Relaciones Geográficas
The Relaciones Geográficas collection is consistently an attraction for visiting scholars. With dates ranging from 1578 to 1586, these highly detailed maps serve as primary sources of information about the Spanish conquest of Middle America. These documents were created in response to a questionnaire initiated by the Spanish Crown in 1577 requesting information about Spanish-held territories in the Americas. The questionnaires covered such topics as population demographics, political jurisdictions, language(s) spoken, physical terrain, and native vegetation. Spanish cartographers created some of the maps; others were made by indigenous peoples. There were 191 responses to this questionnaire, of which the present location of 167 is known, including the 43 held by the Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection. The other known existing relaciones geográficas are held by the Archivo General de Indias, Seville, and the Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid.

Lister Papers
In July 2005, the Benson Library acquired the papers of influential diplomat George Lister through a partnership with the Bernard and Audre Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice at the University of Texas School of Law. Scholars are now able to examine the history of human rights public policy through letters, speeches, essays, and other pieces accumulated during Lister’s lengthy career in the government. Lister’s work was focused mainly on Latin America and stemmed from his examination of horrific human rights violations that occurred in Latin America in the 1960s. His work in foreign affairs aided in the creation of a State Department bureau that deals solely with human rights, aptly named the Bureau of Human Rights, Democracy, and Labor.

Anzaldúa Archive
The archive of Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa (1942–2004) was recently acquired by the Benson. The collection includes manuscripts, essays, and correspondence written by the renowned feminist author, cultural theorist, and scholar. Anzaldúa, a lesbian, had a hard time fitting into the conservative climate in her native South Texas. These early experiences helped shape her autobiographical book Borderlands/La Frontera. She later worked as a professor and traveled the country lecturing on her views of theory and gender studies.

Ignacio Luis Vallarta
The Benson recently acquired the correspondence of Ignacio Luis Vallarta, a significant Mexican attorney and politician in the mid-1800s. After years of government work, including serving as the governor of Jalisco, Vallarta served as the president of the Supreme Court of Justice in Mexico for five years, a position similar in power to the vice president in the United States. Most of the papers are correspondence to other political and business figures discussing issues important to Vallarta’s role in the government.

Modernist Brazilian Music
In 2004, the Benson acquired Dr. Marion Verhaalen’s extensive collection of modern Brazilian music. Verhaalen began the collection in 1969 with the piano music of Camargo Guarnieri and Francisco Mignone. The bulk of the collection focuses on the work of Guarnieri, but also contains musical scores, LPs, tapes, CDs, correspondence, and notes from the last three decades of Brazilian music.
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