Ware R. Smith Diaries

Johanna Michael
ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives
909 West Adams Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90007
Phone: (213) 741-0094
Fax: (213) 741-0220
Email: askone@onearchives.org
URL: http://www.onearchives.org
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Ware R. Smith Diaries

Collection number: Coll2008-029

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Processed by:
Johanna Michael
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Michael P. Palmer

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Ware R. Smith diaries
Dates: 1952-1986
Collection number: Coll2008-029
Creator: Smith, Ware Rayburn, 1935-1986
Collection Size: 5 archive cartons. 1.5 linear feet.
Repository: ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives.
Los Angeles, California 90007

Abstract: Journals and notebooks kept by Ware R. Smith, an openly gay teacher/professor and writer who died of AIDS in 1986. The bulk of the collection consists of Smith's fifteen journals and the loose items he stored in them, documenting his life experience from 1952 to shortly before his death. The collection also includes two notebooks of his writings from 1956-1958.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access
The collection is open to researchers. There are no access restrictions.

Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
Ware R. Smith diaries, Coll2008-029, ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, California.

Acquisition Information
Donor and date of gift unknown.

Processing Information
Collection processed by Johanna Michael, June 9, 2008.
Biography
Ware Rayburn Smith was born on March 20, 1935, in Indiana. He served in the army during the Korean War, then went on to attend Kenyon College and complete his Bachelor's Degree in English in 1959. He was an aspiring writer and kept extensive journals about his life beginning in college as part of his writing process. Finding a calling in academia, he applied to graduate school and completed his Master's Degree in Literature at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1964. He began teaching at Oakland City College and San Mateo College in 1965, then accepted a teaching position at the University of Hawaii. He remained there until 1967, when he decided to pursue a PhD at the University of Iowa. Smith was an outspoken anti-war activist while at the University of Hawaii and the University of Iowa, receiving recognition as such by local newspapers in both cities.

By 1969, Smith had completed all doctoral degree requirements except his dissertation on poetry by Hart Crane and began teaching at the University of Wyoming. After one year there, he decided to return to California and teach at San Francisco City College while working on his dissertation. Smith completed the dissertation and officially received his degree in 1974. He then sought a position on the east coast and was hired by the Smithsonian Press in Washington, DC, where he worked for one year. In 1977, he was offered a teaching position at Clarkson College of Technology in New York. He remained in New York until shortly before his death, also teaching at La Guardia Community College (1979-1981) and Long Island University (1981-1985). When he became ill and was eventually diagnosed with AIDS, he moved back to Berkeley and died there in July of 1986. None of his writings has been published.

Source: Ware R. Smith Diaries, Coll2008-029, ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, California

Scope and Content of Collection
This collection consists of Smith's journals and notebooks. Smith's journals, the earliest loose leaf typescripts and manuscripts, and 15 bound volumes, are arranged chronologically from 1952-1986. His entries are almost all dated, and were written at frequent intervals during most years. Every journal contained at least one loose item placed between the pages; some larger journals contained over twenty loose items. These include journal entries written on loose-leaf paper, correspondence, notes, mementos, photographs and newspaper clippings.

The collection also contains two of Smith's writing notebooks from college. The first, from 1956, contains two untitled short stories (the second with a list of tentative titles), one journal entry dated November 18, 1956, and two short radio announcement scripts. The second, from 1957-1958, contains three poems (two untitled, one called "Study in the Library"), two short stories: "Decision" and "The Friends," one letter (to Bonnie), and one journal entry dated October 5, 1958.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.
AIDS (Disease)--Diaries, letters, and memoirs
Diaries, letters, and memoirs
Gays in higher education
Smith, Ware Rayburn, 1935-1986

Journals June 7, 1952 - June 17, 1986


Journals

Box 1: 1

Journal (typescript and manuscript) June 7, 1956 - September 16, 1957

Box 1: 2

Journal (typescript and manuscript) - Miscellaneous Items June 7, 1956 - September 16, 1957

Box 1: 3

Journal 1 September 22, 1956 - January 28, 1957

Box 1: 4

Journal 1 - Loose Items September 22, 1956 - January 28, 1957

Box 1: 5

Journal 1 - Loose Items - Newspaper Clippings September 22, 1956 - January 28, 1957

Box 1: 6

Journal 2 February 5 - June 18, 1957

Box 1: 7

Journal 2 - Loose Items February 5 - June 18, 1957

Box 1: 8

Journal 3 September 24, 1957 - July 14, 1958

Box 1: 9

Journal 3 - Loose Items September 24, 1957 - July 14, 1958

Box 1: 10

Journal 4 July 16, 1958 - August 13, 1959

Box 1: 11

Journal 4 - Loose Items July 16, 1958 - August 13, 1959

Box 1: 12

Journal 5 August 23, 1959 - June 13, 1960
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<tr>
<th>Box Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 1:13</td>
<td>Journal 5 - Loose Items August 23, 1959 - June 13, 1960</td>
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<td>Box 1:14</td>
<td>Journal 6 June 20, 1960 - August 9, 1961</td>
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<td>Box 2:1</td>
<td>Journal 6 - Loose Items June 20, 1960 - August 9, 1961</td>
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<td>Box 2:2</td>
<td>Journal 7 April 24, 1962 - December 4, 1967</td>
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<td>Box 2:3</td>
<td>Journal 7 - Loose Items April 24, 1962 - December 4, 1967</td>
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<td>Box 2:4</td>
<td>Journal 7 - Loose Items - Newspaper Clippings April 24, 1962 - December 4, 1967</td>
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<td>Box 2:5</td>
<td>Journal 8 January 1, 1968 - April 26, 1969</td>
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<td>Box 2:6</td>
<td>Journal 8 - Loose Items January 1, 1968 - April 26, 1969</td>
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<td>Box 2:7</td>
<td>Journal 8 - Loose Items - Newspaper Clippings January 1, 1968 - April 26, 1969</td>
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<td>Box 2:8</td>
<td>Journal 9 May 23, 1969 - January 1, 1970</td>
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<td>Journal 10 January 10, 1970 - October 6, 1973</td>
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<td>Journal 10 - Loose Items January 10, 1970 - October 6, 1973</td>
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<td>Journal 14 May 1, 1980 - January 1, 1983</td>
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<td>Box 4:3</td>
<td>Journal 15 January 18, 1983 - June 17, 1986</td>
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<td>Notebooks 1956-1958</td>
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