology is inclusive and representative of the individuals, events, and contexts in which psychological science and practice have developed in American society and culture. Selected materials will include, but are not limited to, manuscript collections, media (film and photographs) and objects and artifacts (instruments, apparatus, demonstration and instructional items). AHAP is most interested in those individuals and events that have had significant, lasting, or noteworthy impact on American psychology.

The Director makes all selection decisions. Once an item has been determined to meet the collection parameters, it is evaluated according to the following specific criteria:

- Accuracy/authoritativeness
- Subject area represented
- Level/depth of treatment
- Technical quality

Decisions about value, appropriateness, or importance of deposits are made with careful consideration. The director and qualified staff members make general appraisal decisions regarding items within manuscript collections to retain and restrictions to be made, if any. Materials that are not usually retained include multiple copies of reprints, syllabi, raw data, and computer printouts of data analysis.

3. **How does material arrive?** We ask that donors do not presort their papers before sending them to the AHAP. Papers can be organized in some way if preferred, but simply boxing and sending the papers as they are is acceptable. Because AHAP operates from a small budget and much of our funds are used to process collections, we ask the donor to cover the cost of shipping.

4. **What constitutes *papers*?** Papers are considered to be any forms of materials that are included in a personal manuscript collection. Typical materials found in a collection include research papers, theses and dissertations, notes, photographs, film, and various artifacts. Organizations also donate papers to the Archives, but materials coming from organizations are considered records. The same forms of materials can be found within organizational collections.

5. **What is processing of a collection?** When papers or records arrive, the Archives director does an initial sort of the collection (also known as appraisal). Decisions are made on what to keep, what to restrict, and how best to categorize the material. Material that is not usually

retained includes multiple copies of reprints, syllabi, raw data, and computer printouts of data analysis. The material is then reboxed to await the preparation of the finding aids. The finding aid is an inventory of the materials within a collection.

6. What other types of gifts can be made? The cost associated with processing archival materials is considerable and the AHAP depends largely on private funds for support. We encourage patrons and donors to consider making charitable gifts to the archives. There are a variety of means to do this. The annual *Friends of the Archives* campaign provides a means of charitable giving on a yearly basis. Endowments and other forms of estate planning are especially welcomed and a representative of the University development office is always available to meet with interested donors.

7. What is the Deed of Gift? It is a working document meant to insure the integrity and protection of your papers. The Deed of Gift outlines the agreement between the donor/estate and the archives or repository concerning materials donated to that institution. The Deed of Gift also describes the types of materials donated and notes any restrictions or conditions placed on donated materials, It is suggested that donors review the deed of gift form and discuss any concerns or questions with family members and with the archives director.

a. **Restrictions.** Restrictions can be placed on certain materials within a collection for a number of reasons. Confidentiality issues are the most common reason for restrictions. The presence of personal information such as Social Security numbers and patient records are typical examples of restrictions. Restrictions can be placed by the donor when the Deed of Gift is written or by the Archives as situations arise during processing of the collection. Levels of restriction, when and how restrictions are placed, and public accessibility to materials can be discussed with the Archives director.

b. **How is the issue of copyright handled?** Copyright belongs to the writer or originator of written materials that are present within a collection. Property rights belong to the receiver of any correspondence or other written materials within that collection. In the instances of publication, citation, or the commercial use of these materials, permission must be granted from the writer, originator or donor of the collection. In making the deed of gift the donor provides that right to the Archives. It insures that no one can use, quote, copy or cite from the deposited papers without the Archives' consent. If the donor chooses to maintain copyright, each time an individual uses a deposited collection for any of the above purposes, they must secure permission from the donor or originator of the collection. Permission is consulted by the director from the donor or estate if outside projects require the use of deposited materials.