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## Wilgus, Donald Knight (FA 1203)

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*Descriptive Inventory*

**FA 1203      WILGUS, Donald Knight, 1918-1989**

6 boxes. 127 folders. 4,495 items. 1849;1947-1971  
 Originals, illustrations, newspaper clippings, and photocopies.

1972.221.2

***BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE***

Donald Knight "D. K." Wilgus was an authority and scholar of Anglo-American folk songs and ballads. He was born on 1 December 1918 in West Mansfield, Ohio. He received his bachelor's degree and a master's degree in English from Ohio State University, along with his doctorate in 1954. Wilgus worked as an administrator at Purdue University from 1941-1942 and then was in the U.S. Army from 1942 until 1945. He taught at Western Kentucky State College from 1950 to 1963.

Wilgus was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in Folklore and Popular Culture in 1955. He was founder and editor of the *Kentucky Folklore Record*. Wilgus wrote several books, including *Anglo-American Folksong Scholarship Since 1898*. He served as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Kentucky Folklore Society and later as the president of the California Folklore Society. Wilgus was vice-president and then president (1971) of the American Folklore Society and editor of the journal *Western Folklore* for the California Folklore Society.

Wilgus was the first chairman of the folklore and mythology program at the University of California at Los Angeles in 1965 after joining the faculty in 1963. He later became a professor emeritus of English and Music. A collection of traditional Anglo-American folk songs he started has been named for him at UCLA. On the Westwood campus, he produced six folk festivals. He retired in June 1989. He married his long-time companion and collaborator, Eleanor Long, and they had two daughters. Wilgus passed away in Los Angeles, California on 25 December 1989.

***COLLECTION NOTE***

This collection consists of items collected by college students at Western Kentucky State College in the 1950s and early-1960s that document folklore related culture. Wilgus organized these items as part of the D. K. Wilgus Collection. Most of the items collected are from south central Kentucky, but others from Indiana, Ohio and Tennessee are also included. The first section of folders is separated and categorized by the Frank C. Brown variant text numbers.

Items from the E. C. Perrow Collection and from William Lynwood Montell are also included. A section of off color items which Wilgus classified as "Delta" are organized in Box 6 Folders 3-9.

### ***SHELF LIST***

<b>BOX 1</b>	<b>Inventory and beliefs</b>	<b>1949-1962</b>	<b>929 items</b>
Folder 1	Inventory	n.d.	2 items
Folder 2	Beliefs – Animals, animal husbandry (Brown 7994-7743)	1956-1962	25 items
Folder 3	Beliefs – Birth, infancy and childhood (Brown 1-479)	1956-1962	23 items
Folder 4	Beliefs – Human body, folk medicine (Brown 480-2769)	1951-1960	97 items
Folder 5	Beliefs – Human body, folk medicine (Brown 480-2769)	1956-1962	106 items
Folder 6	Beliefs – Human body, folk medicine (Brown 480-2769)	1953-1961	114 items
Folder 7	Beliefs – Human body, folk medicine (Brown 480-2769)	1956-1961	104 items
Folder 8	Beliefs – Home and domestic pursuits (Brown 2770-3348)	1949-1961	8 items
Folder 9	Beliefs – Economic and social relations (Brown 3349-3705)	1955-1962	7 items
Folder 10	Beliefs – Travel and communication (Brown 3705-4131)	1955-1962	15 items
Folder 11	Beliefs – Love, courtship and marriage (Brown 4132-4873)	1956-1962	51 items
Folder 12	Beliefs – Death and funeral (Brown 4878-5531)	1955-1962	45 items
Folder 13	Beliefs – Witchcraft, ghosts and magic (Brown 5532-5902)	1953-1962	36 items
Folder 14	Beliefs – Cosmic phenomena: Times, numbers and Seasons (Brown 5903-6041)	1956-1962	13 items
Folder 15	Beliefs – Weather (Brown 6042-7093)	1952-1962	115 items
Folder 16	Beliefs – Fishing and hunting (Brown 7744-7907)	1959-1961	4 items
Folder 17	Beliefs – Plants, plant husbandry (Brown 7908-8473)	1952-1962	64 items
Folder 18	Beliefs – Miscellaneous	1950-1962	100 items

<b>BOX 2</b>	<b>Beliefs, children's lore, community culture</b>	<b>1947-1962 927 items</b>
Folder 1	Beliefs – Miscellaneous	1952-1962 83 items
Folder 2	Beliefs – Miscellaneous	1953-1959 101 items
Folder 3	Beliefs – Miscellaneous	1952-1961 106 items
Folder 4	Beliefs – Miscellaneous	1956-1961 80 items
Folder 5	Beliefs – Miscellaneous	1953-1961 128 items
Folder 6	Children's lore – Games – Singing – Baby bouncing rhymes	1953-1961 13 items
Folder 7	Children's lore – Games – Singing – Counting-out rhymes	1949-1962 35 items
Folder 8	Children's lore – Games – Singing – Games rhymes	1955-1961 19 items
Folder 9	Children's lore – Games – Singing – Jump rope rhymes	1949-1962 74 items
Folder 10	Children's lore – Games – Singing – Miscellaneous (See also Speech – Poems and rhymes in Box Folder )	1948-1962 161 items
Folder 11	Children's lore – Games – Singing – Teasing rhymes	1947-1960 17 items
Folder 12	Children's lore – Games – Singing – Tickling rhymes	1948-1961 11 items
Folder 13	Community culture – Community enterprises – Miscellaneous	1953-1961 20 items
Folder 14	Community culture – Community enterprises – Sorghum mill	1961 1 item
Folder 15	Community culture – Entertainment	1954-1961 21 items
Folder 16	Community culture – Family life and work	1957-1961 10 items
Folder 17	Community culture – General and local history	1953-1961 30 items
Folder 18	Community culture – General and local history – Civil War	1957-1961 17 items

<b>BOX 3</b>	<b>Customs, education, ethnic, nationality and religious groups, heroes and villains, linguistics, material culture, music, occupational groups, political folklore, religion, and speech</b>	<b>1849; 1948-1962</b>	<b>533 items</b>
Folder 1	Customs – Miscellaneous	1959-1961	8 items
Folder 2	Customs – Birth and childhood	1955	1 item
Folder 3	Customs – Calendar	1953-1961	31 items
Folder 4	Customs – Courtship and marriage	1954-1961	39 items
Folder 5	Customs – Campus	1953-1960	13 items
Folder 6	Customs – Funeral	1952-1961	13 items
Folder 7	Customs – Games	1948-1961	161 items
Folder 8	Education – Miscellaneous	1954-1959	2 items
Folder 9	Education – Country schools	1960	2 items
Folder 10	Ethnicity, nationality and religious groups – Miscellaneous	1959-1962	5 items
Folder 11	Heroes and villains (See also Tales – Personalities)	1952-1961	30 items
Folder 12	Linguistics – Dialects	1956-1962	24 items
Folder 13	Linguistics – Place names	1948-1961	117 items
Folder 14	Material culture – Miscellaneous	1956-1961	20 items
Folder 15	Material culture – Moonshining (See also Community culture – General and local history Box 2 Folder 17)	1955-1961	5 items
Folder 16	Material culture – Musical instruments – Hammered dulcimer	1959	1 item
Folder 17	Material culture – Food – Preparation and preservation	1949-1961	11 items
Folder 18	Material culture – Soap making	1955-1961	12 items
Folder 19	Material culture – Tombstones – Epitaphs	1959	4 items
Folder 20	Music – Songs – Miscellaneous	1948-1962	5 items

Folder 21	Occupational groups – Auctioneer	1849	1 item
Folder 22	Occupational groups – Pack peddler	1959	1 item
Folder 23	Political folklore – Tales	1955-1961	8 items
Folder 24	Religion – Miscellaneous	1949-1961	8 items
Folder 25	Religion – Religious (See also Tales – Religious)	1956-1959	3 items
Folder 26	Speech – Miscellaneous	1962	1 item
Folder 27	Speech – Poems and rhymes – Miscellaneous (See also Children’s lore – Games – Singing)	1956-1962	7 items
<b>BOX 4</b>	<b>Speech and tales</b>	<b>1916-1967</b>	<b>922 items</b>
Folder 1	Speech – Poems and rhymes – Autograph rhymes	1953-1962	232 items
Folder 2	Speech – Poems and rhymes – Cheerleading yells	1952	1 item
Folder 3	Speech – Proverbs	1954-1962	66 items
Folder 4	Speech – Proverbial comparisons	1955-1961	34 items
Folder 5	Speech – Proverbs and proverbial comparisons	1950-1962	30 items
Folder 6	Speech – Riddles	1952-1962	159 items
Folder 7	Speech – Sayings	1916-1962	37 items
Folder 8	Speech – Tongue twisters	1952-1962	8 items
Folder 9	Tales – Miscellaneous (See also Beliefs, community culture – Family life and work, community culture – General and local history, Heroes and villains, Political Folklore – Tales, Material culture – Moonshining)	1956-1961	9 items
Folder 10	Tales – Animal	1959-1961	12 items
Folder 11	Tales – College (See also Tales – Stories about man – Insane man)	1954-1961	26 items
Folder 12	Tales – College – Faculty	1953-1961	32 items

Folder 13	Tales – Death (See also Beliefs – Death and funeral)	1955-1961 9 items
Folder 14	Tales – Death – Bloodstains	1949-1962 22 items
Folder 15	Tales – Death – Buried alive	1955-1961 23 items
Folder 16	Tales – Death – Ghosts	1953-1967 66 items
Folder 17	Tales – Death – Ghosts – Ball-of-fire	1955-1957 3 items
Folder 18	Tales – Death – Ghosts – Animal	1953-1960 10 items
Folder 19	Tales – Death – Ghosts – Girl in the window	1953-1961 55 items
Folder 20	Tales – Death – Ghosts – Graveyard	1955-1967 40 items
Folder 21	Tales – Death – Ghosts – Hanging	1955-1961 9 items
Folder 22	Tales – Death – Ghosts – Haunted houses	1950-1967 39 items
<b>BOX 5</b>	<b>Tales</b>	<b>1948-1967 693 items</b>
Folder 1	Tales – Death – Ghosts – Headless and missing parts	1953-1967 36 items
Folder 2	Tales – Death – Ghosts – Hitch-hiking	1959-1967 5 items
Folder 3	Tales – Death – Ghosts – Human shape	1955-1961 38 items
Folder 4	Tales – Death – Ghosts – Object/lights	1952-1967 33 items
Folder 5	Tales – Death – Ghosts – Sounds/voices	1948-1961 40 items
Folder 6	Tales – Death – Ghosts – Treasure	1953-1961 10 items
Folder 7	Tales – Ethnic – Native Americans	1953-1961 11 items
Folder 8	Tales – Formula	1952-1961 10 items
Folder 9	Tales – Hunting and fishing	1953 2 items
Folder 10	Tales – Jokes and anecdotes – Miscellaneous jokes	1955-1962 18 items
Folder 11	Tales – Jokes and anecdotes – Cruelty jokes	1960-1962 10 items

Folder 12	Tales – Jokes and anecdotes – Knock, knock jokes	1957-1962	8 items
Folder 13	Tales – Jokes and anecdotes – Little moron jokes	1960-1962	6 items
Folder 14	Tales – Jokes and anecdotes – You tell ‘em jokes	1957	2 items
Folder 15	Tales – Jokes and anecdotes – Numskull stories	1955-1961	44 items
Folder 16	Tales – Jokes and anecdotes – Married couple stories	1955-1961	15 items
Folder 17	Tales – Jokes and anecdotes – Signifying monkey	1955-1958	7 items
Folder 18	Tales – Jokes and anecdotes – Stories about woman (girl)	1955-1961	18 items
Folder 19	Tales – Jokes and anecdotes – Stories about man (boy)	1948-1961	82 items
Folder 20	Tales – Jokes and anecdotes – Stories about man (boy) –	1955-1961	18 items
Folder 21	Tales – Jokes and anecdotes – Tales of lying	1953-1961	83 items
Folder 22	Tales – Legends – Bell Witch	1954-1961	25 items
Folder 23	Tales – Legends – Miscellaneous	1955-1961	10 items
Folder 24	Tales – Marchen	1961	1 item
Folder 25	Tales – Personalities – Champ Ferguson (See also Community culture – General and local history – Civil War	n.d.	1 item
Folder 26	Tales – Personalities – Miscellaneous (See also Heroes and villains)	1953-1961	59 items
Folder 27	Tales – Regional	1954-1959	21 items
Folder 28	Tales – Religious	1948-1961	36 items
Folder 29	Tales – Supernatural – Miscellaneous	1955-1967	8 items
Folder 30	Tales – Supernatural – Witches	1955-1961	22 items
Folder 31	Tales – Violence – Miscellaneous	1959	1 item
Folder 32	Tales – Violence – Duels and suicide	1952-1961	13 items



<b>BOX 6</b>	<b>Tales, Delta, and Collectors' background</b>	<b>1948-1971 490 items</b>
Folder 1	Tales – Violence – Lynching	1954-1961 25 items
Folder 2	Tales – Violence – Night Riders	1955-1962 12 items
Folder 3	Delta – Miscellaneous	1954-1962 20 items
Folder 4	Delta – Speech – Poems and rhymes – Miscellaneous	1948-1962 88 items
Folder 5	Delta – Speech – Graffiti study	1971 1 item
Folder 6	Delta – Speech – Poems and rhymes – Limericks	1948-1957 33 items
Folder 7	Delta – Tales and jokes	1949-1962 75 items
Folder 8	Delta – Tales and jokes – Books and authors	1961-1962 7 items
Folder 9	Delta – Music	1948-1961 176 items
Folder 10	Background – Collectors	1948-1962 54 items

### ***BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD***

FA 1203 WILGUS, Donald Knight "D. K.", 1849;  
1918-1989 1947-1971

Student folk studies projects collected by Professor Donald Knight "D. K." Wilgus while teaching folk studies classes at Western Kentucky University. Most of the items collected are from south central Kentucky, but also includes items from Indiana, Ohio and Tennessee.

6 boxes. 127 folders. 4,495 items. Originals, illustrations, newspaper clippings, and photocopies.  
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***SEE and SEE ALSO***

Western Kentucky State College

See:

Western Kentucky University

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