The Wittliff Collections

Guide to the Rick Riordan Papers
1997-2004

Collection SWWC-079

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Riordan, Rick
Title:	Guide to the Rick Riordan Papers
Dates:	1997-2004
Abstract:	Correspondence, research notes and interviews, plot maps, chapter synopses, character outlines, editor's revision suggestions, and two magazines document the career of Texas writer Rick Riordan spanning the years of 1997-2004.
Identification:	SWWC-079
Extent:	3 Linear Feet, 6 boxes
Language:	English
Repository:	The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University

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Biographical Notes

Author Rick Riordan was born in San Antonio, Texas, in 1964. He graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with degrees in English and History, and in 1988, he received his teaching certification from The University of Texas at San Antonio. He began graduate studies in English and Medieval Studies at San Francisco State University and then pursued a career in education in Oakland, California, where he taught middle and high schools. He continued teaching English for fifteen years in both the San Francisco Bay Area and Texas. Riordan has since retired from teaching to focus his energy on writing full-time. Like many successful authors, before writing and publishing full-length novels Riordan honed his craft by writing short stories. "The Sheet Cave" and "Out on 1040" were featured in *Cactus Alley* in 1988. "A Small Silver Gun" was featured in *Family Circle Mary Higgins Clark Mystery* in the summer of 1998. His short stories have also appeared in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine.* Riordan is perhaps best known for his popular series of mysteries books featuring Tres Navarre, a San Antonio private detective, martial arts master, and English Ph.D. in Medieval literature. In 1997, *Big Red Tequila*, the first in the Navarre mystery series was published. It won the Anthony Award for best original paperback and the Shamus award for the best first private investigator novel. He followed this early success with the second in his series, *The Widower's Two- Step* in 1998. This novel also won Anthony and Shamus awards, as well as the Edgar award for best original paperback. *The Last King of Texas* (2000) was a featured alternate for the Mystery Guild, and *The Devil Went Down to Austin* (2001) was also critically acclaimed. His newest mystery, and the fifth in the Tres Navarre series, is *Southtown*, which was published in 2004. Riordan also writes novels outside of the Tres Navarre series. *Cold Creek* was published in 2003 and placed on the American Library Association's top-ten suspense novels list. In 2003, he was inducted into the Texas Institute of Letters. Riordan uses his native South and Central Texas as locations for many of his novel's settings, and his admiration for this area is apparent. However, he had not always anticipated that he would write about the region. *At The Scene of the Crime*, a panel discussion held in the Wittliff Collections in 2004, Riordan reflected that distancing himself from the area helped him to appreciate it: "I didn't have any desire to write about San Antonio at all until I moved to California…I had to move away, and I had to appreciate what I knew before I wanted to write about it."

Scope and Contents

Correspondence, research notes and interviews, plot maps, chapter synopses, character outlines, editor's revision suggestions, and two magazines document the career of Texas writer Rick Riordan spanning the years of 1997-2004. The bulk of the collection consists of manuscript materials for five of his novels: *Big Red Tequila, Widower's Two-Step*, "Gunman's Cantina" (*The Last King of Texas*), *The Devil Went Down to Austin*, and *Cold Springs*. The collection is arranged chronologically into seven series based on dates of publication of each book, with the seventh series consisting of promotional materials. Because of this, the author's method of constructing and writing a novel from first notes to manuscript is demonstrated. The first series contains two magazines that featured Riordan's short fiction, the first published in 1988 and a more recent piece published in 1998. The second through sixth series are dedicated to each of Riordan's novels. Correspondence, research, and interviews particular to each novel are contained within that specific novel's series. Most of the research notes and interview materials are for the *Widower's Two-Step*, *The Last King of Texas*, and *The Devil Went Down to Austin*. The seventh series contains promotional materials for Riordan. In addition to showcasing the people and cultures of Texas through his writings, another important aspect of the Riordan Papers housed in the Wittliff Collection is that it shows the depth of research spent writing his novel as well as the processes of writing from start to finish.

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open for research.

Contact the Wittliff Collections for information about additional materials from this writer that have not yet been fully processed.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Rick Riordan, 2004.

Physical Location

Materials may be stored off-site. Advance notice is required for use: https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/makearesearchappointment.html.

Conditions Governing Use

Materials from the Wittliff Collections are made available for use in research, teaching, and private study. The user assumes responsibility for determining copyright status, obtaining permission to publish, and abiding by U.S. copyright laws. https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/visit/policies/publication.html

Controlled Access Headings

- Authors, American -- Texas -- 20th century
- Detective and mystery stories
- Texas -- Fiction

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Published Short Stories, 1988,1998

Box   **Folder**

| 1 | 1 | Cactus Alley with "The Sheet Cave" and "Out on 1040."; Family Circle Mary Higgins Clark Mystery with "A Small Silver Gun." , 1988, 1999 |

Series II: Big Red Tequila (Tres Navarre Book #1), 1996-1997, undated

1	2	Correspondence, 1996-1997
1	3	Research interviews, undated
1	4	Miscellaneous research notes, undated
1	5-9	Early drafts, undated
2	1-3	Edited manuscripts, undated

Series III: Widower's Two-Step (Tres Navarre Book #2), 1998, undated

2	4	Notes, undated
2	5	Plot map, undated
2	6-8	Early draft, undated
3	1	Early draft, undated
3	2	Annotated Second Draft, Spiral Bound, undated

Series IV: "Gunman's Cantina," Published as The Last King of Texas (Tres Navarre Book #3), 1998-2000, undated

3	3	Correspondence, 1998
3	4	Research interviews, 1998-2000
3	5	Notes, circa 1998
3	6	Plot map, undated
3	7	Chapter outlines, undated
3	8	Manuscripts, early rendition of Last King of Texas, undated
4	1-2	Manuscripts, early rendition of Last King of Texas, undated

Series V: The Devil Went Down to Austin (Tres Navarre Book #4), 2000-2001, undated

4	3	Correspondence , 2000
4	4	Research, undated
4	5	Notes, circa 2000
4	6	Plot map, undated
4	7	Chapter outlines, undated
4	8-10	Revised drafts, "Devil's Latitude" , undated
5	1-3	The Devil Went Down to Austin, annotated manuscripts with revisions, undated

Series VI: Cold Springs, 2003, undated

| 5 | 4-6 | Manuscripts, undated |
| 6 | 1-3 | Manuscripts, 2003 |

Series VII: Promotional Materials, 2001, undated

| 6 | 4 | Publicity photographs, author's autograph, newspaper advertisement |