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Opening of Additional Leslie White Papers

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The papers of Joseph Casagrande span the years 1938 to 1982, during which time he was professor of anthropology at the University (1960-82), head of the newly established department (1960-67), and director of the Center for International Comparative Studies (1968-82) and Campus Research Services (1979-82). The collection is organized into three major sections: 1) personal papers and correspondence, 2) correspondence, programs and reports concerning professional anthropological associations, and 3) research and teaching.

Casagrande took an active leadership role in the American Anthropological Association, the American Ethnological Society, and the Applied Anthropology Association; his papers relating to the history of the A. A. A. from 1938-1981 include a collection of annual meeting programs and much correspondence relating to the business of the Association. The third group of papers contains manuscripts, microfilm and photocopied documents, publications, course materials, field notes and diaries, photographs, maps, tapes and transcripts of tapes relating to fieldwork, primarily among the Highland Indians of Ecuador, but also among the Chip-pewa and Comanche Indians of North America. There are also files on research methods and the history of anthropology, and on linguistics and psycholinguistics.

The collection contains significant holdings in microfilm and transcribed documents from the Archivo General de las Indias in Seville, the Biblioteca Ecuatoriana, and the British Museum—all of it collected for a project on "The Social Position of the Ecuadorian Indian in Colonial Times and After Independence," for which Casagrande was principal investigator. The materials, which also include information on Peru and Columbia, were indexed by project researchers, and a supplementary finding aid has been compiled by the University Archives.

For further information concerning the use of these three collections, interested researchers should contact Maynard Brichford, University Archivist, or William J. Maher, Assistant Archivist, at the University Archives, University Library Room 19, Urbana, Illinois 61801.

II. Opening of Additional Leslie White Papers

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When the papers of Leslie A. White (housed in the Michigan Historical Collections of the Bentley Library in Ann Arbor) were described in HAN X:2 (1983), I indicated that some materials were to remain sealed until ten years after White's death. The two boxes thus restricted were opened this past March, and their contents will be of interest both to specialists in Pueblo cultures and to those interested in the development of American anthropology.
Box #24 contains Dr. White’s fieldnotes on the Pueblos, in the form of dated handwritten entries in lined paper journals or notebooks. Easily legible, they include material on kinship, family relations, economic conditions, religious beliefs, artifact descriptions, and incidental information collected between 1923 and 1957 at Acoma, Hopi, Laguna, Santa Ana, Sia, Santo Domingo, Santana, San Felipe, Taos and Zuni. They are quite candid, with references to specific named informants—which may account for their having been sealed until now.

Box #18 contains materials of a personal nature. These include journals and diaries kept by Dr. White, somewhat sporadically, from 1918 until his death. The contents are rather varied, and include appointment books and a book of birthdays he wished to remember, as well as long dissertations on life, as he viewed it. Some of the more interesting entries discuss his dealings with other anthropologists and with administrators at the University of Michigan. Although White was a popular and stimulating teacher (who in 1950 attracted 350 students to a course called "The Mind of Primitive Man"), his material and his approach to it often made administrators uncomfortable. White’s frustration over this seeming contradiction between student popularity and administrative disapproval makes interesting reading.

These two boxes also include class notes from courses White took with Fay-Cooper Cole and some notes on Morgan and Bandelier.

The Bentley Library now has in its possession my rather extensive analysis and indexing of White’s papers, so that it is possible for researchers to write to the Library and find out if there is material relevant to their interests. I would also be happy to supply any additional information that I can.

III. The Oral History of Anthropology: Do-it-Yourself

Robert Ehrich, William Fenton, John Fox and Richard Woodbury have set in motion a program to collect oral historical materials through the self-interviews of anthropologists who feel that they have interesting reminiscent material to preserve. The idea is that they will record these themselves, and send copies of the tapes to Herman J. Viola, the director of the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC 20560, where they will be permanently archived. Tapes should be accompanied by an identification sheet giving the name and address of the interviewer/see, along with the names of persons mentioned prominently on the tapes, as well as other materials that seem appropriate (e.g., a written resume or biobibliography). A checklist of possible interview topics is included in the article describing the project in the Anthropology Newsletter, April 1985. A fuller checklist is available from Ehrich (Box 175, Fitzwilliam, NH 03447. It is also hoped to collect an inventory of existing taped materials, wherever they exist.