

Newberry Library
Collection Development Policy
American Indian and Indigenous Studies

I. Overview

a. History and Definition of the Collection

The Newberry has actively and continuously collected materials for American Indian and Indigenous Studies since the 1911 donation of Edward E. Ayer's book and manuscript collection. However, collecting priorities and chronological scope have shifted over this period.

Edward Ayer's own collecting had a strong focus on documentation of early contacts between Indigenous peoples of the Americas and European explorers, settlers, and colonizers, with some added emphasis on the Spanish colonial empire. In the 1890s his collecting scope grew to include Indigenous peoples of Hawaii and the Philippines as those lands were claimed by the United States. In all of these cases, the focus was on accounts from the European and European-American perspectives, and this was continued to greater or lesser degree into the middle of the twentieth century by curators responsible for developing the collection.

Prior curators also placed varying degrees of emphasis on research into pre-contact Indigenous cultures, and on twentieth-century Indigenous cultures. Ayer's own interest in acquiring transcriptions, Photostats, and other facsimiles or surrogates for otherwise unobtainable original documents was continued by Newberry curators well into the second half of the twentieth century. In recent decades, priorities focus more attention and resources on Indigenous perspectives in print, manuscript, and visual form; on contemporary Indigenous cultures; and on unique primary sources in original format.

At some periods since its founding in 1972, the Newberry's D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies has acquired and kept some materials separate from the Newberry's formal and permanent collection. These materials include Indigenous newspapers and newsletters, books, a curricular library of printed and audiovisual teaching aids, and some artifacts. Since roughly 2010, McNickle Center and Newberry curatorial staff have collaborated on developing a process for curatorial staff to collaborate on routing materials received by the McNickle Center for possible addition to the formal and permanent collection, or to assess and disperse them in appropriate ways.

In general, we define the collection following current definitions of the field of Indigenous Studies—and American Indian Studies as a specialized subfield of Indigenous Studies—as an interdisciplinary field “that seeks to understand the

experiences and lives of Indigenous people and communities, past, present, and into the future. It also studies how Indigenous communities and the countries in which they live influence and define each other.” (Source: <https://www.ualberta.ca/native-studies/about-us/what-is-native-studies>, accessed 4/16/2020)

b. Relation to other Newberry collections

While the Ayer Collection remains the primary named collection of materials for Indigenous peoples of the Americas, Hawaii, and the Philippines, other named collections with significant amounts of material related to Indigenous Studies include:

- Graff (westward expansion of United States)
- Fitzgerald (polar exploration)
- Bonaparte (historical linguistics)
- Greenlee (colonial Brazil)
- Ruggles (Pre-1872 US history)

Special (Case) and General Collections also include materials related to Indigenous studies.

c. Relation to other Chicago-area collections

Virtually every academic library includes some coverage of American Indian and Indigenous Studies as part of collecting in American history, other area studies, ethnic studies, or other priorities. Chicago-area collections with some intentional focus on rare and unique primary sources in the subject area include:

- University of Chicago. The Special Collections Research Center includes dozens of archival collections in the area, especially papers of faculty affiliated with its Department of Anthropology. Also of note are the Native American Educational Services (NAES) Records.
- Field Museum, Rosenthal Library. Includes focus on anthropology and ethnology, and the Museum’s Archives are a rich source for related topics.

II. Collecting Guidelines

a. Subject scope

As in most collecting areas, the Newberry prioritizes acquisition of primary sources over secondary sources for American Indian and Indigenous Studies. It further prioritizes rare or unique primary sources available to scholars at few other repositories, and copies of printed works that exhibit unique characteristics (annotation or other marks of interesting use or ownership, binding, etc.) or features such as illustration or unusual format that make consultation of physical (rather than digital) objects important for certain kinds of research.

Additional scope considerations for American Indian and Indigenous Studies include:

- Materials related to all Indigenous peoples in the Americas (including the Caribbean); the Indigenous people of Hawaii; the Indigenous peoples of the Arctic regions; and the Indigenous peoples of the Philippines are considered within scope and actively acquired.
- Materials on the world's many other Indigenous peoples may be collected as part of collecting secondary sources for Indigenous Studies, or for comparative purposes, but are considered out of scope for primary source collecting.
- In general, priority is given to acquisition of materials created, published, and/or endorsed by American Indian, Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian people in the United States, as well as other people of Indigenous heritage throughout the Americas.
- Chronological scope for most current collecting is 1492-Present, with emphasis on 1920-Present. Chronological scope for past collecting has varied, including periods in which collecting included archaeological sources and other documentation of Indigenous peoples prior to European contact, and in which collecting prioritized pre-1920 materials.
- Historical materials that include specific types of information that is sensitive for particular Indigenous groups or cultures will not be intentionally collected without consultation of appropriate officers of the affected group. See the Newberry's policy on Access to Culturally Sensitive Indigenous Materials for further information.
- Historical materials that document the histories of encounters between settler-colonists and Indigenous people inevitably include documentation and examples of violence, abuse, racism, and appropriation. Such materials are considered within scope and actively acquired, so long as they do not violate the Newberry's policy on Access to Culturally Sensitive Indigenous Materials.

b. Format scope

The format scope of the American Indian and Indigenous Studies collections is unusually broad for the Newberry. It includes:

- Printed books and pamphlets
- Periodicals including newspapers and newsletters
- Modern manuscript collections
- Individual manuscripts
- Maps
- Broadsides
- Artworks on paper
- Photographs
- Ephemera (especially postcards)
- Subscription databases

The subject area also includes significant amounts of surrogate materials for originals held in other repositories or private collections, including microform, Photostat, and

transcribed primary sources (handwritten and typescript). These formats remain accessible and significant portions of the collection, but are no longer actively collected.

Three-dimensional non-codex artifacts and artworks not on paper (such as paintings, hides, or beadworks) are important formats for American Indian and Indigenous Studies, and are present in the Newberry's collections in small numbers. In general, such formats are considered out of scope, as better suited to museum environments; however, in strictly paper-based collections, non-Indigenous perspectives predominate and many archival silences are present. For that reason, exceptional circumstances may warrant occasional acquisition of an artifact or artwork if it is critically relevant for improving understanding of other Newberry collection items, or if it holds high research value as part of an archival collection.

- c. Level of collecting for subsets:
 - i. Printed Primary Sources

The Newberry holds unparalleled collections in the following specialized areas, and continues to collect them as comprehensively as funding, space, and other considerations allow:

- American Indian Captivity Narratives. All editions and printings, nonfictional and fictional, of “works containing experiences of captives among the [American] Indians” (as defined in the Newberry bibliography *Narratives of Captivity Among the Indians of North America*).
 - Captivity narratives outside of the present-day United States are within scope, but are not collected comprehensively.
 - Most captivity narratives feature the experiences of non-Indigenous captives, but narratives of captivity of a member of one American Indian group by another are also within scope.
- Indigenous Languages of North and Central America. The Newberry collection in this area is unique for its geographic range and for its strength in the nineteenth century.
 - All materials in Indigenous languages of this geographic range are within scope, but material from 1800-present is most actively collected.
 - While referred to as a “linguistics” collection, the collection’s focus is on language documentation, description, and instruction (grammars, dictionaries, vocabularies, and texts, be they literary, religious, or educational).
 - Scholarly linguistic studies and descriptions of language structure and syntax are within scope but generally acquired by donation only.
 - Indigenous languages of South America, the Arctic, Hawaii, and the Philippines are also well represented in the collections

and within scope, but not collected as actively as those of North and Central America.

In addition to these comprehensive collecting areas, the Newberry currently places emphasis on collecting rare printed primary sources in the following categories:

- Writings by and about Native peoples of the Midwest (US and Canada)
- American Indian activist organizations and individuals, and protest actions: pamphlets, periodicals, gray literature, and ephemera
- Comics books, graphic novels, and zines by Indigenous peoples of the Americas
- Books, pamphlets, periodicals, and ephemera produced by and for American Indian educational institutions
- Documentation of performance of Indigeneity:
 - Intertribal American Indian gatherings and performances open to the general, non-Indigenous public: powwows, pageants, parades, ceremonials
 - Indigenous performance in Wild West shows
 - Printed ephemera for films by and about American Indians
 - Non-Indigenous “playing Indian” in literature, theater, film
- Real-photo postcards
- Maps
 - Indigenous cartography
 - Cartography of allotment and settler encroachment on Indigenous lands
- Materials of genealogical and local history interest
 - Directories
 - American Indian community histories
- Books with marks of Indigenous ownership and use (annotation, inscription, etc.)

ii. Secondary Sources

While the Newberry prioritizes acquisition of primary sources in general and in this subject area specifically, it acquires current scholarly and secondary sources more intensively for American Indian and Indigenous Studies than for most subjects, in keeping with its international reputation as a research hub for the subject area.

Virtually all secondary materials on Indigenous peoples of the Americas, the Arctic, Hawaii, and the Philippines are within scope. Top priority is on American Indian histories, cultures, and literatures, particularly in the

Midwest and Great Plains. Secondary priorities are the First Nations of the central Canadian provinces (Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan) and the Indigenous peoples of Mexico and Guatemala.

The following categories are **deemphasized** in current secondary source collecting and generally acquired only through donation:

- Archaeology (LOC Class CC)
- Physical Anthropology (LOC Class GN49-296)
- Pre-1492 History (LOC Class E51-73), except the Maya
- Sciences (LOC Class Q)
- Materials on Indigenous peoples outside of the Americas

iii. Modern Manuscript and Archival Collections

In collecting unique manuscript and archival collections in American Indian and Indigenous Studies, the Newberry follows these principles:

- The archival record in American Indian and Indigenous Studies should be primarily administered by the archives of Indigenous nations and tribes themselves.
- The Newberry seeks to supplement this record by collecting unique materials that do not easily fit within the archives of a particular nation or tribe, and/or that may be collaboratively administered with a tribe's archives. Examples here may include the records of intertribal organizations; family papers for families including members from multiple nations; or papers of members of nations without a formal archives or without capacity for particular materials.
- The Newberry will not acquire the papers of an enrolled member of an American Indian nation or tribe, or a Canadian First Nation, without seeking prior consultation with the archivist or historical officer of that group by either the Newberry or the donor, to ensure the papers are not of interest to or obtainable by the group's own archives.
- The Newberry will not intentionally acquire papers of anthropologists or other non-Indigenous fieldworkers who obtained information without the full, knowledgeable, and documented consent of the Indigenous peoples whom they encountered.

Within the framework of these principles, the following are areas of special emphasis for continued collecting in modern manuscript and archival collections:

- Records of American Indian activist organizations, papers of individual American Indian activists, and documentation of Indigenous-led protest actions
- Papers and records documenting Indigenous life in the Midwest, particularly in Chicago
- Papers of Indigenous people prominent in other fields actively collected by the Newberry (religion, music, dance, theater, printing and graphic design, cartography, literature)
- Papers of Indigenous families across multiple generations

iv. Artworks

The Ayer Collection is one of the few Newberry collections which includes original works of visual art. Within limited budgetary means, the Newberry currently places emphasis on collecting artworks in the following categories:

- Artworks on paper by enrolled members of American Indian nations and Canadian First Nations, with priority for those living in the Chicago area
- Photographic portraiture of Indigenous people by Indigenous photographers
- Artists' books by Indigenous creators

The following formats are held by the Newberry in limited numbers, but are considered out of scope for further collecting:

- Oil paintings
- Hide paintings

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Approved by the Collection Development Steering Committee

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