

Special Collections and OSU's Academic Plan:

Highlights from 2001

This report addresses one question: In 2001, how did the special collections of The Ohio State University Libraries and Health Sciences Library 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)? Even as the Academic Plan "is the initial roadmap for the journey to academic excellence" it is the roadmap for this report. The Academic Plan names six general strategies and fourteen supporting initiatives. Accordingly, this document lists each of the strategies of the Academic Plan and states how the functions or general activities of the special collections carry out the general strategy. Finally, the report cites specific actions during 2001 within the strategy. Included are highlights only; a comprehensive list would lengthen this report considerably.

Within the OSU Libraries, special collections are the Cartoon Research Library (CGA), the Hilandar Research Library (HIL), OSU Archives, the Polar Archival Program, Rare Books and Manuscripts/ Charvat Collection of American Fiction (RARE), and the Theatre Research Institute Library (TRI).¹ The Medical Heritage Center (MHC) is part of the Health Sciences Library, but the curator meets and works closely with the faculty and staff responsible for special collections in the OSU Libraries.

Strategy: Build a World Class Faculty

- § *Recruiting.* Research materials that are rare or unique and of extraordinary quality have been used in the search processes during the past year. In 2001:
 - Prospective faculty in History, English, Theatre, Spanish and Portuguese, Slavic, and Medieval Studies and health professionals have toured HIL, MHC, RARE, and TRI respectively.
- § *Exhibiting.* Loaning research materials for national and international exhibition serves to promote the University as a center of world class scholarship. In 2001:
 - TRI loaned materials for exhibition to the Museum of the City of New York.
 - RARE provided items for the Biliotheque Nationale in France and for the Newseum, an interactive museum on the World Wide Web.
 - CGA responded to requests for its Calvin and Hobbes exhibit from France and Portugal and contributed to exhibits at the Cartoon Art Museum of San Francisco, the Minnesota Museum of

¹ The John Glenn Archives are part of the special collections also. However, the papers of John Glenn, the core collection, are not yet available fully for use and for that reason have not been included in this report. Rare Books and Manuscripts and the Charvat Collection of American Fiction are presented as RARE because they share the same staff at this time.

American Art, the Charles M. Schulz traveling exhibit and for an exhibit concerning Arnold Roth at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia; in addition CGA organized an exhibit and gave a lecture at the Columbus Parks and Recreation Department Cultural Arts Center.

- TRI loaned materials for an exhibition concerning *Guys and Dolls* at the Museum of the City of New York and scene designs for the San Francisco Performing Arts Library.
- MHC provided information for two PBS documentaries (Chicago and Indiana) the National Institute of Health, and a research from Germany interested in homeopathy resources.
- Polar Archives shared items for the “Echoes in the Ice” exhibit now touring at the Natural Resources Canada.

§ *Research use.* Special Collections are part of a global community of scholarship in that researchers from all parts of the United States and many different countries used special collections at The Ohio State University Libraries last year. In 2001:

- OSU Archives provided documentation and information for a German dictionary of scientists and for a book about Jesse Owens by a British press.
- RARE was a destination point for an NEH seminar sponsored by the English Department (Foxe’s Book of Martyr’s Conference) and the Spanish and Portuguese Department (Spanish Golden Age Conference) and for an Irish Drama Conference by the Department of Theatre.
- Polar Archives is working with producers in Norway and in Australia for documentaries concerning polar explorers in its collections.
- HIL hosted the 2001 Medieval Slavic summer Institute which included participants from England and Spain. One scholar from the Netherlands observed “Nowhere in the world can one gain such a concrete view of the cultural and intellectual unity of Slavia Orthodoxa as here, near the banks of the Olentangy River.”
- CGA was the destination place for a researcher from Canada, who spent a full month studying American cartoonists and their views of Canada in the late 19th Century; CGA’s International Cartoon Festival drew registrants from five different foreign countries.

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

- § *Collections.* In research libraries, proof of national and international stature is not only research use but the continued acquisition of rare and unique materials of prominent research value. In 2001:
- TRI acquired the Bebe Miller Collection which documents the nationally known choreographer of modern dance, the Daphne Dare Collection of original costume and scene designs, including for the Stratford (Ontario) Shakespeare Festival, the West End (London) productions, Broadway productions and many British television shows and films.
 - Polar Archives received the records of the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs.
 - CGA attracted significant numbers of original works in the collections of Lynda Barry, Morrie Brickman, Kate Salley Palmer, in addition of more than a thousand volumes of Chinese translations of Japanese manga.
 - RARE acquired the Tess Gallagher and Raymond Carver collections, more Samuel Beckett manuscripts, and another installment of the William T. Vollman Collection.
 - HIL received ten collections of Slavic manuscripts on microfiche from Moscow State University, totaling 385,000 pages.
 - MHC hired a project archivist to make available the Myers Nuclear Medicine Archives, which in the words of one researcher is “the largest single collection of historical nuclear medicine collections in the world.”
- § *Recognition from national agencies and foundations.* In 2001:
- Curators from TRI, Rare, and University Archives served as reviewers and panelists for the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Historic Publications and Records Commission.
 - CGA curator served on the Pulitzer Prize Committee in editorial cartooning.
 - TRI curator is a board member of the national Dance Heritage Coalition
 - Polar received an unrestricted grant (\$18,000) from the Lincoln Ellsworth Foundation.
- § *Participation with units that have received Selective Investment Awards because of their national prominence.* In 2001:
- CGA and History Department agreed to co-host a Thomas Nast symposium in Dec. 2002.
 - RARE hosted classes in History and in English which featured the use of collections in Rare and the curator taught “Rare Books Librarianship (Kent State LSCI 60665).

Strategy: Enhance the Quality of the Teaching and Learning Environment

- § *Classroom instruction by curators in 2001:*
- CGA curator taught JCOM 648.01 and was a guest lecturer for English 294 and Kent State LSCI 60652
 - HIL curator had responsibility for Slavic 792 “Practical Slavic Paleography, lectured in Classics 800, Comparative Studies 245, and Serbo-Croatian 103, had served on two dissertation committees in the Slavic Department.
 - TRI curator taught Theatre 801 and was involved with courses in acting, lighting design, and graduate methods as well as guest lecturing in Kent State LSCI 60652.
 - RARE curator taught “Rare Book Librarianship” for Kent State University provided guest lectures in at least four OSU classes. In addition, RARE hosted classes from the Departments of English, History, Fine Arts, German Language and Literature, Spanish and Portuguese, Greek and Latin, French and Italian, Dance, and Industrial Design.
 - OSU Archivist was a member of a team that organized and taught “OSU Its History and its World”(ASC 494) and archivists had responsibility for Kent State LSCI 60652 (Introduction to Archival Administration).
 - MHC curator taught and exhibited early medical diagnostic tools as part of OSU’s “History of Medicine,” (Medical Mini-module II #661)
- § *Non-classroom activities.* Exhibits and special events also help to enrich the quality of the teaching and learning environment. In 2001:
- Polar curator hosted a special event at the Wexner Center “With Byrd at the Movies.”
 - MHC held three endowed lectures that featured international and local speakers of prominence and loaned materials for community projects such as local theatre groups.
 - CGA developed and hosted the International Cartoon Festival; in addition the curator lectured in the Faculty Club Lunch and Learn program; exhibits at CGA “Calvin and Hobbes,” “At the Movies in 1951,” and Hal Foster’s Prince Valiant,” drew campus-wide as well as national and international attention; and the curator lectured for the 50th alumni reunion class.
 - RARE has had a leadership role in the Aldus Society, a community bibliographic society which includes numerous OSU faculty; had responsibility for a major exhibit and lecture program concerning William S. Burroughs; and a cooperative exhibition on calligraphy with the Columbus College of Arts and Design;

- OSU Archives provided exhibits in the lobby of the Main Library pertaining to the history of OSU and lectured for the OSU Alumni Association 50th reunion.
- Special collections had responsibility for the 1901 exhibit in Sills Gallery.

Strategy: Enhance and Better Serve the Student Body

§ *In 2001, special collections found numerous ways of connecting to students as individuals and as members of student organizations:*

- OSU Archives cooperated with Ohio Staters in developing the University Museum in Bricker Hall, assisted student organizations in preserving their records by holding educational meetings, and tours, exhibited during Welcome Week, and participated in Homecoming with exhibits and a lecture.
- RARE loaned photographic replicas of medieval manuscripts for an exhibit at the Ohio Union.
- HIL, RARE and TRI have been destination places for prospective graduate students in Slavic, Theatre, History, and English departments. Three students in Theatre credited their TRI visits as the deciding factor in choosing graduate programs.
- CGA had an exhibit, “Calvin and Hobbes” as part of the Welcome Week programming.

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 2001:*

- RARE began negotiations with the Ohio Latino Arts Association to receive its records.
- TRI created an exhibition in Bricker Hall concerning “Porgy and Bess” in the late spring and in the fall held readings from plays by women playwrights. In addition, TRI commenced work for a symposium on African-American singer Ruby Elzy, an OSU alumni, that was held in February 2002.
- OSU Archives created and presented a slide show about the history of diversity at OSU and worked closely with an OSU graduate student who is writing a thesis concerning the history of the Black Studies department.

Strategy: Help Build Ohio's Future

§ *Service to the state of Ohio and contributions to its future occurred in different ways. In 2001:*

- CGA, TRI, RARE, and OSU Archives contributed digital images to the Ohio Memory Project, a Web site that serves to document the history of Ohio and will be used by teachers and K-12 students as well as other researchers
- OSU Archivist served as one of the governor-appointed members of the Ohio Historic Records Advisory Board and is a member of the Ohio Electronic Records Committee.
- CGA and TRI curators participated in the Popular Culture committee for the Ohio Bicentennial Commission.
- MHC curator participated on the Ohio Bicentennial Science Committee as a representative for the various Health Science history collections in Ohio.
- RARE was a destination place for groups from other Ohio colleges, including Heidelberg, Wittenberg, and Otterbein and works closely with Thurber House in Columbus.
- TRI hosted high school interns from the Columbus Alternative High School.