

## Pacific Northwest Booksellers' Association historical files assessment:

**Condition:** Physical condition is excellent, except for a few rusty fasteners. Pages are crisp, readable and for the most part not even folded. Multiple copies of many of the newsletters and other ephemeral handouts are present, and less-than-perfect copies could be weeded out in processing, leaving a pristine set. Most of the material is typewritten (or printed), but some handwritten notes, correspondence, and manuscripts are present. Handwriting quality on these items varies wildly, but the majority are very readable. Some of the meeting notes are little more than scribbles and doodles, but these are not bad examples of the many such small-business-meeting notes I have seen over the years.

**Content:** These files contain documentation of the yearly activities of the PNBA - every year they did a membership review and collected dues, held regular board meetings, printed and distributed a few copies of their newsletter ('Footnotes'), and held a larger regional conference somewhere outside of Seattle. Documentation of these regular activities constitute the bulk of these records, consisting of minutes, printouts of the bylaws, copies of the newsletters, official correspondence soliciting for membership dues, meeting agendas and notes, membership and mailing lists, reports (usually from the treasurer), and receipts and invoices (mostly from the conference center/hotel used for the offsite conference). These are housed in folders which are arranged in generally chronological order, and the folders are thickest between 1984 and 1990 - earlier than that they get very thin. The sixties and seventies folders are largely empty.

Conference topics varied every year, and examples include information on remodeling bookstores, marketing strategies, and various other subjects of interest to the book-selling industry. This conference was also the site of their annual awards presentation.

Besides these routine records, there are a few accounts of less ordinary activities. There are, predictably for such an organization, several instances of political infighting and conflict within the PNBA, documented in correspondence and occasionally in the minutes. There is also a series of letters and typescript drafts of material regarding sponsorship of an educational pamphlet on the AIDS crisis in 1987, several groups of correspondence on various first amendment cases and opposition to censorship in general (including the Salman Rushdie incident in 1989), a little bit of discussion on local literacy programs, and a folder (containing, among other material, letters from two US Senators) on the PNBA's opposition to the appointment of Judge Bork to the Supreme Court in 1987.

The final element of the collection is a three-ring binder containing photocopies of the handwritten minutes of the PNBA between 1960 and 1972.

**Recommendations:** I feel that this material is of limited research value. While there are some points of interest for general researchers, the contents mostly reflect internal information about the PNBA which would only be of interest to someone who was specifically interested in this organization. Since we already have it, however, my recommendation would be to organize it in strict chronological order by year, breaking it up into files as we did for Hitchman, such as:

Correspondence

Ephemera

Newsletters

Notes

Minutes

Agendas

etc.

This simple processing would make it a little bit easier to find things, and wouldn't take too long with a collection of this size, especially once we weeded out the duplicates of various items.