ARCHIVAL RESEARCH, A PRIMER

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Handling Instructions

- Be gentle
- One folder out of the box at a time
- One person handling material in each folder at a time
- Replace folders in order (use an OUT card)
- Keep papers in order (turn pages like a book)
- No ink or liquids
Finding Archives: Discovery Tools

Tools that search across multiple institutions:

■ WorldCat*
■ ArchiveGrid
■ Archive Finder*
■ ArchivesWiki

*A subscription is required for full access.
Use “Advanced Search”
Another approach: Biographical Databases

- American National Biography*
- Biography Resource Center*
- Gale Literary Database (including Contemporary Authors)*

(search your library’s databases for “biograph”)
Types of Description: Catalog Record
Types of Description: Finding Aids

Overview

Repository: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208240
New Haven, CT 06520-8240
Email: beinecke@yale.edu
Phone: (203) 432-4950
Fax: (203) 432-4067

Call Number: 7703 RE 3


Title: Richard Wright papers

Dates: 1937-1978

Physical Description:
9 1/2 linear ft. (143 boxes, including oversize) - 3 bound volumes - 2 broadsides - 2 miniature items

Signature:
The Richard Wright Papers contains manuscripts, correspondence with other writers such as Nelson Algren, Arna Bontemps, Ralph Ellison, Chester Himes, Langston Hughes, Okakura Takuboku and Margaret Walker, photographs, financial and legal documents and printed materials relating to the life and work of Richard Wright. Included are drafts of such works as Black Boy and Native Son, photographs of trips to Spain and Ghana, various items of personal memorabilia such as Wright's playing card box, and a film of Wright's screen test for the movie version of "Native Son".

View/Search:
To view and/or search the entire finding aid, see the Full HTML or the Printable PDF.

Finding Aid Links:
To cite or download this finding aid, use the following addresses: https://hdl.handle.net/relations/beinecke/wright

Digital Images:
Search for digital images from this collection.

Administrative Information

Provenance:
The Wright Papers were purchased in 1976 from Mrs. Ellen Wright, Richard Wright's widow.

Information about Access:
This collection is open for research.

Restricted Physical access to the collection may be requested with permission of the appropriate curator. A digital reference copy is available.

This collection may be accessed online at Yale's Library Online Catalog (YLOC). For more information, please check the library's online catalog, ORBi. Material for which the location is given as "FIL" must be requested 72 hours in advance. Please consult with Beinecke Access Services for more information.

Ownership & Copyright:
The Richard Wright Papers are the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Copyright is retained by the authors or their heirs. Additional information is available at the appropriate curator.
Typical Components of a Finding Aid

- Overview: descriptive summary, size ("extent"), provenance, restrictions, citation, copyright information, contact information, access information, [material removed]
- Biographical or historical note
- Scope and content note
- Container list
Types of Documents in Literary Archives

- Correspondence
- Manuscripts
- “Personal Papers” (incl. journals, diaries, daybooks, personal documents, scrapbooks…)
- Photographs
- Ephemera/“memorabilia”
- Scrapbooks (sometimes in “Personal Papers”)
Planning Your Visit: Time Considerations

- Is the material accessible?
- How much material is there?
- How long will it take to review?
- Descriptive clues: holograph, typescript, ALS, TLS, date ranges
- What is the reproduction policy?
- What is the digital photography policy?
Some Practical Considerations

■ What are the hours of operation?
■ What are the procedures for entering the facility? Are there clothing restrictions?
■ How do you request material? How long does it take for material to arrive (time for retrieval)?
■ What kind of note-taking is permitted? (Laptop? Loose paper? Photography?)
During Your Visit

- Note citation information from finding aid/catalog record
- Keep track of box/folder numbers for documents
- Note copyright information if available (WATCH File: http://norman.hrc.utexas.edu/watch/)