



Collecting Policy – Photographic Collections

Overview and Scope of Collections

As part of its collecting activity, Georgia State University Special Collections and Archives has from its inception acquired photographs related to organized labor in the South, Georgia State University and its history, and, later, popular music, women, gender and sexuality, and social change. With the acquisition of the Lane Brothers Commercial Photographers Photographic Collection in 1985, the department began to build an important collection of photographic material documenting events, personalities, businesses and organizations, buildings and construction, and daily life in Atlanta and the Southeastern region. The Atlanta area photographers' collections include photographs from a variety of independent photographers such as Ernest Welch, David Lennox, Steve Eberhardt, and Tom Coffin. Another significant acquisition includes the Atlanta Journal Constitution photo archives which contains over 6,000,000 photographs, negatives, and digital images from the newspaper. Our photographic collections are estimated to include around 10,000,000 photos primarily produced between the years 1940 and 2019.

Individual Collections and Research Strengths

Though the collections include photographs made all over the world, the vast majority of the photographs document Atlanta, Georgia. The bulk of the material is in the form either of paper photographic prints or acetate negatives; it contains few older or unusual photographic formats. The cornerstones of the photographic collections are the Lane Brothers Photographers Collection and the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (AJC) Photographic Archive. Employed by insurers, advertisers, developers and real estate companies, public relations firms, and other organizations or individuals, the Lane Brothers were one of the busiest photography companies in the city and documented the life of Atlanta's majority culture, circa 1940-1970. The AJC archive represents feature, news, and sports photojournalism created or obtained for the city's most widely distributed newspapers, and documents the city's infrastructure, noteworthy events, prominent leaders, and the daily life of its residents exhaustively, circa 1870-2004 (bulk 1980-2000).

The collections include photojournalistic, commercial, and personal photography collections. Although individual photographic items that complement the subject strengths of the collection will be considered, preference is given to complete collections documenting the work of an individual or firm. Fine art photography is not collected. The AJC archive includes a quantity of photos that are the intellectual property of news services, entertainment corporations, and other commercial creators (many in fax form). When possible, such rights entanglements are avoided.

Chronological Periods Collected

No chronological period is excluded; however, content should align with research strengths. Items of notable age or format that are outside of collected subjects may be accepted for their exemplary or teaching value.

Geographical Areas Collected

The collection focuses on photographers and photography of Atlanta and the state of Georgia.

Formats

The collecting scope encompasses all analog and digital still photography formats. When motion picture film or analog or digital video is part of a collection and complements other visual components, it will be considered for acquisition, but moving images will not be collected actively. Cellulous nitrate negatives and film will not be accepted.

Digital photographs created, received, or maintained in a non-tangible, electronic format including born-digital and scanned images, may be warehoused online (aka: cloud storage such as GoogleDocs or Microsoft OneDrive), on a mainframe, on a computer hard drive, or on any external storage medium, including disks and thumb drives, handheld computers (ex: Blackberry), and cell phones. All digital images, both born digital and digitized from the collection are stored in our digital preservation system which is designed to keep these photos available and accessible in perpetuity.

Donating Collections

Georgia State University is happy to accept donations that fall within its collection scope. Any collection accepted commits us to the task of organizing and preserving it, which involves hand labor and costs for archival supplies. Donors are encouraged to include a monetary donation to fund the cost of processing and preserving their materials.

Due to limited staffing, budget and space, all collection donations are subject to review by the Head of Special Collections and Archives or the Dean of Libraries and may be declined. Partial collections are discouraged, but may be reviewed at the discretion of the Archives.

When a donation is accepted, a deed of gift must be signed by the donor specifying the materials to be donated. This deed of gift will be negotiated between the donor and Georgia State University. Special conditions may be specified by the donor, but GSU Special Collections and Archives may refuse any donation in which it deems the conditions of use overly restrictive.

The GSU Special Collection and Archives discourages:

- Materials that are irreparably damaged or infested by insects or mold.
- Materials in which the donor's ownership is in question or disputed.
- Plaques, trophies, books, artwork, and objects.
- Duplicate materials due to lack of space.

- Collections that contain materials that do not fit within the scope of our collection areas. Copies, digital or physical, of materials donated to another repository.
- Collections for which the Archives is unable to provide sufficient support to preserve and provide access to archival records.
- Collections for which the Archives is unable to provide suitable space, staffing, supplies, and equipment.
- Material placed on permanent loan, and will not assume liability for materials not owned by Georgia State University.

While any one of the above attributes does not constitute a compelling reason for refusing a collection, the acquisition of a collection with one or more of these deficiencies may be refused or temporarily delayed. During periods of severe deficiency in resources, the GSU Special Collections and Archives will give priority to new accessions of University records whenever possible.

Donors may make arrangements to examine the material they have donated and can be given a copy of any inventories, finding aids, or other research materials produced by Special Collections and Archives about the donated material.

Georgia State University is a nonprofit organization and has been granted tax-exempt status by the IRS. Donations may qualify as tax-deductible. This, however, does not permit the archives staff to appraise gifts. Under IRS regulations, no library, archive, or museum can perform an appraisal. A list of qualified appraisers will be provided upon request.

Access and Use

All collections will be made accessible to researchers through finding aids, databases, digital collections, and our website as appropriate. Some collections may not be disseminated publicly via the web due to copyright restrictions. Those collections will only be accessible onsite during our regular reading room hours.

Some collections may be used for public exhibits on Georgia State University campuses, however, we will not commit to specific exhibition requests from donors. Exhibits will be created and disseminated at the discretion of the collection archivist.

Cooperative Agreements

Georgia State University Special Collections and Archives will not collect material that is related to a specific person or institution that is already comprehensively covered by another archival institution. Wherever possible, we will work cooperate and collaborate with institutions maintaining complementary collections.

Guidelines Review

This Collection Policy will be reviewed and evaluated every 5 years to ensure that the mission of the GSU Special Collections and Archives is being met.

