

Area Studies – Africana Studies and Hispanic Studies Collection

Purpose and Scope of the Collection

- The Area Studies Collection (Africana Studies and Hispanic Studies) supports the research and teaching of multiple departments at Texas A&M University, particularly the Global Languages & Cultures Department in the College of Arts & Sciences, with its minors in Africana Studies and Hispanic Studies for Community Engagement, but also with departments across CLAS, including History, Sociology (which has a Minor in Latino/a and Mexican-American Studies), and English. Disciplines that inform or are informed by these areas of study include among others: literature, linguistics, history, political science, religion, sociology, anthropology, economics, labor, law, legal issues, performing/visual arts, military history, psychology, and science.
- The collection also supports students, staff, and faculty with similar research interests throughout the campus. Moreover, the policy also supports the research of faculty, staff and students that contribute to the critical understanding of the salience of the African and Hispanic heritages in other disciplines throughout the university.
 - The Collection more broadly supports the research efforts of scholars and students nationally and internationally, helping thereby to maintain Texas A&M University's worldwide reputation as a top-level research university.
 - Because Texas A&M is a federally-recognized Hispanic Serving Institution, it has a particular obligation to provide its Hispanic student, staff, and faculty populations with access to the histories of their peoples and cultures. Texas' historical, cultural, and geographical proximity to Mexico and Central America in particular means that Hispanic Studies materials have significant relevance to our state.
 - The role of the Libraries is to help ensure that all members of the TAMU campus community have a place where their voices can be heard and where they can learn about experiences similar to their own. The Area Studies Collection contributes to this obligation by providing sources of information by and about African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Hispanic people from outside the United States, and people of the African Diaspora, groups that have substantial presences on this campus and in the TAMU System.
- **Covers**
 - The Area Studies Collection collects all sorts of materials that contribute to a better understanding of the social, cultural, political, and economic expressions of people of African and/or Hispanic descent, considered broadly. The Collection is designed to support the research interests of scholars across multiple disciplines, as well as the reading interests and curiosity of general readers.
 - Materials are primarily collected from the mid-19th century forwards, though earlier materials are also collected depending on their scholarly significance or importance to the development of African or Hispanic history and culture.
 - Materials are primarily collected in English and Spanish, though other non-English materials are and will be collected depending on the scholarly significance of the items.
 - Materials will be accepted without geographic limit, reflecting the worldwide distribution and impact of the Afro-Diasporan and Hispanic cultural worlds.
- Primary sources are materials created in the time period being studied. These sources can include (but are NOT limited to): diaries, manuscripts, newspapers and periodicals of the time, monographs of the time, government records (including legislative reports,

debates, and testimony, as well as court opinions and census records), religious records (including sermons and tracts, are published at the time), oral histories, et al. Primary source materials can be in almost any format from printed collections of correspondence, archival manuscript collections, microfilmed newspapers, or digitized monographs. All formats are desirable with permanent archival access as a major consideration.

- Secondary sources are materials created later by someone that did not experience firsthand or participate in the events in which the author is writing about. Secondary sources often summarize, interpret, analyze or comment on information found in primary sources. These sources can include (but are NOT limited to) published books of history (academic and popular), literary works, documentary films and audiovisual presentations, biographies, dissertations, et.al. All formats are desirable.

Collection Strengths

- The majority of the materials in the Africana Studies Collection are related to the Black Power Movement, Civil Rights Movement, and its alternative Hispanic and Asian Movements. These include papers of activists, academic, and literary figures such as Angela Davis, Alex Haley, Amiri Baraka, Ernest Gaines, the Black Panthers, Eldridge Cleaver, Jayne Cortez, Charles Levy Civil Rights Collection, Berenice Napper, Jeff Stumpo-JavaShock papers, Political and Radical collections, and materials related to enslaved Africans.
- There are significant collections that focus on popular culture that include Black Superheroes, Charles Criner Papers and Art Collection, historical trade cards and photographic postcards.
- The plight of enslaved Africans and the early Black community in the US are included in a number of collections such as Slavery and Emancipation documents, Guadalupe Baptist Association, William Harrison Mays, The Crawford Family Letters, Abolitionists Archive, Warrington Penn Portraits, and The Cherokee Freedman Collection.

Current Collecting Foci

- Acquisition status: Active
- The Area Studies – Africana Studies Collection is interested in Black revolutionary and alternative movements in the US and globally, the Diaspora of African people, and collections related to Africana popular culture. The Collection also looks to collect books, archival materials, and other materials relating to African-American history, culture, and politics more specifically.
- The Area Studies – Hispanic Studies Collection looks to collect books, archival materials and other materials relating to the Hispanic social, political, and cultural experience in the United States and Mexico in particular, but will also accept materials from outside that geographical area that apply to the collection's mission.

Institutional Repository/Digitization Projects

- Digital Black Bibliographic (DiBB) Project-a grant funded joint project of Professors Amy Earhart, Rebecca Hankins, Maura Ives, and Sarah Potvin. The collection contains working papers and Afro-Scholar newsletter from the 1970s-80s.
- In Fulfillment of a Dream: African Americans at Texas A&M University Online exhibit. Campus-wide exhibit developed and housed at Cushing Memorial Library and Archives. This exhibit attempts to explore the complex history of African Americans on the TAMU campus since its founding in 1866.

- Texas Agricultural Extension Service - Images of a Rural Past online exhibit. In the early 1970s, the Texas A&M University archives acquired a large collection of photographs from the Agricultural Communications Office of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. This collection consists of nearly 7000 photographs, many feature African Americans. The vast majority are black and white images ranging from the 1930s through the late 1970s, although some photographs date from earlier and later periods. These images were captured by photographers working throughout the state, and document many activities aimed at improving the lives and livelihood of rural Texans. Farming, home improvement, raising of livestock, and other programs of the Extension Service were illustrated and the photographs were retained for educational and publicity initiatives. Through a grant from the TexShare Access to Local Holdings program, the images have been digitized and entered into a searchable database.

Connections to other Special Collections and Archives collections

- The Area Studies Collection has connections to many other Cushing collections, whether by shared subject matter, shared contextual interest, or by simply adding to the multidimensionality and geographic/cultural scope of other collections. These collections include:
 - The Women's & Gender Studies Collection (the experiences of African-American women and Latinas, as well as the particularly vulnerable population of LGBT people of color, are vital to document and preserve)
 - University Archives (to help document the African-American and Hispanic-American student, staff, and faculty experience on TAMU's campus)
 - The Colonial Mexican Collection (to document the origins and evolution of the Hispanic community in Mexico and former Mexican territories)
 - The Science Fiction & Fantasy Research Collection (the creative voices of writers of color form a significant part of the long creative record of science fiction and fantasy)
 - The Sports/Martial Arts Collection (the Boxing segment of this collection, in particular chronicles an immensely visible African American presence in a popular sport)

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