

BURROUGHS, WILLIAM S., 1914-1997.

William S. Burroughs collection, circa 1950-2004

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Burroughs, William S., 1914-1997.
Title: William S. Burroughs collection, circa 1950-2004
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 1192
Extent: 2.75 linear feet (6 boxes), 2 oversized papers boxes (OP), 1 bound volume (BV), and AV Masters: .25 linear feet (1 box)
Abstract: Collection of correspondence, artwork, writings, printed material, and audiovisual material by and about American novelist William S. Burroughs.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

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Related Material in Other Repositories

[William S. Burroughs papers](#), New York Public Library; [William S. Burroughs papers](#), The Ohio State University Libraries Special Collections; [William S. Burroughs papers](#), Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library; and [William S. Burroughs collection](#), Arizona State University Libraries Special Collections

Related Materials in This Repository

[Barry Miles William S. Burroughs collection](#).

Source

Purchase, 2011.

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Citation

[after identification of item(s)], William S. Burroughs collection, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing

Arranged and described at the folder level by Sarah Quigley, 2015.

Collection Description**Biographical Note**

William S. Burroughs (1914-1997) was an American novelist, essayist, and writer of experimental fiction. A primary member of the Beat generation, he was an avant-garde author who affected postwar popular culture as well as literature. Born in St. Louis, Missouri, to Mortimer Perry Burroughs and Laura Hammon Burroughs (née Lee), William graduated from Harvard University in 1936. While studying medicine in Vienna, Austria, in 1937 he married Ilse Klapper, a German-Jewish refugee to help her escape to America; they never lived as a married couple and divorced in 1946. At that time, Burroughs was living in Greenwich Village, New York City, with Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg and was romantically involved with Joan Vollmer. Burroughs and Vollmer had one son together, William Burroughs, Jr., and lived together until her death in 1951.

In 1959, Burroughs became involved with the Church of Scientology, going "clear" during an intensive two-month course in 1968. Throughout the decade that he was a member, Scientology heavily influenced his writing, including his cut-up technique in which a text is cut up and rearranged to create something new. He quickly became disillusioned with the organization after attaining "clear" status, primarily due to the church's security procedures and his negative opinion of L. Ron Hubbard. He was expelled later in 1968.

Burroughs is known for the books *Junkie* (1953) and *Naked Lunch* (1959), among many other works of fiction and nonfiction. *Naked Lunch* was notably the subject of an obscenity trial before its publication in the United States in 1962. Burroughs settled in Lawrence, Kansas, in 1981, where he continued to write and collaborate with other authors and musicians. He died there in 1997.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of correspondence, artwork, writings, printed material, and audiovisual material by and about William S. Burroughs from circa 1950-2004. Some files in the collection were labeled in Burroughs's hand; the original folders have been retained and their contents left in their original order. Original titles, when present, have been transcribed and the files are identified in the container list. Correspondence primarily consists of letters between Burroughs and figures such as Brion Gysin, Alex Trocchi, Claude Pelieu, Mary Beach, and Richard Aaron, as well as letters to Burroughs from Dick Seaver, Peter Matson, Claude Pelieu, Henry A. Sofeico, Jr., Richard Aaron, Tom Veitch, Udo Berger, Jann Wenner, Jan Herman, Allen DeLoach, Daniel Halpern, and Malcolm McConnell. In his letters, particularly to Pelieu and Beach, Burroughs speaks frequently about his disillusionment with the Church of Scientology. Other topics include the film adaptation of *Naked Lunch*, requests for Burroughs to review books and other works, and the construction and placement of his archive. Letters from Udo Berger

also occasionally include poems. Additional correspondence contains letters to Brion Gysin from Burroughs's long-time assistant James Grauerholtz which discuss Burroughs's publishing efforts and travel schedule, films including a possible adaptation of *Junkie* starring David Bowie, and the planning of the Nova Convention.

One notable element of the collection is an alphabetical accordion file, unlabeled by Burroughs but with a photograph of an empty chair pasted to the front cover. The everyday file and fast sorter includes correspondence, financial records such as hotel bills and receipts, artwork by unidentified artists, business cards, writings by others that were sent to Burroughs, and printed material such as flyers for events. Materials are in original order, which is roughly alphabetical. Of particular interest may be a 1964 issue of "The Burrough" in folder C; the newsletter has had a portion of one column cut out.

Artwork in the collection consists of paintings and sketches by Burroughs. Writings primarily contain typescript drafts of Burroughs's short stories, cut-ups, and fragments from his books *Naked Lunch* and *Interzone*. There is a dream journal from 1968, as well as typed notes about his dreams. There are also proofs, a corrected typescript, and the publisher's correspondence and records from the publication of Bradford Morrow's edition of *Doctor Benway*. Edits to the typescript were made on the outside of plastic sleeves that originally held the pages. The pages have been removed from the sleeves for their protection; the sleeves have been retained, though the editing marks are very faint.

Printed material includes advertisements, flyers, invitations, newsletters, posters, and other items relating to Burroughs. Some items document readings or other events in which Burroughs participated, however most of this material relates to publications or events about Burroughs, including bibliographies of his work, catalogs advertising sale of Burroughs's books or manuscripts, and inventories of collections of Burroughs's archives. Audiovisual material in the collection is predominantly recordings of the Naropa Summer Institute Writing Program's, William Burroughs Conference held in 1985.

The final portion of the collection consists of correspondence and other documents from Robert Jackson, a prominent collector of William Burroughs material. Correspondence in this section is mostly from Ted Morgan to Jackson regarding access to Jackson's collection for research and publication of Morgan's *Literary Outlaw*; there is an autographed photocopy of this work. This section also includes documentation of Jackson's acquisition of Burroughs material and the 1984 purchase agreement between Jackson and Arizona State University for a portion of his Burroughs collection.

Arrangement Note

Arranged by record type, then in chronological or alphabetical order.

Container List

Correspondence

Box	Folder	Content
1	1	1960, 1970-1973, 1995 circa
1	2	1960-1965, 1970-1973, "Publishers, agents, interviews" [original Burroughs file]
1	3	1962-1964 circa, William S. Burroughs to Alex Troochi
1	4	1963-1967, Brion Gysin to Andreas Brown and Ira Cohen
1	5	1964 circa, Alex Troochi to William S. Burroughs
1	6	1967-1969, William S. Burroughs to Claude Pelieu and Mary Beach
1	7	1972-1973, Brion Gysin to William S. Burroughs [original Burroughs file]
1	8	1972-1976, William S. Burroughs to Richard Aaron
1	9	1973 [original Burroughs file]
1	10	1973-1974, "Letters for which files exist" [original Burroughs file]
1	11	1975-1980, James Grauerholtz to Brion Gysin
1	12	1976-1980, William S. Burroughs to Brion Gysin
1	13	1980, Brion Gysin to James Grauerholtz

Everyday file and fast sorter, circa 1964-1975

1	14	C
1	15	D
1	16	E
1	17	F
1	18	G
1	19	H
1	20	I, J
1	21	K
1	22	L
2	1	M
2	2	N, O
2	3	P, Q
2	4	R
2	5	S
2	6	T
2	7	U, V
2	8	W
2	9	X, Y, Z
2	10	Unsorted material from the back of the folder
2	11	Folder

Artwork

- 2 12 Christmas card, 1989 [addressed to Robert Jackson]
- 2 13 Ink sketch, numbers repeated inside grid, circa 1960s
- 2 14 Ink sketch, numbers repeated in shapes, circa 1960s
- 2 15 Painting, black and red cloud forms, circa 1960s
- 2 16 Painting, repetition of "September 17, 1899" in red, purple, and yellow, circa 1960s
- 2 17 Pencil sketch, "The Blind Mouth," with dream notes on verso, circa 1950s

Writings

- OP1 1 *The Addict in the Street* by Jeremy Lerner, proofs, 1971
- 2 18 "Alaska and Dahfar," "Red Boy in Port City," "Red Desert Lizard Boy," drafts and cut-ups, undated [original Burroughs file]
- 2 19 Bradford Morrow's "Doctor Benway" edition, corrected typescript, undated
- 2 20 Bradford Morrow's "Doctor Benway" edition, preface, typescript, 1979
- 2 21 Bradford Morrow's "Doctor Benway" edition, proofs, 1979 [1 of 2]
- OP2 1 Bradford Morrow's "Doctor Benway" edition, proofs, 1979 [2 of 2]
- 2 22 Bradford Morrow's "Doctor Benway" edition, publisher's correspondence and administrative records, 1979
- 3 1 "Carson's Family," circa 1972 [original Burroughs file]
- 3 2 "Cobble Stone Gardens," typescript, 1973 [photocopy with original letter to Richard Aaron]
- BV1 - Cut-ups, undated
- 3 3 Cut-ups/Fold-ins, circa 1960s
- 3 4 Cut-ups/Fold-ins, circa 1966
- 3 5 Dream journal, 1968
- 3 6 James Grauerholtz cut-ups, undated [includes note to Robert Jackson, 1984]
- 3 7 *Interzone* fragments, typed with annotations, circa 1950s
- 3 8 *Naked Lunch*, final film script, undated [1 of 2]
- 3 9 *Naked Lunch*, final film script, undated [2 of 2]
- 3 10 *Naked Lunch* fragments, typed with annotations, circa 1950s
- 3 11 Notes, undated
- 3 12 *Nova Trilogy* typescripts, circa 1960s
- 3 13 "On Call" script and source material for program about L. Ron Hubbard and Scientology, 1969 [includes letter to Claude Pelieu and Mary Beach; source material consists of five Hubbard publications; original Burroughs file]
- 3 14 "On the Death of Jack Kerouac," carbon typescript, 1969
- 3 15 "Scientology Revisited," annotated typescript, 1969 [includes letters to Claude Pelieu and Mary Beach]
- 3 16 "Shannon Story," typescript, 1960

- 3 17 Typed dream notes, undated [original Burroughs file]
 3 18 Typed fragments annotated with note from "A.G.," circa 1950s
 3 19 Unidentified author, untitled poem, undated
 3 20 Unidentified author, untitled typescript, second draft, undated [photocopy]
 4 1 Unpublished manuscripts, 1960-1964 [original Burroughs file]: Nova cut-ups; "Brief History of the Occupation;" Newspaper story cut-ups, 1963 ["Towers Open Fire" period]; "The 'Priest' They Called Him;" Cut-ups, 1963 ["Towers Open Fire" period]; Nova related draft typescript; The Ticket that Exploded cut-ups; Typescript drafts later published as "Inferential Kid"
 4 2 Untitled draft about Alamout (Iran), annotated typescript, circa 1970s
 4 3 Untitled fragments, typescripts, undated [with envelope addressed to Hiram Hayden]
 4 4 Untitled typescript, undated
 4 5 "Wild Boys overflow," typescripts, circa 1960s

Photographs

- 4 6 Burroughs, William S., undated

Printed material

- 4 7 Advertisement, "Burroughs on Video," Water Row Books, undated
 4 8 Advertisement, *The Cat Inside*, Grenfell Press, 1986
 4 9 Bibliography, "3 Beat Poets: Gregory Corso, Allen Ginsberg, Lawrence Ferlinghetti," an exhibition of books and manuscripts from the Harris Collection, Brown University Library, 1962
 4 10 Book dealer catalogs, circa 1977-2001
 4 11 Burroughs, William S., obituaries, 1997
 4 12 Catalogue of the William S. Burroughs archive, circa 2001 [photocopy]
 4 13 Clipping, *Phoenix New Times*, page 137 advertising Burroughs appearance at the University of Arizona, 1984
 4 14 Cover, "Burroughs: The Movie," 1983
 4 15 Exhibition announcement, William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin, Centre George Pompidou (Paris, France), undated
 4 16 Flyers, William S. Burroughs and John Giorno poetry reading, St.. Mark's Church (New York, New York), 1974
 4 17 Goodman, Michael B., *William S. Burroughs: A Reference Guide*, 1990 [autographed photocopy]
 4 18 *Harpers and Queen*, October 1982 [includes articles about Burroughs and Gysin]
 5 1 Invitation, John Du Cane's "Sign" premiere screening (London, England), undated [photocopy]
 5 2 Invitation, "Ports of Entry: William S. Burroughs and the Arts," Los Angeles County Museum of Art (California), 1996
 5 3 Newsletter, Arizona State University Libraries, Fall 1984

- 5 4 Newsletter, Coach House Press, July 1974
- 5 5 Newsletter, The Ohio State University Friends of the Libraries, Spring 1999
- OP2 2 Poster, "An Evening with Allen Ginsberg," Brown University, 1985
- OP2 3 Poster, William S. Burroughs reading, Arizona State University, 1984
- 5 6 Program, William Burroughs at Harriman Studio, 1974
- 5 7 Rushing, Lynda Lee, "William S. Burroughs: A Bibliography," *Bulletin of Bibliography and Magazine Notes*, volume 29, number 3, 1972 [photocopy]
- 5 8 Tee Shirt featuring image of Burroughs, by "Burkhart," 1990
- 5 9 William S. Burroughs papers, preliminary inventory, undated

Audiovisual

- AV1 - Anderson, Laurie, William S. Burroughs and John Giorno, "You're the Guy I Want to Share My Money With," 1981 [original: audio cassette]
- AV1 - Naropa Summer Institute Writing Program, William Burroughs Conference, Eric Mottram, July 22, 1985 (1 of 2) [original: audio cassette]
[Digital/digitized copy available in the Reading Room: id bn73s]
- AV1 - Naropa Summer Institute Writing Program, William Burroughs Conference, Eric Mottram, July 22, 1985 (2 of 2) [original: audio cassette]
[Digital/digitized copy available in the Reading Room: id bn74x]
- AV1 - Naropa Summer Institute Writing Program, William Burroughs Conference, Anne Waldman, Cut Up method, July 23, 1985 (1 of 2) [original: audio cassette]
[Digital/digitized copy available in the Reading Room: id bn72n]
- AV1 - Naropa Summer Institute Writing Program, William Burroughs Conference, Anne Waldman, Cut Up method, July 23, 1985 (2 of 2) [original: audio cassette]
[Digital/digitized copy available in the Reading Room: id bn7n0]
- AV1 - Naropa Summer Institute Writing Program, William Burroughs Conference, William Burroughs, Greg Corso, Allen Ginsburg, July 24, 1985 (1 of 2) [original: audio cassette]
[Digital/digitized copy available in the Reading Room: id bn7q8]
- AV1 - Naropa Summer Institute Writing Program, William Burroughs Conference, William Burroughs, Greg Corso, Allen Ginsburg, July 24, 1985 (2 of 2) [original: audio cassette]
[Digital/digitized copy available in the Reading Room: id bn7jk]
- AV1 - Naropa Summer Institute Writing Program, William Burroughs Conference, Ted Morgan, July 25, 1985 [original: audio cassette]
[Digital/digitized copy available in the Reading Room: id bn752]
- AV1 - Naropa Summer Institute Writing Program, William Burroughs Conference, Colloquium, July 27, 1985 (1 of 2) [original: audio cassette]
[Digital/digitized copy available in the Reading Room: id bn7rd]
- AV1 - Naropa Summer Institute Writing Program, William Burroughs Conference, Colloquium, July 27, 1985 (2 of 2) [original: audio cassette]

[Digital/digitized copy available in the Reading Room: id bn7sj]

Robert Jackson material

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| 5 | 10 | Acquisition of Burroughs material, 1980-1987 |
| 5 | 11 | Arizona State University Libraries purchase agreement for Burroughs collection, 1984 |
| 5 | 12 | Correspondence, 1984-1989 |
| 5 | 13 | Correspondence, 1990-2004 |
| 5 | 14 | Grauerholtz, James, "The Death of Joan Vollmer Burroughs: What Really Happened," 2002 [includes letter to Jackson and text of Grauerholtz speech at The Ohio State University during Burroughs exhibit, 2001] |
| 5 | 15 | Morgan, Ted, <i>Literary Outlaw</i> proofs, 1988 [1 of 2] [photocopy inscribed to Jackson] |
| 5 | 16 | Morgan, Ted, <i>Literary Outlaw</i> , proofs, 1988 [2 of 2] [photocopy inscribed to Jackson] |
| 6 | 1 | Notes, unidentified, undated |
| 6 | 2 | Other archives and manuscripts catalogs (not Burroughs material), circa 1970s |
| 6 | 3 | Printed material about Burroughs related events and programs, 1984-2000 [1 of 2] |
| OP2 | 4 | Printed material about Burroughs related events and programs, 1984-2000 [2 of 2] |
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