

Collection Development Policy

Wheaton College Billy Graham Center Archives

Prepared by Katherine Graber (Director) in Collaboration with Paul Ericksen (Interim Dean of Library and Archives) and Robert Shuster (Archivist)

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Our Mission

The Wheaton College Billy Graham Center Archives collects, preserves, and makes available unpublished materials relating to North American, Protestant, nondenominational evangelism activities and global missions efforts, especially focused on the twentieth century. The Archives strives to make these resources available to scholars, students, Christian workers, and the general public through our Manuscripts Reading Room, programming, outreach endeavors, and more.

Our Purpose

The purpose of the Wheaton College Billy Graham Center Archives is to build a major research collection of unique materials that reflect North American, Protestant, nondenominational evangelism activities and global missions efforts. By collecting in these areas, the Archives seeks to locate, preserve, and promote resources, especially those that are undocumented by other memory institutions and research libraries. The collections are especially intended to advance the evangelistic mission of the Church by providing inspiration and training to individuals serving in Christian ministry. The Archives makes these resources accessible to a broad range of users, including the Wheaton College community, visiting scholars and students, Christian workers, and the general public. The collections are intended primarily for research, teaching, and spiritual inspiration but may also be used for physical and digital exhibits, publication, loans, and other appropriate purposes.

Research Community

The Wheaton College Billy Graham Center Archives welcomes a broad range of visitors annually to use the collections in the Manuscripts Reading Room, as well as providing instruction sessions to on-campus classes and visitors, and reference services to users from around the world. The Archives' increasing presence online through its website, digital exhibits, social media, and collections catalog continues to provide awareness of and access to its collections to thousands of users every year.

The Archives' research community is comprised of three categories of users:

The Wheaton College campus community

- Faculty members
- Staff members
- Undergraduate and graduate students

Visiting scholars and students

- Scholars, particularly in the fields of history, missiology, sociology, theology, religious studies, anthropology, and political science
- Students, particularly postgraduate students

Christian workers

- Pastors
- Evangelists
- Missionaries

General public

- K-12 students
- Campus visitors
- Genealogists

Scope and Strengths of the Collection

The Archives collections are comprised of a broad spectrum of material documenting the history and practice of evangelism and global missions efforts by nondenominational, North American, Protestant parachurch organizations and individuals, spanning the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries. The collections includes items in a wide array of physical formats, including print materials, manuscripts, and audiovisual items, as well as born-digital content.

While the collections do not circulate, they are accessible on-site in the Manuscripts Reading Room. A small portion of the collections has been microfilmed and is available through interlibrary loan.

Although the Archives is a department of Wheaton College and reports to the Dean of Library and Archives, the development of its collections and holdings is determined by the Archives Director and other archivists.

While the collections may be used for a broad spectrum of research topics, the core of the collection reflects several research strengths, particularly:

- Mass evangelism in North America in the twentieth century
- Twentieth-century, North American missionary movements, particularly in China, Southeast Asia, East Africa, and South and Central America
- College and high school student ministry

Method of Acquisition

The Archives collections are maintained and updated by the archivists as supervised by the Archives Director. The archivists, as the primary curators of original material within the collection, are best positioned to select new material that will supplement the existing collection of rare and original material while avoiding duplication.

Any material relating to North American, Protestant, nondenominational evangelism and global missions is open to consideration under the current collecting policy.

The Archives acquires materials through the following sources:

- Donations, solicited and unsolicited, by private individuals or organizations

- Transfer from other Wheaton College departments and offices, such as the Billy Graham Museum or Buswell Library Special Collections
- Purchase from private dealer or auction
- Transfer or exchange with other repositories or collectors

Due to budgetary constraints, only small and exceptional purchases are made from private individuals and organizations and through online dealers.

The Archives preferred method of acquisition is donation, solicited by the archivists from both organizations and private individuals. Unsolicited donations will be accepted based on the gift's applicability to the collection, condition of the gift items, and available storage space. The archivists will determine whether individual unsolicited gifts will be an asset to the existing collection and may consult with the Archives Director.

All gifts made to the Archives are considered outright donations and the Archives reserves the right to retain or discard donated materials at the discretion of the archivists. The archivists may return discarded items to the donor at their request.

Donors will be required to complete a deed of gift at the time of donation. If donors wish to apply access restrictions to the gift material, these requests will be considered and reflected in the deed of gift as agreed upon between the donor and the Archives. However, if the archivists or Archives Director consider any requested restrictions an excessive obstacle to user access, they may decline to accession potential donations.

Donations made to the Archives collections cannot be appraised by Archives staff for monetary value. The archivists will provide the donor with an itemized list of donated items and acknowledge the gift with a dated letter acting as a receipt of the donation.

Parameters of Collection

Published or Unpublished

The Archives seeks to build a collection of unique materials not accessible at other institutions. In keeping with this goal, the Archives prioritizes collecting unpublished, unique material. Books, periodicals, and other published materials offered to the Archives will be referred to the Evangelism and Missions Collection of Buswell Library or Buswell Library Special Collections, as appropriate.

Duplicate Material

The Archives reserves the right to reject duplicate material offered by donation and will not seek to purchase or otherwise acquire material duplicated by other institutions. Within its collections, the Archives will keep the minimal number of copies of an item necessary for access and preservation purposes.

Physical Condition

The Archives will only acquire, by donation or purchase, archival materials that are usable for research. Material may be declined under the following conditions:

- Material is deemed too fragile, deteriorated, or corrupted to be used for research
- No playback equipment is available to read, hear, or view audiovisual material
- Born-digital material is impossible to migrate to stable, industry standard formats

Language of Material

In keeping with its collecting focus on North America, the majority of material in the Archives is English language material. However, the Archives accepts material in a broad range of languages. Languages currently represented in the collections include: Dutch, French, German, Mandarin, Spanish, and Swahili, among others.

Date Range of Material

While the majority of the Archives collections are focused on the twentieth century, the Archives is committed to documenting the history of North American, Protestant, nondenominational evangelism and global missions from the middle of nineteenth century and will continue to collect material created in the twenty-first century and ongoing. Materials offered to the Archives that fall outside of this date range will be recommended to another memory institution or research library.

Subject Areas for Collection

- Ministry of Billy Graham
- The Lausanne Movement
- Mass evangelism initiatives in North America
- International interdenominational evangelism conferences or congresses
- Interdenominational missions conferences
- Interdenominational missionary sending agencies
- Short-term missions agencies
- Bible translation efforts
- Medical missions
- Missionary recruitment and training
- Youth and student ministries
- Religious television and radio broadcasting
- Prison ministries
- Religious music used in evangelism efforts

Subject Areas Not Collected

- Evangelical organizations or individuals not directly involved with evangelism or global missions
- Christian denominations or church congregations
- Christian colleges or universities
- Christian publishing
- Subjects heavily collected by another institution
- The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association

Formats for Collection

Manuscript and Archival Material

- Posters and broadsides
- Maps and surveys
- Pamphlets and promotional literature
- Newsletters and mass mailings
- Newspaper and magazine clippings
- Conference and business records
- Book, article, and sermon manuscripts
- Sheet music
- Oral history transcripts
- Correspondence
- Diaries and similar first-person accounts
- Organizational records
- Professional, personal, and family papers

Audiovisual Material

- Photographs of all varieties
- Slides
- Moving image recordings of all formats
- Oral history interviews
- Sound recordings of all formats

Electronic or Digital Material

The Archives may collect material in digital format where the original no longer exists or is deteriorated or corrupted. Born-digital material will be accepted into the collections if it can be migrated and preserved in updated formats according to industry standards, is compatible with software and hardware currently owned by the Archives, and includes appropriate levels of metadata. The Archives will consider accepting a range of text, image, sound, video, and email files.

Material Formats Not Collected

- Textiles
- Sculptures
- Artwork
- Published books or periodicals, with the exception of manuscripts and heavily annotated books or articles
- Materials duplicated in other collections
- Materials for which the Archives does not have playback equipment
- Broken, corrupted, or obsolete materials

Reference Resources

The Archives may collect reference sources to supplement the collections and increase and advance user access. Examples of reference materials collected include: monographs, biographies, atlases, dictionaries, encyclopedias, published conference proceedings, etc.

Deaccessioning

Donated or purchased material in the Archives, once accessioned, is owned by the Archives and cannot be removed by any outside entity.

Materials may be deaccessioned and removed from the collection under the following circumstances:

- Transfer to another Wheaton College repository, such as the Marion E. Wade Center or Buswell Library Special Collections
- Transfer to another memory institution or research library if material is deemed more complementary to their collections
- Exchange of material with another memory institution or research library
- Removal and destruction at the discretion of the Archives staff if material is significantly underused, damaged, or deemed outside the Archives collecting policy

Preservation

The preservation of archival material is of highest priority. Original materials are stored in climate-controlled stacks in acid-free folders and boxes. All original materials are examined for mold/water damage and pest infestation upon arrival and thoroughly cleaned from dust.

If materials purchased by or donated to the Archives are deemed too fragile for research use, the archivists will create a research copy for use in the Manuscripts Reading Room and the original will remain in storage to prevent further damage to the item. Any materials for which microfilm or digital surrogates exist should remain in secure storage, and users must access the research copies instead.

Intellectual Freedom and Collection Challenges

The Archives strives to support the highest level of intellectual freedom in its collecting practices and will collect, accession, exhibit, loan, and provide unrestricted access to material in any format that supports and contributes to the mission and purpose the Archives as is described in its collection development policy.

Any challenges to material deemed sensitive or questionable in the collections will be considered by the Director of the Archives in collaboration with the Archives staff. If the challenged material is reference material, it can be removed from the Manuscripts Reading Room and stored off-site at the discretion of the Archives Director. If the challenged material is original material, it will remain in Archives secure storage. Information may be redacted or removed for a specified period of time at the discretion of the Archives Director. If a challenge is rejected, material will continue to be accessible to users upon request.

Anyone interested in lodging a complaint against material currently held in the Archives collections will be requested to submit a letter describing the nature of the objection. All complaints will be reviewed by the Archives Director in a timely fashion and individuals submitting challenges will be contacted accordingly.

Statement on Copyright

The Archives seeks to provide the highest level of collection access to users. These efforts include creating digital surrogates of items in the collections and making them, along with born-digital material, available on the Internet through the Archives website, blog, digital exhibits, and catalog system. In keeping with this mission, any donor who holds the copyright to original materials must assign nonexclusive rights to the Archives at time of donation. Transfer of copyright will be reflected on the deed of gift.

Donors who hold copyright include: photographers; composers; authors of manuscripts, letters, and diaries; oral history interviewees; and the like. The Archives is not liable for copyright infringement by patrons using the collections.

Commitment to Non-competition

The Archives is committed to developing its collections in such a way as it does not duplicate the holdings of similar memory institutions or research libraries. As such, the Archives will not enter into direct competition with such institutions for collections or other resources.

Collection Development Policy Updates

The Archives Collection Development Policy is crafted by the staff of the Archives and is approved by the Dean of Library and Archives and the Provost. The policy will be reevaluated and updated every five years to ensure the highest level of quality research material to the Archives' research community.

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