



# Southwestern Writers Collection

The Wittliff Collections at the Alkek Library  
Texas State University-San Marcos

## A Guide to the James Crumley Papers

1965-1992

Collection 055

### Descriptive Summary

<b>Creator:</b>	Crumley, James
<b>Title:</b>	The James Crumley Papers
<b>Dates:</b>	1965-1992
<b>Abstract:</b>	Manuscripts, galley proofs, notes, clippings, correspondence, legal papers, photographs, poetry, screenplays, short stories and artifacts represent the writing career of James Crumley from 1965 until 1992. The materials are arranged into the following five series: Works, Correspondence, Clippings, Personal, and Works by Others.
<b>Identification:</b>	Collection 055
<b>Extent:</b>	9 boxes including oversize and artifacts (5 linear feet)
<b>Language:</b>	Materials are written in English
<b>Repository:</b>	<a href="#">Southwestern Writers Collection, Special Collections, Alkek Library, Texas State University-San Marcos</a>

## Biographical Sketch

Novelist James Crumley was born in Three Rivers, Texas, on October 12, 1939 and spent most of his childhood in south Texas. He maintained a straight-A average in high school while also playing football. After graduation he attended the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta on a Navy ROTC scholarship, but soon left to enlist in the U.S. Army, where he served from 1958 to 1961. Crumley then returned to Texas and enrolled at Texas A&I (now Texas A&M University-Kingsville), where he had received a football scholarship. Crumley completed his BA in History in 1964, and was accepted into the University of Iowa's prestigious creative writing program, where he earned a MFA in 1966. Immediately after graduating he joined the English faculty at the University of Montana at Missoula. His masters thesis was eventually published as the novel, *One to Count Cadence*, in 1969, a popular and critically acclaimed look at the Vietnam War. After his novel was published, Crumley left Montana to hold a series of visiting professorships: the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (1969-70), Colorado State University (1971-74), Reed College in Portland, Oregon (1976-1977), Carnegie-Mellon University (1979-1980) and the University of Texas at El Paso (1981-1984.)

During a two-year stretch as a freelance writer (1974-1976) Crumley published the first in a series of crime novels for which he would become known. *The Wrong Case* (1975) featured a detective named Milo Milodragovitch, who would also appear in later novels. "I always introduce my work by explaining that I am a bastard child of Raymond Chandler – without his books, my books would be completely different. We cover some of the same ground, his dark streets in LA, my twisted highways in the mountain west. But because of the events surrounding the Vietnam War, my detectives are not as comfortable with traditional morality as Philip Marlowe seems to be," (*Contemporary Authors*, 2000).

In 1978 *The Last Good Kiss* (1978) was published, which introduced Crumley's other detective protagonist, C.W. Sughrue. His third crime novel, *Dancing Bear* (Milodragovitch series), was published in 1983. After leaving his last teaching job in 1984, Crumley has worked full-time as a writer. He's made his home base in Missoula, Montana since the mid-1980s. He has worked on film screenplays, which remain unproduced, and has continued to write and publish fiction. *The Muddy Fork and Other Things: Short Fiction and Nonfiction* was published in 1991, featuring many of Crumley's short stories. The detective series continued with *The Mexican Tree Duck* (Sughrue series) in 1993, and *Bordersnakes* (1996), which brought together Milodragovitch and Sughrue for the first time.

According to Robert E. Burkholder in *the Dictionary of Literary Biography Yearbook* (1984), Crumley's crime novels stand "the genre on its head by creating an antiheroic protagonist plagued by the weakness and vice of the corrupt world in which he lives and works and endowing him, nevertheless, with the sort of noble instincts that motivate him to sift through the scum in order to identify right from wrong. Crumley's detectives are curiously amoral moralists."

Crumley's final published works include *The Putt at the End of the World* (2000); the Milodragovitch series novel, *The Final Country* (2001); and one in the Sughrue series, *The Right Madness* (2005). He passed away September 17, 2008 from complications from kidney and pulmonary disease.

## Scope and Content Note

Nine boxes of manuscripts, galley proofs, notes, clippings, correspondence, legal papers, photographs, poetry, screenplays, short stories and artifacts, 1957-1992, document the writing career of James Crumley. The collection has been arranged into five series: Works, 1965-1992; Correspondence, 1957-1986; Clippings 1971-1992; Personal Materials, 1957-1979; and Works by Others, n.d.

The Works series comprises the largest part of the collection. It documents Crumley's writing process from drafts through proof copy or published work. The Novels subseries makes up the largest portion of the series, with the numerous *Dancing Bear* files documenting Crumley's changing ideas for titles and other aspects related to the novel. The Correspondence series contains mostly fan letters written to him, but also includes correspondence regarding the film rights for Crumley's novel, *One to Count Cadence*. The Personal series contains photographs, certificates and legal documents related to Crumley's education, military career, and marriages. Works by Others include screenplays based on Crumley's novel *The Last Good Kiss*, and poetry.

## Series Description

### Series I: Works (1965-1992)

The Works series comprises the largest part of the collection. It documents Crumley's writing process from drafts through proof copy or published work.

#### Subseries A: Novels (1965-1992)

This subseries has been arranged in chronological order by date of the novel's creation. This subseries makes up the largest portion of the Works series, with the numerous *Dancing Bear* files documenting Crumley's changing ideas for titles and other aspects related to the novel. Although multiple drafts of each work are present, the drafts typically include only the first few chapters of the work. The specific portions of each work represented and any variant titles are identified by the folder titles. Each of Crumley's novels is represented here, including one unpublished novel, by the title "Meat."

#### Subseries B: Short Stories (1971-81)

This subseries has been arranged in alphabetical order by title, and includes mainly annotated typescripts and fragments of each short story, as well as one galley, and one carbon copy.

#### Subseries C: Screenplays (1978-90)

Arranged in alphabetical order by title of screenplay, this series includes typescripts of screenplays based on Crumley's novels *Dancing Bear* and *The Last Good Kiss*, as well others not based on Crumley's novels.

#### Subseries D: Poetry (n.d)

This series is arranged alphabetically by title and includes two annotated typescripts of poems apparently written by Crumley.

### Series II: Correspondence (1957-1986)

Arranged in order from earliest to most recent, the correspondence in this series consists largely of fan letters written to Crumley, as well as two 1957 letters from Senator Lyndon Baines Johnson congratulating Crumley on his scholastic achievements. Several drafts of letters written by Crumley are also included, such as a 1969 letter to MGM studios regarding a film treatment of *One to Count Cadence*.

### Series III: Clippings (1971-1992)

This series includes newspaper and magazine articles related to Crumley's literary career.

### Series IV: Personal (1957-1979)

This series contains photographs, certificates and legal documents related to Crumley's education, military career, and marriages, as well as a steel hardhat and cap.

**Series V: Works by Others, n.d.**

**Subseries A: Screenplays (n.d.)**

Arranged in alphabetical order by author, this subseries includes two screenplays based on Crumley's novel *The Last Good Kiss*.

**Subseries B: Poetry (n.d.)**

Also arranged in alphabetical order by author, this subseries includes poetry by Kathy Callaway (1 folder), various authors (1 folder), and unidentified authors (1 folder).

# **Administrative Information**

## **Access Restrictions**

Open for research.

## **Preferred Citation**

James Crumley Papers, Southwestern Writers Collection, Texas State University-San Marcos

## **Acquisition Information**

Gift donated by James Crumley, 1992

## **Processing Information**

Processed by Alicia Leschper and Amanda York, 2001.  
Finding aid revised by Maggie DeBrecht, 2011

# Container List

## Series I: Works, 1965-1992

### Novels, 1965-1992

#### Box Folder

##### One to Count Cadence, 1965-1971

- |   |     |  |
|---|-----|--|
| 1 | 1-2 | Second draft October 1965-April 1968                     |
|   | 3-5 | Typescript   |
|   | 6   | Excerpts and Editor's note, March 15, 1968               |
| 2 | 1-2 | Typesetting copy   |
|   | 3   | Author's 1 <sup>st</sup> proof galley, December 26, 1968 |
|   | 4   | Author's 2 <sup>nd</sup> proof galley                    |
|   | 5   | Clippings 1969 and 1971                                  |

##### The Wrong Case, 1975

- |   |   |                                |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
|   | 6 | Typescript photocopy           |
| 3 | 1 | Typescript photocopy-continued |
|   | 2 | Correspondence, February 1975  |
|   | 3 | Reviews 1975                   |

##### The Last Good Kiss, 1978-1984

- |  |     |  |
|--|-----|--|
|  | 4-5 | Annotated Typescript c.1978                            |
|  | 6   | Book jacket  |
|  | 7   | Reviews 1978-1981                                      |
|  | 8   | Movie contract with Warner Bros. Inc., January 6, 1984 |



## Series I: Works-continued

### Novels-continued

#### Box Folder

*Dancing Bear*, 1983, n.d. (Annotated typescript fragments with various titles)

- |   |       |   |
|---|-------|---|
| 4 | 1     | Typescript-untitled                                     |
|   | 2     | Annotated typescript- "Walking Backwards"               |
|   | 3     | Annotated typescript- "Milo version," Chapter 1         |
|   | 4     | "Milo version," Chapter 1, second draft                 |
|   | 5     | "Milo version," Chapters 1-5, first draft               |
|   | 6     | "The Muddy Fork," Milo version (original and photocopy) |
|   | 7     | "A Plague of Orphans," Chapter 1 fragments              |
|   | 8     | "TRW," Chapters 1-2                                     |
|   | 9     | "TRW," Chapters 2-3                                     |
|   | 10-11 | "The Local Memory," Chapter 1                           |
|   | 12    | "Soledad City," Chapter 1                               |
|   | 13    | "Drunk on the Wind," Chapter 1, pages 1-2               |
|   | 14    | "Drunk on the Wind," Chapter 1, pages 1-9               |
|   | 15    | "Drunk on the Wind," Chapters 1-2                       |
|   | 16    | "The Dead Heart," Chapters 1-2                          |
|   | 17    | "Drawing Blood," Chapter 1, pages 4-5                   |
|   | 18    | "Drawing Blood," Chapter 1, pages 1-9                   |
|   | 19    | "Drawing Blood," Chapter 1, pages 1-22                  |
|   | 20    | "Drawing Blood," Chapter 1, pages 28-38                 |
|   | 21    | "Drawing Blood," Chapter 1                              |

## Series I: Works-continued

### Novels-continued

#### Box Folder

##### Dancing Bear-continued

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 4 | 22 | “Without Drawing Blood,” Chapter 1, pages 4-12                             |
|   | 23 | “Without Drawing Blood,” Chapter 1 fragments                               |
|   | 24 | “Without Drawing Blood/ Mahagen,” Chapter 1, first draft                   |
|   | 25 | “Without Drawing Blood/ Mahagen,” Chapter 1, second draft                  |
|   | 26 | “Snow,” Chapter 1, pages 2-6   |
|   | 27 | “It’s Snowing in the Foothills of My Heart,” Title page with no typescript |
|   | 28 | Reviews 1983   |
| 5 | 1  | Reviews-continued  |
|   | 2  | Title page of screenplay   |

##### Mexican Tree Duck, n.d., ca. 1992 (Annotated typescripts by various titles)

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | 3 | “A Wild Justice,” Chapter 1, pages 1-5     |
|  | 4 | “MD,” Chapter 1, pages 1-5                 |
|  | 5 | “Mexican Tree Duck,” Chapter 1, pages 1-2  |
|  | 6 | “Mexican Tree Duck,” Chapter 1, pages 1-10 |

##### Meat, unpublished, n.d. (Annotated typescripts by various titles)

- |  |    |                               |
|--|----|-------------------------------|
|  | 7  | “CT,” Chapters 1-2            |
|  | 8  | “UT,” Chapter 1, pages 1-2    |
|  | 9  | “UT,” Chapters 1-2            |
|  | 10 | “Meat,” Chapter 1, pages 1-3  |
|  | 11 | “Meat,” Chapter 1, pages 1-14 |

## **Series I: Works-continued**

### **Novels-continued**

#### **Box Folder**

##### Meat-continued

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 5 | 12 | “Meat,” Chapter 1, pages 1-20          |
|   | 13 | “Meat,” Chapter 1                      |
|   | 14 | “Meat,” carbon typescript, pages 1-98  |
|   | 15 | “Meat,” carbon typescript, pages 1-112 |

### **Short Stories, 1971-1981**

- |   |       |   |
|---|-------|---|
| 5 | 16    | “Another Poet in Montana,” typescript, pages 1-10, n.d.           |
|   | 17-18 | “Cairn,” annotated typescript, c.1978                             |
|   | 19    | “Cousin,” first draft, n.d.                                       |
|   | 20    | “Daddy’s Gone a-Hunting,” second draft, c. 1974                   |
|   | 21    | “Dirty Works,” pages 1-7, n.d.                                    |
|   | 22    | “Driving Around Houston,” pages 1-27a, n.d.                       |
|   | 23    | “The Fastest Man in Nebraska,” first draft, August 10, 1965       |
|   | 24    | “Goodbye Cruel World,” first draft, December 21-27, 1971          |
|   | 25    | “Goodbye Cruel World.” second draft, December 28, 1971            |
|   | 26    | “Goodbye Cruel World,” typescript, January 4, 1972                |
|   | 27    | “Goodbye Cruel World,” carbon typescript, n.d.                    |
|   | 28    | “The Heavy,” typescript (original and photocopy), n.d.            |
|   | 29    | “The Heavy,” galley copy, 1981                                    |
|   | 30    | “An Ideal Son for the Jenkins Family,” annotated typescript, n.d. |
|   | 31    | “Labor Pains,” annotated typescript, n.d.                         |

## **Series I: Works-continued**

### **Short Stories-continued**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
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5	32	“Moons,” annotated typescript, page 2 only
6	1	“The Philanderer,” first draft, n.d.
	2	“The Philanderer,” annotated typescript, n.d.
	3	“The Philanderer,” annotated typescript, original and photocopy, n.d.
	4	“Roadsigns, Roadcircles, and Detours,” annotated typescript and published version, n.d.
	5	“Story,” page 1, n.d.
	6	“Story,” pages 1-2, n.d.
	7	“Story,” pages 1-5, n.d.
	8	“Story,” pages 1-7, n.d.
	9	“The Sunbathers,” n.d.
	10-13	“Things I Can’t Write About and the Reasons Why,” n.d.
	14	“Three Cheers for Thomas J. Rabb,” pages 1-20, n.d.
	15	“Three Cheers for Thomas J. Rabb,” pages 1-32, n.d.
	16-17	“Three Forks,” pages 1-6, n.d.
	18	“Three Forks,” page 4, n.d.
	19	Untitled (Military Air Transportation), n.d.
	20	“Whores,” c.1977

### **Screenplays, 1978-1990**

6	21	“Ain’t No God in Mexico,” annotated typescript, n.d.
	22	“The Big Nowhere,” first draft, November 16, 1990

## **Series I: Works-continued**

### **Screenplays-continued**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
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6	23	“Dancing Bear,” Revised typescript (with Tim Hunter), n.d.
	24	“Judge Dredd,” revised first draft (with Tim Hunter), 1989
7	1	“The Last Good Kiss,” first draft, January 21, 1979
	2	“The Pigeon Shoot,” movie synopsis (English July 20, 1983 and Spanish August 5, 1983)
	3	“The Pigeon Shoot,” first draft, December 13, 1983
	4	“The Pigeon Shoot,” first draft, December 13, 1983 (photocopy)
	5	“The Sheepeater Campaign,” notes, 1978
	6	“The Sheepeater Campaign,” typescript, 1978
	7	“Tunnels of Cu Chi,” second draft (with Tim Hunter), n.d.
	8	“Untitled,” first draft (with Gwenyth Mapes), August 1988

### **Poetry, n.d.**

7	9	Food for the Dogs
	10	How to Survive Your Life

## **Series II: Correspondence, 1957-1986**

8	1	Correspondence 1957-1975
	2	Correspondence 1978-1986

## **Series III: Clippings, 1971-1992**

8	3	Clippings and articles on or about Crumley
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## **Series IV: Personal, 1957-1979, n.d.**

8	4	US Army Football photographs and team roster, n.d.
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#### **Series IV: Personal-continued**

##### **Box Folder**

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 8 | 5 | US Navy certificates of accomplishment, 1957-1959   |
|   | 6 | College transcripts (University of Iowa, MFA English, 1970, Texas College of Arts and Sciences, BA, 1965) |
|   | 7 | Wedding photograph, bride Sandra L. McCollough, Refugio, TX 1962  |
|   | 8 | Divorce decrees, Sandra L. Crumley (1968), Margaret L. Crumley (1975), Judith Ann Ramey (1979)            |
|   | 9 | Vitae   |

##### Artifacts

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 9 |  | Blue and white baseball cap from Montana Review of Books, and a steel hardhat with initials JAC scratched on inside brim |
|---|--|--|

#### **Series V: Works by Others, n.d.**

##### **Screenplays, n.d.**

- |   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| 8 | 10 | “The Last Good Kiss,” revised screenplay by Walter Hill |
|   | 11 | “The Last Good Kiss,” First Draft by Michael Jenning    |

##### **Poetry, n.d.**

- |   |    |                          |
|---|----|--------------------------|
| 8 | 12 | Poems by Kathy Callaway  |
|   | 13 | Poems by various authors |
|   | 14 | No authors               |