

## **Special Collections and OSU's Academic Plan:**

### **Highlights from 2006**

OSU's Academic Plan names six general strategies for the University to improving its academic excellence. In 2006, how did the special collections of The Ohio State University Libraries contribute to the University's goal of becoming "one of the world's great public research and teaching universities," as stated in the Academic Plan (October 2000)?

Special Collections collect, preserve, and promote the use of rare books, manuscripts and other primary research materials. Research libraries pride themselves in the breadth of their holdings of rare and unique documentation of culture because it is what makes them distinctive among their peers. Within the OSU Libraries, special collections are the Cartoon Research Library (CGA), the John Glenn Archives, the Hilandar Research Library (HIL), OSU Archives, the Polar Archival Program, Rare Books and Manuscripts/ Charvat Collection of American Fiction (RAR), and the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute Library (TRI).<sup>1</sup> In addition the Medical Heritage Center (MHC), which is part of OSU's Prior Health Sciences Library and the Historic Costume and Textile Museum (College of Education and Human Ecology) are special collections and partner with the OSU Libraries.

Even as the Academic Plan "is the initial roadmap for the journey to academic excellence" it is also the roadmap here. This report lists each of the strategies of the Academic Plan and states the accomplishments of the special collections in 2006 that pertain to the strategy. Included are highlights only; a comprehensive list would lengthen this report considerably.

In reviewing the activities of the curators and their staffs, credit should also go to Special Collections Cataloging and to Office of Preservation. Many materials in the OSU Libraries, Special Collections present special challenges of access and preservation. Scholars and students cannot learn about Special Collections without catalog records in Oscar and the World Wide Web. Many of the collections require original cataloging because as unique items, there are usually no catalog records elsewhere that can be copied. Fortunately, the Special Collections Cataloging Department has worked to provide the records needed for access.

No one should use items that will suffer from use. Because Special Collections contain materials for which duplicates are hard to find or do not exist, Special Collections have extra-ordinary needs for preservation. Again and again, OSU's Book and Paper conservator, has provided invaluable assistance in the work of Special Collections.

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<sup>1</sup> Rare Books and Manuscripts and the Charvat Collection of American Fiction are presented as RARE because they share the same staff at this time.

***Strategy: Build a World Class Faculty***

- *Recruiting.* Research materials that are rare or unique and of extraordinary quality have been used in the recruiting processes during the past year. In 2006:
  - Prospective graduate students and faculty in History of Art and Architecture, English, History, Slavic and East European Studies and Theatre toured CGA, HIL, RARE and TRI ;
  - OSU's colleges and departments continued to use photographs and historical material from the University Archives for displays, brochures, and websites.
  - CGA hosted a special tour for visiting Finish scholar Pekka Tammi during his campus stay with the Department of English.
- *Exhibiting.* Loaning research materials for national and international exhibition serves to promote the University as a center of world-class scholarship. In 2006:
  - Rare has provided items from its Lillian Schwartz Collection of computer animated art to museums in Florence, Paris, London, to name only a few sites.
  - CGA loaned cartoons to the Charles M. Schulz Museum, Santa Rosa CA and to Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Trento, Italy, and other museums.
  
  - Glenn Archives loaned artifacts to the Astronauts Hall of Fame in Titusville, Florida.
  - OSU Archives provided images of Jesse Owens to the Museum of Mississippi for an exhibit.
  
- *Research use.* Special Collections are part of a global community of scholarship in which researchers from all parts of the United States and many different countries used special collections at The Ohio State University Libraries last year. Highlights from 2006:
  - Approximately 22% of reference requests answered by the Byrd Polar Archives came from researchers in countries outside the U.S.A.
  - HIL hosted two researchers from Bulgaria and one from Romania, as well as scholars from universities in the United States. In addition, HIL responded to requests from scholars in England, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Scotland, and Serbia.
  - TRI hosted the International Centre for Women Playwrights Third Annual Retreat.
  - Rare hosted prominent researchers from the United Kingdom and also the University of Texas

- OSU Archives provided documents to researchers in England and to the Canadian Broadcasting Company.

***Strategy: Develop Academic Programs that Define Ohio State as the Nation's Leading Public Land-Grant University.***

- *Collections.* OSU Libraries have extra-ordinary documentation, that include the papers of writer James Thurber, cartoonist Milton Caniff, the San Francisco Academy of Comic Art Collection, choreographer Twyla Tharp as well as theatrical designers and critics, polar explorer Richard Byrd, the heroic Jesse Owens, microfilm from Hilandar monastery, and clothing from prominent designers. In 2006 curators continued to acquire collections, some of which are :
  - TRI added the Curtiss Show Print collection, which concerns tent shows, vaudeville companies, minstrel shows, circuses and other traveling companies in the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. This collection will be featured in an exhibit and catalog of the Association of Research Libraries
  - CGA added 15 original artworks by Will Eisner, 3600 original editorial cartoons by Nick Anderson, who won the 2005 Pulitzer Prize, and 24 diaries of Edwina Dumm, one of the first women cartoonists.
  - Rare acquired the Frederic Tuten literary archive and an important addition to its William T. Vollmann literary archive.
  - MHC made available the extensive papers of William G. Myers, who pioneered in nuclear medicine.
  - Glenn Archives acquired an additional 24 cubic feet of materials documenting the career of Senator Glenn.
  - HIL received more manuscript collections (on microfiche) of Moscow State University that pertain to Old Believers and that enhance an even larger collection of materials documenting this culture.
  - Byrd Polar Archives received a pencil drawing of the City of New York (flagship for Admiral Byrd on his first expedition) by prominent artist Rudolph Wendelin.
  
- *Recognition from national agencies and foundations.* In 2006:
  - CGA curator chaired jury for the Pulitzer Prize in editorial cartooning.
  - TRI curator serves as vice chair of the national Dance Heritage Coalition, which is supported by the Mellon and other foundations.

- Byrd Polar Archives received grants from the Kane Lodge Foundation and the Lincoln Ellsworth Foundation, both in New York City.
  - Rare received a grant from the Institute of Culinary Arts for conservation of its cook book collection.
  - Curator of the Historic Costume and Textile Collection served as chair of the Costume Society of America's Grants to Small Museums Committee.
  - Glenn Archivist served as the 2006-2007 chair of the Congressional Papers Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists.
- *Participation with units that have received Selective Investment Awards because of their national prominence. In 2006:*
    - Rare and TRI partnered with the Public History Program from the Department of History in engaging undergraduates with special collections.
    - Rare has partnered a fourth year with Professor Lewis Ulman of the Department of English in a digital editing program.
    - CGA has partnered with the Department of History's Harvey Goldberg Program for Excellence in Teaching in developing a curriculum source for K-12 school teachers.

***Strategy: Enhance the Quality of the Teaching and Learning Environment***

- *Classroom instruction by curators in 2006:*
  - HIL curator taught Slavic 870 and two quarters of Slavic 693.51 and served on 5 MA committees. In addition, HIL held a special summer institute concerning medieval Slavic manuscripts that had international as well as local participation.
  - CGA curator taught "History of Newspaper Editorial Cartoons and guest lectured for other classes.
  - Curators of the John Glenn Archives, the Byrd Polar Archives and the University Archives hosted and made presentations to students in historical research methods classes.
  - TRI curator taught two weeks of Theatre Research Methods and supervised students from History 489 (internships in public history).
  - Rare has provided materials for teaching use in the Departments of English, History, Art History, French and Italian and Spanish and Portuguese. Three classes from the Department of English have centered their courses in the Rare Books Department. The curator of the Avant Writing Collection has made frequent presentations also.
  - OSU Archivist was one of a team of faculty who teach ASC 500 ("OSU: Its History and Its World"); in addition the Archivist and

Associate Archivist presented “Buckeye Navigator”, a review of OSU History through its historic buildings and sites, as a Freshman Success lecture.

- HCTC provided 724 objects over 63 sessions to support classroom teaching. In addition the curator supervised 2 interns last year and assisted 10 students in individual studies.
  
- *Non-classroom activities.* Exhibits and special events also help to enrich the quality of the teaching and learning environment. In 2006:
  - Glenn Archives installed a temporary exhibit in Page Hall that commemorated the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Glenn’s Friendship 7 space flight.
  - Rare presented “Upon the Shoulders of Giants: History of Science.” Philip Sills Exhibit Hall, Main Library, The Ohio State University Libraries, the last exhibit in the Thompson Library until 2009.
  - CGA initiated and arranged two visits to OSU for Keith Knight, who gave well-attended presentations.

***Strategy: Enhance and Better Serve the Student Body***

- *In 2006, special collections found numerous ways of connecting to students as individuals and as members of student organizations:*
  - OSU Archives edited the script for the Oval Tour that is given by OSU Ambassadors.
  - MHC hosted a lecture for medical students about the history of medicine in Columbus.
  - Curator of HCTC served as the faculty/staff advisor for the OSU Fashion Guild, a student organization.
  - CGA worked with OSU Honors & Scholars in hosting a two hour lecture and tour for prospective students.
  - All prospective graduate students in Theatre visit TRI as part of the recruitment process.

***Strategy: Create a Diverse University Community***

- *By means of public programs, by acquiring collections, and by making available documentation of diversity, the special collections feature the diversity that is our university and our culture.* In 2006:
  - HCTC assembled two exhibits in Bricker Hall (“African Textiles: Threads of Black History,” and “The Art of Asian Embroidery.”

- A noteworthy addition for TRI was the Glenda Gill Collection on African-American theatre.
- Rare acquired a Haitian Photograph Collection, in addition to its Joanne Grant Civil Rights Collection and the John W. Bennett Anthropology Collection.
- CGA worked with Minority Affairs and the Multicultural Center in arranging a presentation of African-American cartoonist Keith Knight.

***Strategy: Help Build Ohio's Future***

- *Service to the state of Ohio and contributions to its future occurred in different ways. In 2006:*
  - CGA played a lead role in the development of the “Opper Project: Using editorial Cartoons to Teach History. This is designed to support the Ohio Content Standards by linking through the Web editorial cartoons for use in K-12 classroom instruction in Ohio.
  - HCTC provided lectures about the history of clothing at Columbus State and its Lifelong Learning program.
  - Rare presents a monthly program for a local bibliophilic society and the Head of Rare is on the Board of Ohioana.
  - The Glenn Archivist continued as an advisor to the John and Annie Glenn Museum in New Concord, Ohio.
  - OSU Archivist is a member of the governor appointed Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board.
  - TRI, together with the Department of Theatre, the OSU Hillel Foundation and the Columbus Jewish Foundation, held “Beyond the Borscht Belt: A Jewish Theatre Celebration” that featured a reading of Emily Mann’s *Meshuggah*.