

# Guide to the Judson Crews Papers

YCAL MSS 536



by H. Dean and Andrea Benefiel

2011-11-11

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
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**CALL NUMBER:** YCAL MSS 536

**CREATOR:** Crews, Judson, 1917-2010

**TITLE:** Judson Crews papers

**DATES:** circa 1930-1991

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 17.44 linear feet (41 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The Judson Crews Papers provide evidence of the personal and professional life of American poet Judson Crews between 1930 and 1991. The papers document Crews' career as a poet, printer, and small-press publisher, and consist of correspondence, writings, and personal papers. Crews and his wife Mildred Tolbert, a photographer and writer, were members of the artistic community in Taos, New Mexico in the mid twentieth-century. There is also some material relating to Crews' friendship with Henry Miller. Correspondents include Crews' daughters Anna Bush Crews and Carole Judith Crews as well as Wendell B. Anderson, Carol Bergé, and J. Whitebird.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.crews>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.crews>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Judson Crews, 1972-1991.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

The Judson Crews Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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## Preferred Citation

Judson Crews Papers. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Processing Information

This collection received a basic level of processing, including rehousing and in some instances minimal organization, at or around the time of acquisition. Further description was carried out in 2011-2012. Various acquisitions associated with the collection have not been merged and organized as a whole. Each acquisition is described separately in the contents list below and titled according to month and year of acquisition.

As a rule, descriptive information found in the Collection Contents section is drawn in large part from information supplied with the collection and from an initial survey of the contents. Folder titles appearing in the contents list below are often based on those provided by the creator or previous custodian. Titles have not been verified against the contents of the folders in all cases. Otherwise, folder titles are supplied by staff during initial processing.

This collection includes materials previously identified by the following call numbers: Uncat Za Ms 13, Uncat Za Ms 39, Uncat Za Ms 46, Uncat Za Ms 95, Uncat Za Ms 122, Uncat Za Ms 132, Uncat Za Ms 168, Uncat Za Ms 171, Uncat Za Ms 188, Uncat Za Ms 379, Za Crews, and Zab C867 + 1.

This finding aid may be updated periodically to account for new acquisitions to the collection and/or revisions in arrangement and description.

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## Judson Crews (1917-2010)

Judson Campbell Crews, American author and small-press publisher, was born on June 30, 1917, in Waco, Texas, the youngest of seven children born to Noah George and Tommie Farmer Crews. Following his father's suicide in 1936, Crews worked as a landscape architect in Waco. He then attended Baylor University (A.B., 1941). Crews also started publishing a number of literary magazines, including *Vers Libre* (1937) and *Motive* (1940), the latter established along with Crew's bookstore of the same name.

Following graduation Crews published his first book of poetry, *Psalms for a Late Season*, which was printed by Iconograph Press (1942). Crews served with the U.S. Army Medical Corps during World War II (1942-1944). After which Crews completed a Master of Arts in sociology and psychology (1944) from Baylor University and studied fine arts (1946-1947). Following graduation Crews moved out West, spending time in Washington, Oregon, and California, where he befriended Henry Miller, a relationship he later reflected on in his books *Henry Miller and My Big Sur Days: Vignettes From Memory* (1992) and *The Brave Wild Coast: A Year with Henry Miller* (1997).

After living in California Crews moved to Taos, New Mexico, where he established Este Es Press (1946-1966) and worked as a printer for *Taos Star*, *El Crepusculo*, and *Taos News Publishing Co* (1948-1966).

Crews and Mildred Tolbert (1919-2008), a photographer and writer, were married on October 19, 1947. Crews and Tolbert had two daughters: Anna Bush Crews (1948-) and Carole Judith Crews (1950-).

While in Taos, Crews continued to publish literary magazines such as *The Flying Fish* (1948), *The Deer and Dachshund*, in collaboration with Tolbert and Wendell Anderson, which continued on as *Suck-Egg Mule* (1951), *Taos* (1951), *Poetry Taos* (1957), and *The Naked Ear*. In addition to publishing authors such as Robert Creeley, Charles Bukowski, and Carol Bergé, Crews also published his own writings including *The Heart in Naked Hunger* (1958), *Inwade to Briney Garth* (1960), *A Unicorn When Needs Be* (1963), *Hermes Past the Hour* (1963), and *Angels Fall, They Are Towers* (1965). Throughout his career Crews wrote under several pseudonyms, including Willard Emory Betis, Trumbull Drachler, Charley John Greasybear, Cerise Farallon, and Toby Macadams.

Crews returned to graduate school at the University of Texas at El Paso in 1967. At various points in his career Crews balanced his artistic life with careers in social work and as an educator in sociology and psychology. Crews was employed as a caseworker for the El Paso Country Child Welfare Unit (1966-1967), instructor for Wharton Junior College, Wharton, Texas (1967-1970), psychological counselor and community services coordinator for Community Mental Health Service, Gallup, New Mexico (1970-1971), lecturer at the University of New Mexico Branch College, Gallup, New Mexico (1971-1972), and director of the intensive care unit at the State School for Girls, Chillicothe, Missouri (1973).

Following a separation from Mildred Tolbert in 1972, Crews moved to Africa where he was a lecturer in social development studies at the University of Zambia, Lusaka (1974-1978). While in Africa Crews began writing an autobiography, which remains unpublished. Following his return to the United States, Crews and Tolbert finalized their divorced (1979). Crews returned to Taos where he published more books, including a collection of poems *The Clock of Moss* (1983) edited by Carol Bergé.

Crews died in Taos, New Mexico, on May 17th 2010.

Mildred Tolbert was born in Amarillo, Texas on January 8, 1919. After two years of college Tolbert moved to Taos where she practiced photography, a skill she later taught as a civilian photography instructor at Lowry Field in Denver, Colorado (1943). Tolbert worked in photography laboratories (including Leco Photo Service) in New York for two years before returning to Taos. Tolbert studied literature at the University of Texas at El Paso (1966) and the University of Houston (where she graduated with a bachelor of arts in 1970). In 1973 Tolbert received a fellowship from the Helene Wurlitzer Foundation of New Mexico, an artist residence program based in Taos. Tolbert's works were included in exhibitions at the Shipley Gallery (2005) and the Harwood Museum (2006). Crews died in Ranchos de Taos, New Mexico, on January 22, 2008.

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## Scope and Contents

The Judson Crews Papers provide evidence of the personal and professional life of American poet Judson Crews between 1930 and 1991. The papers document Crews' career as a poet, printer, and small-press publisher, and consist of correspondence, writings, and personal papers. As the Papers illustrate, Crews and his wife Mildred Tolbert, a photographer and writer, were members of the artistic community in Taos, New Mexico in the mid-twentieth-century. There is also some material relating to Crews' friendship with Henry Miller.

Crews' creative life is reflected in his writings and correspondence. The papers include various drafts of his poetry and other writing projects, such as "Henry Miller and the Millennial Oranges of Big Sur," and an unpublished memoir. Some manuscripts are listed under Crews' pen names, such as Charley John Greasybear, Cerise Farallon, and Toby Macadams. Crews' correspondence similarly reflects his literary circle, with correspondents including Joanie Whitebird, who was a writer, editor, publisher, and founder of Wings Press, Phil Nurenberg of Happy Rock Press, and poet Carol Bergé. There are also letters between Crews and Wendell Anderson, a friend and collaborator who also wrote a thesis on Crews titled *A Critical Analysis of Poems by a Contemporary Poet of the Avant-Garde: Judson Crews* (a copy of which is in the

papers). The Papers also include the work of other artists, such as photographs by Mildred Tolbert and writings by Carol Bergé, Wendell Anderson, and others.

Crews' personal life is recorded in his correspondence with his wife Mildred Tolbert, daughters Anna Bush Crews and Carole Judith Crews, as well as Carol Bergé, with whom he was involved romantically.

To a lesser degree the papers relate to Crews' career as a social worker and instructor, with correspondence regarding the New Mexico Department of Hospitals and Institutions, Crews' Master's Thesis on *The Treatment of Social Problems in Recent Southern Literature*, and teaching materials.

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## Arrangement

Organized into eleven groupings: I. 1972-1980 Acquisitions, 1930-1983. II. August 1986 Acquisition, 1984-1985. III. July 1987 Acquisition, 1982-1987. IV. August 1987 Acquisition, 1982-1987. V. May 1989 Acquisition, 1987-1988. VI. January 1990 Acquisition, 1981-1989. VII. April 1990 Acquisition, undated. VIII. November 1990 Acquisition, 1978-1981. IX. February 1991 Acquisition, undated. X. August 1991 Acquisition, 1984-1991. XI. Undated Acquisition, 1980-1984.

Material within this collection has been organized by acquisition reflecting the fact that the collection has been acquired in increments over time. Researchers should note that material within each acquisition overlaps with or relates to material found in other acquisitions (e.g., correspondence, writings, and personal papers can be found in all groupings). In order to locate all relevant material within this collection, researchers should consult each acquisition described in the Collection Contents section.

Researchers should also note that similar material can be arranged differently in each acquisition, depending on how the material was organized when it was received by the library.

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## Collection Contents

### I. 1972-1980 Acquisitions, 1930-1983

11.68 linear feet (28 boxes)

Contains correspondence and drafts of writings.

Former call number: Za Crews

Not arranged in any particular order.

b.1	Collection list and notes	circa 1970
b.1	Prose writings, typescript, corrected 5 Folders	1930s-1940s
b.1	<i>Rape of the Innocent... Rape of the Damned</i> , typescript carbon 2 Folders	1946
b.2	<i>I Have No Pleasure in Them</i> , typescript, corrected	undated
b.2	Clippings and notes	1930s-1940s
b.2	Poetry typescripts and manuscripts 5 Folders	1963-1969
b.3	Poetry typescripts and manuscripts 5 Folders	1947-1970
b.3	Photographs by Mildred Tolbert 2 Folders	undated
b.3	Photographs of Pat Barela sculptures	undated
b.4	<i>The Treatment of Social Problems in Recent Southern Literature</i> , Masters Thesis, typescript 4 Folders	1944
b.4	<i>A Tyranny of Tears</i> , typescript, corrected	undated
b.4	<i>The Unnecessary Serpent</i> , typescript	undated
b.5	Tolbert, Mildred, correspondence 3 Folders	1973
b.5	Correspondence 3 Folders	1970-1973
b.6	Correspondence 2 Folders	1968-1973
b.6	Poetry typescripts and manuscripts 3 Folders	1969-1973, undated
b.7	List of June 1980 acquisition	1980
b.7	Poetry typescripts and manuscripts 7 Folders	1933-1948

b. 8	Poetry typescripts <i>7 Folders</i>	1950-1968
b. 9	Poetry typescripts <i>5 Folders</i>	1968-1972, 1978-1979, undated
b. 9	"Willard Emory Batis," typescript poems	1953
b. 9	"Trumbull Drachler," typescript poems	1953
b. 10	Poetry typescripts	undated
b. 10	Anderson, Wendell, correspondence	1979-1980
b. 10	Anderson, Wendell. <i>A Critical Analysis of a Group of Poems by a Contemporary Poet of the Avant-Garde, Judson Crews</i> , typescript	1969
b. 10	Tolbert, Mildred, correspondence <i>2 Folders</i> Also includes letters from Anna Bush Crews and Carole Crews.	1975-1980
b. 11	"Cerise Farallon," typescript poems	undated
b. 11	"Toby Macadams," typescript poems	undated
b. 11	<i>Rape of the Innocent... Rape of the Damned</i> , typescript, corrected <i>2 Folders</i>	1978 July 26
b. 11	Correspondence, rejection letters, and typescripts <i>3 Folders</i>	1975-1980
b. 12	Anderson, Wendell and Emily, letters to Mildred Tolbert	1969
b. 12	Poetry related mailings and printed material	undated
b. 12	Correspondence, typescript poems, and printed material <i>6 Folders</i>	1959-1970
b. 13	Correspondence and photographs <i>5 Folders</i>	1967-1971
b. 13	Newspapers	1959-1960
b. 13	Teaching materials and correspondence	1969-1972
b. 14	Correspondence <i>8 Folders</i>	1970-1972
b. 15	Correspondence <i>5 Folders</i>	1961-1972
b. 15	Crews, Carole and Anna Bush Crews, correspondence	circa 1970
b. 15	Poems, typescript	undated
b. 16	Anderson, Wendell B., correspondence	1980-1981
b. 16	Crews, Carole and Anna Bush Crews, correspondence	1980-1981



b. 16	Tolbert, Mildred, correspondence	1981
b. 16	Whitebird, Joanie, correspondence	1980-1981
b. 16	Correspondence	1979-1981
b. 16	"Henry Miller and the Millennial Oranges of Big Sur," manuscript and typescript draft	undated
b. 17	Anderson, Wendell and Emily, correspondence <i>6 Folders</i>	1983, undated
b. 17	Benedetti, David. "Beautiful Vulva," typescript	1952
b. 17	Benedetti, David. <i>Mounting Information Text: A Computer-Written Novel Programmed by David Benedetti</i> , typescript	1981 March 29
b. 17	Bergé, Carol. <i>Secrets, Gossip and Slander: A Novel</i> , typescript (photocopy)	1981 August
b. 17	Correspondence, periodicals, etc. <i>6 Folders</i>	1982-1983
b. 17	Tolbert, Mildred, correspondence <i>8 Folders</i>	circa 1983
b. 18	"Fuck Nukes," typescript, corrected	undated
b. 18	<i>The Noose</i> , manuscript notes and correspondence	1978
b. 18	Poems, typescript and manuscript	1975-1979
b. 18	Personal papers, with letters by him and notes for his works	undated
b. 18	Macnab, Alexander. Poems, typescript	undated
b. 18	Macnab, Maggie. "Symmetrical Dualisms," typescript	undated
b. 18	Anderson, Wendell and Emily, correspondence	1980
b. 18	Byrd, Bobby, correspondence and typescripts	undated
b. 18	Crews, Carole and Anna Bush Crews, correspondence	1980
b. 18	Gonzales, Arden, correspondence and typescripts	1980
b. 18	Whitebird, Joanie, correspondence and typescripts	1979-1980
b. 18	Unsorted correspondence	1970-1980
b. 18	Broadsides, clippings, pamphlets, etc.	undated
b. 19	Anderson, Wendell, correspondence	1978-1979
b. 19	Unsorted correspondence, typescripts, and printed material <i>4 Folders</i>	1970-1979
b. 19	Crews, Carole, correspondence	1970-1979
b. 19	Crews, Anna Bush, correspondence	1970-1979

b. 20	Unsorted correspondence, mainly with editors of poetry publications <i>7 Folders</i>	circa 1970-1977
b. 21	Tolbert, Mildred, letters to Judson Crews and Anna Bush Crews <i>7 Folders</i>	1974-1979
b. 22	UNZA papers and correspondence	1973-1975
b. 22	<i>The Apprentice</i> , Literary Quarterly	1934
b. 22	Guggenheim application writing samples, typescript	undated
b. 22	Personal papers, correspondence, and typescripts	undated
b. 22	Whitebird, Joanie, correspondence	1978-1979
b. 22	Correspondence about New Mexico Department of Hospitals and Institutions	1971
b. 22	Unsorted correspondence, mostly with Mildred Tolbert and Carol Bergé	undated
b. 22	Wengler, Joan, correspondence	1977-1978
b. 22	Anderson, Wendell, correspondence <i>2 Folders</i>	1973-1978
b. 23	Poems, typescript, manuscript, and typescript (photocopy) <i>7 Folders</i>	1939-1979, undated
b. 24	Poems, typescript and typescript (photocopy) <i>8 Folders</i>	1947-1976, undated
b. 24	"Lusaka," poems, manuscript <i>3 Folders</i>	1974-1975
b. 25	Anderson, Wendell B. Poems, typescript and typescript carbon <i>8 Folders</i>	undated
b. 26	Anderson, Wendell B. Poems, typescript and typescript carbon <i>8 Folders</i>	1960, undated
b. 26	Bergé, Carol. Correspondence and typescripts	undated
b. 26	"Charley John Greasybear," correspondence and typescripts	1978
b. 26	Unsorted correspondence, typescripts and manuscripts, and printed material <i>3 Folders</i>	1974-1979
b. 26	Poems, typescript <i>2 Folders</i>	undated
b. 27	Anderson, Wendell B., correspondence	1964-1969
b. 27	Anderson, Wendell B. <i>A Blossom Burning Against Time</i> , typescript	undated
b. 28	Anderson, Wendell B. <i>A Critical Analysis of a Group of Poems by a Contemporary Poet of the Avant-Garde</i> , Judson Crews, typescript (photocopy)	1969

**II. August 1986 Acquisition, 1984-1985***0.83 linear feet (2 boxes)*

Contains incoming and outgoing correspondence, and a manuscript draft memoir by Crews.

Former call number: Uncat Za Ms 13.

Not arranged in any particular order.

b. 29	Anderson, Wendell and Emily	1984-1985
b. 29	Bergé, Carol Also contains photographs.	1984
b. 29	Nureburg, Phil	1984
b. 29	Tolbert, Mildred <i>2 Folders</i>	1984-1985
b. 30	Memoir, 1917-1927, manuscript draft <i>5 Folders</i> Pages 1-833	undated

**III. July 1987 Acquisition, 1982-1987***0.42 linear feet (1 box)*

Contains incoming correspondence.

Former call number: Uncat Za Ms 39.

Not arranged in any particular order.

b. 31	Tolbert, Mildred	circa 1986
b. 31	Nureburg, Phil	1984-1985
b. 31	McLaughlin, John	1983-1986
b. 31	Crews, Anna Bush	1982-1986
b. 31	Crews, Carole	1982-1987

**IV. August 1987 Acquisition, 1982-1987***1.25 linear feet (1 box)*

Contains a draft of Crews's autobiography, manuscript draft poems, and correspondence.

Former call number: Uncat Za Ms 46.

Not arranged in any particular order.

b. 32	[Autobiography], typescript, corrected <i>10 Folders</i> Pages numbered 8201-9631.	undated
b. 32	Poetry manuscripts <i>2 Folders</i>	1982-1984
b. 32	Anderson, Wendell and Emily, correspondence	1985-1987
b. 32	Nurenborg, Phil, correspondence	1984-1986
b. 32	Tolbert, Mildred, correspondence	1987
b. 32	Photograph of Crews by Mildred Tolbert and finding aid for Arden Tice Papers at University of New Mexico	undated
b. 32	Bergé, Carol, correspondence	1986-1987

**V. May 1989 Acquisition, 1987-1988***0.42 linear feet (1 box)*

Contains correspondence, a draft of Wendell Anderson's "Taos and This Far South," and assorted short writings.

Former call number: Uncat Za Ms 95.

Not arranged in any particular order.

b. 33	Anderson, Wendell and Emily, correspondence	1987-1988
b. 33	Anderson, Wendell. "Taos and This Far South," typescript draft (photocopy)	undated
b. 33	Essays and autobiographical writings, typescript and manuscript	undated
b. 33	Tolbert, Mildred, correspondence	1988

**VI. January 1990 Acquisition, 1981-1989***0.42 linear feet (1 box)*

Contains correspondence, primarily incoming; as well as photocopies of typescripts of *The Ultimate Minotaur* and *The Anatomy of a Centaur*; manuscript draft poems; and a typescript photocopy of Wendell Anderson's "Taos and This Far South."

Former call number: Uncat Za Ms 122.

Not arranged in any particular order.

b. 34	Whitebird, Joanie, correspondence	circa 1981-1987
b. 34	Tolbert, Mildred, correspondence	1989
b. 34	Editors, etc. Contains correspondence to Crews from the editors of a variety of magazines and other publications.	1982-1987
b. 34	<i>The Ultimate Minotaur</i> , typescript (photocopy)	undated
b. 34	<i>The Anatomy of a Centaur</i> , typescript (photocopy)	undated
b. 34	"Poetry Manuscripts," manuscript drafts 2 Folders Pages numbered 2701-3146.	1984-1988
b. 34	Anderson, Wendell. "Taos and This Far South," typescript (photocopy), corrected	undated

## **VII. April 1990 Acquisition, undated**

*1 linear foot (1 box)*

Contains an undated draft of Crews's autobiography.

Former call number: Uncat Za Ms 132.

Not arranged in any particular order.

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b. 35	[Autobiography] "Copy #1," manuscript and typescript draft <i>15 Folders</i> Pages numbered 4951-6400.	undated
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## **VIII. November 1990 Acquisition, 1978-1981**

*0.21 linear feet (1 box)*

Contains primarily incoming correspondence, with enclosures of poems, photographs, and printed material.

Former call number: Uncat Za Ms 168.

Not arranged in any particular order.

b. 36

Bergé, Carol  
*3 Folders*

circa 1978-1981

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**IX. February 1991 Acquisition, undated***0.63 linear feet (2 boxes)*

Contains photocopied drafts of unidentified writings.

Former call number: Uncat Za Ms 171.

Not arranged in any particular order.

b. 37	Unidentified writing [Autobiography], typescript (photocopy) <i>5 Folders</i> Pages numbered 6551-7300.	undated
b. 37	Unidentified writing [Autobiography], "Copy #2," manuscript (photocopy) <i>3 Folders</i> Pages numbered 4201-4650.	undated
b. 38	Unidentified writing [Autobiography], "Copy #2," manuscript (photocopy) <i>2 Folders</i> Pages numbered 4651-4950.	undated

**X. August 1991 Acquisition, 1984-1991***0.42 linear feet (1 box)*

Contains incoming correspondence and manuscript poems.

Former call number: Uncat Za Ms 188.

Not arranged in any particular order.

b. 39	Anderson, Wendell, correspondence <i>3 Folders</i>	1988-1991
b. 39	Tolbert, Mildred, correspondence <i>2 Folders</i>	1989-1990
b. 39	"Poetry manuscripts," holograph drafts <i>2 Folders</i> Pages numbered 2966-3100, 3147-3300.	1984-1989

**XI. Undated Acquisition, 1980-1984**

*0.42 linear feet (1 box)*

Contains primarily correspondence between Carol Bergé and Crews, with a small amount of correspondence from Bergé to third parties.

Former call number: Uncat Za Ms 379 and Zab C867 +1.

Not arranged in any particular order.

b. 40	Bergé, Carol <i>7 Folders</i>	1980-1984
b. 41	"Judson Crews," <i>Poetry Now</i> , Volume 6, Number 6	1982

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

American literature -- 20th Century  
Authors, American -- 20th Century -- Archives  
Authors and publishers -- United States  
Poets, American -- 20th Century -- Archives  
Publishers and publishing -- United States  
Small presses -- United States

### **Occupations**

Authors -- Taos (N.M.) -- 20th Century  
Poets -- Taos (N.M.) -- 20th Century

### **Names**

Anderson, Wendell B.  
Bergé, Carol, 1928-2006  
Crews, Anna Bush  
Crews, Carole Judith  
Crews, Judson, 1917-2010  
Miller, Henry, 1891-1980  
Tolbert, Mildred  
Whitebird, J.