

Collection Development Policy The University of Arizona Poetry Center

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Purpose

This document outlines key principles for the growth and ongoing management of The University of Arizona Poetry Center Library's collections. These principles are intended to provide specific guidance for the development of our library collections in support of the Poetry Center's mission.

Poetry Center Library Community

The Poetry Center Library is located in Tucson, Arizona. One of the finest libraries of contemporary poetry in the United States, it operates as an area of special emphasis in the University of Arizona (UA) College of Humanities. The Library is open to the public six days a week. We serve a wide spectrum of community members in Tucson and Southern Arizona, as well as statewide, national, and international literary communities.

The Library's on-site community includes UA students, faculty, staff, and alumni who take and teach Creative Writing classes at the Poetry Center, as well as students and faculty of Pima Community College; visiting researchers who come to the Poetry Center to consult its collections; adult residents of Tucson and Southern Arizona who visit the Poetry Center to read, write, take community classes, and attend free public programs, such as the Poetry Center's Reading and Lecture Series; and K–12 students and their families who visit the Poetry Center's Children's Collection and attend free public programs for families and youth.

The Library also serves many community members off-site, through satellite programming and extensive digital collections. Our off-site community includes attendees of the long-running Arizona Prison Writing Project, for which the Poetry Center is the institutional home; attendees of the Poetry Center's satellite Reading and Lecture Series in Phoenix, Arizona; and adults and youth in Southern Arizona who attend outreach programs facilitated by the Poetry Center's Docent Program and Speakers' Bureau. Thousands of researchers and readers from across the nation and around the world access our digital collections, which are free and open to the public. These include voca.arizona.edu, a digital library of more than 800 audio and video recordings from the Poetry Center's Reading and Lecture Series; the [LaVerne Harrell Clark Photographic Collection](#) of portraits of poets; the Poetry Center's web site, poetry.arizona.edu; and the Poetry Center's blog, [1508: A Blog Where Poetry Lives](#).

The Library's community is diverse and inclusive. Our community members include readers, writers, performers, teachers, students, scholars, and others with a common interest in the literary arts.

Poetry Center Mission and Background

The mission of the Poetry Center is to advance a diverse and robust literary culture that serves a local-to-global spectrum of writers, readers, and new audiences for poetry and the literary arts.

The Poetry Center was founded in 1960 by writer, editor, and philanthropist Ruth Walgreen Stephan (1910-1974). Stephan's initial vision for the Poetry Center called for a space in which the public could "encounter poetry without intermediaries." Over time, this vision has evolved to include both a special collections poetry library and a wide variety of public programming (such

as poetry readings, classes, and discussion groups). The library collection was launched with several hundred volumes donated personally by Stephan, and in 1962, the Poetry Center's Reading and Lecture Series was inaugurated with a reading by Stanley Kunitz. Since that time, more than 1,000 writers have read or lectured here, including most major contemporary U.S. poets, significant international visitors, and emerging artists. Library collections, meanwhile, have grown to include more than 70,000 items related to contemporary poetry. The Poetry Center is housed in the award-winning Helen S. Schaefer Building, completed in August 2007.

The Poetry Center Library is at the heart of the institution's mission: the Poetry Center possesses one of the finest, most extensive, and most fully accessible collections of contemporary poetry in the nation. The Library's collections are non-circulating, but are entirely open to the public. The majority of our books are in open stacks ideal for browsing.

Responsibility for Collection Development and Management

The Library's staff shares responsibility for collection development and management, overseen by the Poetry Center's librarian. As a small staff, we make collection development and management decisions collaboratively, with all staff members contributing to decision-making. In our decisions, the Poetry Center's librarian and library staff take into consideration the Center's unique position as an independent area of special emphasis in the UA College of Humanities, as well as the depth and breadth of resources available at other libraries on the UA campus. We welcome requests for resources from all members of our community, and encourage community members to speak with library staff to share recommendations.

Selection Criteria

In selecting items for its collection, the Library aims to reflect the diverse landscape of contemporary poetry. We strive to collect works that broadly represent a diverse range of aesthetics, writers, and presses. We make a special effort to locate and acquire works by independent presses and small presses with independent distribution. In our decisions, we balance the need for collection growth with space and budget considerations.

Scope of Collections

Subject Fields

The Poetry Center Library uses the collection depth indicators known as the RLG Conspectus, developed by the Research Libraries Group. The collection depth indicators guide collection development decisions by indicating to what extent a library attempts to collect materials within a given subject field. The RLG Conspectus levels are 0 = Out of Scope; 1 = Minimal Level; 2 = Information Level; 3 = Study Level; 4 = Research Level; 5 = Comprehensive Level. A [detailed description](#) of the RLG Conspectus levels is found at the web site of the U.S. Library of Congress.

The list below describes the Library's subject fields and lists the corresponding collection development indicator for each field. Subject fields not found on this list are generally recognized as falling out of scope.

Contemporary poetry. This policy defines ‘contemporary’ as written and published at or after the Poetry Center’s year of founding, 1960. **4 (Research Level)**

Contemporary editions of poetry written prior to 1960. While the Library’s focus is on work written and published at or after its 1960 founding, we also collect major earlier works of use to contemporary poets and writers, chiefly in contemporary editions. **3 (Study Level)**

Contemporary poetry criticism. The Library chiefly collects poetry criticism published by poets. Secondly and on a smaller scale, other contemporary poetry criticism is collected. **3 (Study Level)**

Biographies of poets. In this subject field, we include biographies of poets and editions of poets’ letters (chiefly contemporary poets). **2 (Information Level)**

Children’s literature/poetry. The Library focuses on books of poetry published for children and young adults, written by adults, children, and young adults. Secondly, we also collect illustrated works of non-poetry children’s literature published on themes related to arts and literature. **3 (Study Level)**

Contemporary fiction. We collect a limited selection of contemporary fiction published by faculty of UA’s Creative Writing Program, as well as a limited selection of contemporary fiction published by visiting writers in the Poetry Center’s Reading and Lecture Series. We also collect selected fiction published by poets, with special attention to cross-genre works that combine poetry and fiction. **1 (Minimal Level)**

Contemporary creative nonfiction. We collect a limited selection of contemporary creative nonfiction published by faculty of UA’s Creative Writing Program, as well as a limited selection of contemporary creative nonfiction published by visiting writers in the Poetry Center’s Reading and Lecture Series. We also collect selected creative nonfiction published by poets, with special attention to cross-genre works that combine poetry and creative nonfiction. **1 (Minimal Level)**

Reference. We maintain a limited collection of standard reference works, such as dictionaries and thesauri, with a special collecting focus on writers’ resources and poetry-specific reference works. **3 (Study Level)**

Formats

The Library primarily collects printed books and periodicals. Additionally, we collect fine press editions, broadsides, chapbooks, artist-made books, and book objects, primarily housed in the Archives and Rare Book Room. We also maintain a very limited collection of commercial audio and video recordings in physical form (e.g., CDs, DVDs).

The Library collects archival materials produced by the Poetry Center and/or documenting its institutional activities. Archival collections include the Poetry Center’s institutional records; print and digital photography produced by the Poetry Center and its staff; and digital audio and video recordings of the Poetry Center’s Reading and Lecture Series, housed and made available to the public on voca.arizona.edu, with backup on physical media. The Library also houses and

catalogs the Master of Fine Arts theses of UA's Creative Writing Program, by agreement with the Department of English, which has ownership of the materials. The Library does not otherwise collect unpublished poetry manuscripts, nor archival materials or papers outside of its institutional activities.

The Library does not collect electronic books, serials, or subscriptions.

Languages

The Library primarily collects English-language materials. We also collect multilingual editions of poetry translated into English. Monolingual editions in languages other than English are generally considered out of scope.

Geographical Areas

The Library primarily collects the work of U.S. poets and poetry in translation, chiefly from U.S. publishers. We also regularly collect the work of English-language poets from other countries and world regions, including but not limited to work published by major poetry publishers of the United Kingdom and Canada. Within U.S. poetry, the Library's particular geographical strengths include Tucson and Southern Arizona, as well as the state of Arizona; University of Arizona authors; the U.S. Southwest; and Southwest American Indian nations.

Chronological Guidelines

As described above in "Scope of Collections," the Library collects at the research level editions of poetry written and published after 1960 and continuing to the present day, with a special focus on recently published works. We also collect at the study level contemporary editions of poetry written prior to 1960. We may collect or accept as gifts works published prior to 1960 on a minimal level.

Duplicates

The Library does not generally collect more than one copy of an item or accept duplicate materials as gifts. We may collect differing editions of a single work (e.g., revised editions; multiple translations of a single text) as appropriate to the collection's scope.

Selection Aids

Resources used by the Library's staff in making selection decisions include small press web sites and e-news lists; poetry blogs, review sites, and newsletters; notification lists from distributors; conference book fairs, such as the Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP) Bookfair; and recommendations from library users, Poetry Center staff, UA Creative Writing faculty, staff, and students, and other members of the Library's community. Additionally, we regularly consult the Poetry Center's schedule of events, with an eye toward collecting a representative range of works by visiting writers.

Intellectual Freedom

The Poetry Center Library affirms and adheres to the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, as found at <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>.

Collection Maintenance

The Library reserves the right to review any accessioned materials and recommend their removal from the collection based on considerations such as physical condition, duplicate status, and failure to meet the criteria/scope of the Library's collection development policy. Materials that are in deteriorating physical condition will be repaired or replaced if possible. Materials will only be deaccessioned with the review and approval of the Poetry Center's librarian and the appropriate collection specialist.

Replacements

Lost, stolen, or damaged library materials may be replaced, if possible, at the discretion of library staff or at the request of library users. When considering if an item should be replaced, we will evaluate the item's relevance to the scope of our collections, the availability and cost of the replacement, coverage of the item's subject area by existing holdings, and requests for the title from users.

Revisions

This policy is reviewed annually by a committee from the Poetry Center's library staff, who may retain the policy as written, make minor revisions, or recommend the need for a major revision of the policy. The Poetry Center's Executive Director may also request a minor or major review of the policy at any time. In all cases, a complete review and revision of the policy shall take place ten years from its initial date of approval, and every ten years thereafter. Date of last major revision: 03-28-2017 (initial date of approval).

Appendix: Gifts Policy

Your interest in donating library materials to the University of Arizona Poetry Center is very much appreciated. Gifts from our friends help us to build our library, one of the largest and most publicly accessible collections of contemporary poetry in the United States. Thank you for your generosity and support of the Poetry Center!

Financial Contributions

Financial contributions to the Poetry Center and its library represent our area of greatest need. Each year, private contributions from people like you provide the majority of the Poetry Center's funding for programs that range from K-12 and adult education to community readings and lectures. There are many ways to give, and you can learn more by contacting Executive Director Tyler Meier at tmeier@email.arizona.edu or (520) 626-5880, or by visiting our [donation web page](#).

Library Materials

When considering making a donation of library materials to the Poetry Center, we encourage you first to read over the policies below and check our [online library catalog](#) to ensure that the materials you wish to donate are not already present in our collection.

Donations that may be appropriate for the Poetry Center's library collection generally meet the following criteria: (*Please note that due to space and personnel constraints, we are unable to accept all materials offered to us*)

- **In Scope:** books and broadsides of contemporary poetry in English or English translation, generally published after 1960
- **In Small Quantities, or Single Items:** the library does not have the processing resources to accept large quantities of materials
- **In Good Condition:** the library does not have the resources to care for damaged or deteriorating books
- **Do Not Duplicate Existing Holdings in the Collection:** prior to contacting the Poetry Center library, please check our [online library catalog](#) to see if the materials you would like to donate are already in the collection.

As a small organization with limited space and processing resources, the library does not accept materials that fall outside of the above criteria. Examples of materials that cannot be accepted include materials in large quantities; toys, games, kits, and children's activity sets; two-dimensional or three-dimensional visual art (except poetry broadsides and artist books/book objects); teaching materials, curricula, textbooks, or workbooks; materials that are not in the library's scope of contemporary poetry, or are peripheral to that scope; personal or professional files (authors' papers); damaged books; books with mold, mildew, or infestations; and books that duplicate existing holdings in the collection.

Donations of library materials that are accepted by the University of Arizona Poetry Center become the property of the Arizona Board of Regents and cannot be returned to the donor for any reason. Upon receipt, the Poetry Center library reserves the right to make all determinations

regarding retention, location, use, maintenance, removal, or disposal. The library reserves the right to dispose of unsolicited materials as it deems appropriate.

The Poetry Center's library staff appreciates speaking with potential donors in advance to determine if your donation is a good fit. If you have questions or would like to discuss a potential donation, please contact the librarians at 520-626-3765.

Read Between the Bars

[Read Between the Bars](#) is a volunteer-based Tucson organization that provides books free of charge to people who are incarcerated in the State of Arizona. The University of Arizona Poetry Center is not affiliated with Read Between the Bars but is pleased to serve as a site for one of the organization's book donation bins, located in the lobby of the Helen S. Schaefer Building.

If you have books in good condition that are not acceptable for donation to the Poetry Center's collection, please consider bringing them to the Read Between the Bars donation bin. Read Between the Bars accepts new or used paperback books (no hardcover books, magazines, or audiovisual materials) in good condition, on any subject.

Acknowledgement

Donations of library materials that are accepted for the Poetry Center's library collection are acknowledged with a letter. Donors must provide a name and address in order to receive an acknowledgement letter. Additionally, if desired by the donor, a "Gift of..." note may be made in the catalog records of accepted materials acknowledging the source of the donation.

Appraisals of gifts are the sole responsibility of the donor. According to U.S. tax regulations, the Poetry Center library cannot appraise donated materials. It is the responsibility of the donor to keep appropriate record of materials donated.