In the spirit of the recent decision by the Modern Language Society and the
Linguistic Society of America to "do something" about archiving the precious field notes of
prevalent scholars, this essay explores the possibility of beginning our own closed collection
while we were still living. We also addressed the problem of the rapid disappearance of
field written works and sound recordings, which are the primary sources used by scholars
to recreate the cultures of the past. The collection was to be housed at the University where the
Library's usual form for depositing materials has been prepared through a special grant to the Manuscripts collection.

Eventually we hope to have a full-scale index prepared.

As a few other scholars began to discuss adding their materials to the Northwest
Linguistic Collection, a new gift of field notes had to be devised. The wording of the
Library's usual form was such that no active scholar wanted to entrust current research
manuscripts to a division of the library. Although the Beed of Gift included a space for spelling out
special rules, the main body of the form seemed to say that the material was being given
without any control being maintained by the donor. This made people nervous, and several
noted Northwest scholars still refused to begin a sub-collection there.

The specifics finally agreed upon are:

1) Any scholar wishing to begin a named sub-collection is first asked to sign the
Library's Beed of Gift (Deed of Gift), which specifies that the collection will be forever
governed by the original Agreement setting up the collection.

2. This Agreement (see Appendix A) states that the Northwest Linguistic Collection
will be permanently closed with access granted on an individual basis by the Northwest
Linguistic Collection board, consisting of a group of scholars familiar with the current
situation in the Pacific Northwest.

3) The Agreement specifies that copies (photocopies, microfilm/fiche, etc.) of the
materials may be deposited, with the ownership of the originals being given to the Library
but the donor retaining full control over that copy as desired. This allows a
scholar to continue actively working with field notes and recordings, with the assurance
that a safe copy is in the Archives in case of fire, flood, or airline baggage
delivery. In these cases, the ownership of the original is retained by the
Library, and the materials given specific archival permission by the library.

4) Materials in the Collection may be used by any scholar who changes fields and does not wish to
of their ancestors through the telling of their "old stories". It was necessary to be able to
assure them that only persons who were qualified to consult the materials would be
allowed to do so. This was agreed upon.

A major obstacle to this agreement was the fact that none of our board members need
be resident at the University where the collection was to be housed. That was solved by
making the current Archivist or Curator of Manuscripts a member of the Board.

The next step was the writing of the agreement, a form acceptable to the scholars depositing
material, to the University of Washington Libraries' Division of Archives and Manuscripts,
and to the Washington State Attorney General's Office, and to the University of Washington
Board of Regents. Since we were busy collecting still more material, and the Archivist and
Curator of Manuscripts were operating with a small staff, several years passed before the
final agreement was ready.

Although the time span may seem excessive, the manuscript materials were being left in
the Manuscript Collection in "safe copy" form during that period. The Library made
little attempt to document the collection in detail during those early years, since it was
a closed collection and still under negotiation, but in recent years an outline of the
contents has been prepared through a special grant to the Manuscripts collection.

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do any more with with certain materials, or a student who decides to abandon the study of
languages and enter another field or simply change the focus of research).  
5) Those materials are then the property of the Library, but the donor or his heirs may remain still the publication and literary rights, if so specified in the Deed of Gift†.

6) Or a scholar may transfer literary rights to another scholar. It would be wise to do so by formal written document.

7) For reasons of safety, when the Library has physical possession of both copies and originals, they will be stored in different buildings when at all possible (certainly not easily done at present, since the Archives collection is in a separate building.  
8) Also for reasons of safety, no sound recordings will be played back on a machine with recording or erasing capabilities, and at any rate usually only a copy will be used for playback.

These simple rules have made it possible to begin a growing collection of important manuscript materials in an area where the native Indian languages are disappearing. And in the process it has encouraged tribal groups to begin their own collections, though often without the safeguards necessary for a true archive.

Another growing collection, primarily from the Northwest but encompassing all of North America and including considerable ethnographic as well as linguistic material, has been established using the same basic rules. This is the Jacobs Research Funds Collection, housing copies of materials from individuals who receive research grants from the Jacobs Research Funds, just as the Boas Collection at the APS Library houses copies of materials from individuals who receive research grants from the Phillips Fund.

Beginning such a collection takes patience and tact, both on the part of the involved scholars and of the archivists. But it works as well as possible. And the Board has been encouraged to begin other collections in other places. We do encourage scholars involved in Northwest language studies, however, to seriously consider adding safe copies of their material to this growing collection where all the complicated work has already been formalized.

† Little has been written until quite recently about the literary rights of the language consultant who originally contributed the material. This problem has not been resolved to the satisfaction of all, and reassurances that the board will act responsibly in all cases may not satisfy some. At any rate, knowing that the collection is under the continuing control of a group of scholars and Indians who are responsible is enough for most donors.

APPENDIX A

THIS AGREEMENT made (DATE) between the Board of Regents of the University of Washington, hereinafter referred to as the "University," acting on behalf of the University of Washington Archives and Manuscripts Division of the University of Washington Library, and Laurence C. and M. Terry Thompson, hereinafter referred to as "Contributor,"

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, it has been recognized by the University and a number of scholars interested in Linguistics that the establishment and maintenance of a Northwest Linguistic Collection in the University of Washington Library would be of benefit both to the University of Washington and to the aforementioned scholars;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual agreements hereinafter contained, the parties hereto hereby agree for themselves as follows:

The University agrees:

1. To establish and administer a Northwest Linguistic Collection in the University of Washington Library System, which collection shall consist of the correspondence, field notes, notebooks, audio-recordings, holographs, typescripts of articles, reports and unpublished papers, and other related material presented to the University by contributors to the Collection;

2. To designate upon the request of a contributor any material presented to the Northwest Linguistic Collection as material included in the Northwest Linguistic Collection, provided that no agreement is hereby made to consolidate any material presented to the Northwest Linguistic Collection as such into uninterrupted shelving units‡;

3. To store all original material presented to the Northwest Linguistic Collection at a location separate and apart from the storage location of any copy of such material, but to otherwise make such original material available for copying or other use under the same rules governing the access to copies of such material;

4. To have audio-recordings in the Northwest Linguistic Collection played for users only on equipment in which accidental erasure is non-existent or minimal; and

5. To establish through the University of Washington Library's Archives and Manuscripts Division policies or arrangements for the copying of material presented to the Northwest Linguistic Collection, the object of such policies or arrangements being the minimizing of any hazard to the original integrity of material donated to the Northwest Linguistic Collection.

The Contributor agrees:

1. To donate to the University, and more particularly to the Northwest Linguistic:

‡ This rather legalistic jargon has a relatively mundane meaning: that material donated to the collection may be physically stored in several different locations, rather than all together on the same shelves. Since the Archives has each donation numbered, and items are placed on the shelves in numerical order, it is not difficult for the Archives employees to find all of the materials from any particular donor or in any particular language, whether they are microfilm/fiche, original notebooks, photographs, tape recordings, etc.
Collection of the University of Washington Library, the present ownership of the original and one or more copies of the contributors correspondence, field notes, notebooks, audio-recordings, holographs, typescripts of articles, reports, and unpublished papers, and other related material as selected by the Contributor, provided that the present possession of the original, as well as all publication and literary rights to contributed material, shall remain with the Contributor for his or her life if so desired by the Contributors. Unless previously donated, present possession of the original and all publication and literary rights to contributed material shall pass to the University upon the death of the Contributor, to be administered by the Board of Trustees of the Northwest Linguistic Collection.

The University and the Contributor mutually agree that

1. A Board of Trustees composed of at least six persons shall govern access to contributed material in the Northwest Linguistic Collection upon the death of the Contributor of that particular material. Initially trustees will be jointly appointed by the University and those who have already contributed to the Northwest Linguistic Collection. Additional trustees may be appointed by agreement of a majority of the trustees. A permanent trustee shall be either the University Archivist or the Curator of Manuscripts. The term of office for each trustee shall be for life, unless the office is resigned. Each trustee shall name his own successor in office, subject to the approval of the other trustees at the time of succession.

2. Access to material presented to the Northwest Linguistic Collection by the Contributor will be governed by the following rules:

   a. During the Contributor's life, access to any material in such contribution for the purpose of copying or other use will be granted only with the written permission of the Contributor. Following the death of the Contributor, access to any material in such contribution for the purpose of copying or other use will be granted only with the written permission of two of the trustees of such contributed material;

   b. A copy of material in the Northwest Linguistic Collection may be made for a Contributor or any other person granted access to the Collection at the expense of the person requesting the copy, and such copy may be removed from the University of Washington premises.