



Collection Development Policy June 2015

Introduction

The Walter Havighurst Special Collections serves as the repository for special collections materials in the Miami University Libraries, supporting research by patrons whose work relies on primary resource materials. These patrons include but are not limited to undergraduate students, graduate students, university faculty, visiting scholars, and general members of the community. Special Collections houses those materials that, due to age, scarcity, source, condition, format, or inherent value, are best handled separately from the general collections. The nature, extent, and depth of the collections are subject to review and are dependent on the research needs of the library's constituent audience.

Collecting Mission and Rationale

Special Collections' mission is to acquire, preserve, and provide access to a wide range of primary research materials in their original formats. These formats include printed books, manuscripts, audio-visual materials, realia and ephemera, works of art, and other materials.

The primary responsibility of Special Collections is to serve the curriculum and research needs of Miami University's faculty and students. The use of the primary materials held in the Walter Havighurst Special Collections for research or instructional purposes is an integral part of an exceptional educational experience, in keeping with the teaching and research missions of Miami University.

The primary users of Special Collections are researchers in the humanities, social sciences, and creative art departments. Special Collections seeks to collect in subject areas receiving substantial and sustained attention within the University community, specifically those representing ongoing departmental research interests. Additionally, Special Collections seeks to house materials that represent a diverse selection of communities and perspectives in order to better serve the research interests and intellectual growth of its patrons.

Special Collections also considers service to scholars on the national and international levels to be a critical part of its mission. Special Collections therefore seeks to build collections in areas not well covered by other repositories, both locally and nationally.

Collecting Methods and Criteria

The Head of Special Collections is responsible for the general supervision and coordination of collection development activities and makes all final decisions on the acquisition of new

materials. Donation is the preferred method of acquisition for Special Collections, which accepts gifts of materials from both individuals and organizations. Acquisitions are also made through the purchase of items selected from dealer catalogs or purchased from private individuals or organizations. Purchases are funded primarily by gift funds.

Emphasis is placed on acquiring items in their original states, and facsimiles are only purchased when appropriate. Duplicates are not to be added to the collection, unless they can replace a lesser copy or serve as a teaching tool. The condition and long-term stability of the material is also a major consideration in its acquisition. Exceptions may be made in instances where the scarcity of an item in any condition warrants accepting a less-than-perfect specimen.

New additions to the collections should increase or complement existing collections, ideally in the primary collecting areas listed below. If materials do not fit into our collection criteria or otherwise enhance existing collections, Special Collections staff will exercise discretion in accepting and accessioning them. Generally speaking, Special Collections will accept materials that do not fit into its collection development plan if those materials 1) exhibit specific, inherent value; or 2) are in and of themselves comprehensive enough to constitute their own collection.

Primary Collecting Areas

Special Collections has three conspectus level five collections: **Edgar and Faith King Juvenile Literature Collection**, which documents developments in children's literature from the 18th century to the present; the **de Saint-Rat Collection of Russian History, Art and Literature**, which documents late 19th and early 20th century Russian history and culture; and the **Covington Collection**, which documents the exploration, settlement, and development of the Old Northwest Territory and the Ohio River Valley. In addition to the areas described below, Special Collections will continually work to grow and enhance these collections and to maintain their comprehensive status.

American History and Literature

Strengths: Early Republic; Civil War; settlement of Ohio River Valley and the Old Northwest and Cincinnati imprints; Native American history and literature; history of transportation

Representative Collections: Covington Collection, Samuel Richey Collection of the Southern Confederacy, John H. James Collection, Bach Collection of Native American Literature, Myaamia Collection, The Working Library of Louise Bogan

Actively Collecting:

- ❖ Primary and manuscript materials related to the American Civil War
- ❖ Materials related to World War I
- ❖ Materials related to modern American espionage
- ❖ Maps and transportation ephemera from all time periods
- ❖ Native American literature, specifically works by Native American women playwrights and materials to support and enhance the Myaamia Collection

- ❖ Primary and manuscript materials related to 19th century education, specifically in the Ohio area
- ❖ Materials related to American involvement and soldiers' personal lives during the Vietnam War

European History and Literature

Strengths: late 19th and early 20th century Russian history, art and literature; Germany and the Third Reich

Representative Collections: de Saint-Rat Collection of Russian History, Art and Literature

Actively Collecting:

- ❖ Materials about or related to World War I and the European Theater of World War II
- ❖ Art, literature, ephemera, or other materials related to 20th century nationalist or political propaganda, specifically Nazism and Bolshevism

Children's Literature and Memorabilia

Strengths: 18th – 20th century children's literature, predominantly English language with additional strengths in folklore and fairytales; 19th century schoolbooks, including a large collection of McGuffey readers; 19th and 20th century games

Representative Collections: Edgar and Faith King Collection of Juvenile Literature, McGuffey Family Papers and Readers

Actively Collecting:

- ❖ Children's literature classics
- ❖ Folklore and fairy tales from all cultures, especially in formats aimed at children, with a special emphasis on collecting materials from traditionally under-represented communities
- ❖ Materials, especially local primary documents, relating to the education of young children in the 19th century

Performing Arts and Fine Arts

Strengths: 19th and 20th century drama; artists' books and private and fine press publications

Representative Collections: Rodolfo Usigli Archive, Native American Women Playwrights Archive, English Toy Theatre, Rick Ludwin Collection

Actively Collecting:

- ❖ Native American women playwrights
- ❖ Artists' Books
- ❖ Fine press publications

History of the Book

Strengths: Book of Hours; Ethiopian religious text in original binding; solid teaching collection of incunable leaves and woodcuts

Actively Collecting:

- ❖ Medieval Manuscripts, whole or partial
- ❖ Early printed matter and incunabula
- ❖ Examples of significant developments in book technology

Miami University History

Strengths: early Miami University records and history; maps and descriptions of early Oxford and southwestern Ohio; sports history

Representative Collections: 1841 Collection, Cradle of Coaches Archives

Actively Collecting:

- ❖ Cradle of Coaches materials
- ❖ Ohioana, especially materials local to Oxford and Butler County

In addition to the collection strengths listed above, Special Collections also houses strong teaching collections for various topics, including art history, world history, and cook books. Special Collections will collect into these and other areas in order to meet the needs of its patrons.

Guidelines for the Deaccession of Materials

Special Collections will carefully assess all materials before accepting them to lessen the likelihood of deaccession. There are, however, often valid reasons why materials in special collections may be deaccessioned, including but not limited to: irreparable deterioration of condition, replacement with identical materials in better condition, and reassessment of collection needs and use.

In the deaccession of any item from its collections, Special Collections will weigh carefully the interests of the public for which it holds the collections in trust, and will consider and abide by any legal and donor restrictions. Procedures for the deaccession or disposal of materials will be at least as rigorous as those for purchasing and should be governed by the same basic principles. In addition, the process of deaccession will be carried out in as open and public a manner as possible.