

Special Collections and OSU's Academic Plan:

Highlights from 2004

OSU's Academic Plan names six general strategies for the University to improving its academic excellence. In 2004, 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).¹ In addition the Medical Heritage Center (MHC), which is part of OSU's Prior Health Sciences Library, is a special collection and a 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 2004 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 Preservation. More than 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. Most of the contents of Special Collections require original cataloging because there are usually no catalog records elsewhere that can be copied. Fortunately, Beth Russell and the Special Collections Cataloging Department have 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, Harry Campbell, OSU's conservator, has provided invaluable assistance in the work of Special Collections.

¹ 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 2004:
 - 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 ;
- *Exhibiting.* Loaning research materials for national and international exhibition serves to promote the University as a center of world-class scholarship. In 2004:
 - Polar Archives lent a collection of paintings to the German Maritime Museum and the Wegner Institute to develop an exhibit, “The Magic of Antarctic Colours,” in Bremerhaven, German of paintings by David Paige, from the Byrd Antarctic Expedition 1933-35. This was a featured event for delegations to the International Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research.;
 - CGA lent materials to the Indiana Historical Society and Washington University in St. Louis;
 - MHC hosted the national traveling exhibit, “Legacy of Heroes” and has been selected as a site for another traveling exhibit, “Changing the Face of Medicine”;
 - Glenn Archives loaned artifacts concerning the Friendship 7 flight to the Wien Museum in Vienna, Austria;
 - TRI added items and hosted a national touring exhibition “America’s Irreplaceable Dance Treasures.
 - RAR participated in the Guild of Book Workers touring exhibition “In Flight,” a collection of fine arts books commemorating a century of flight.
- *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. Highlights from 2004:
 - HIL hosted Fulbright scholars from Bulgaria and Russia and provided reference services to scholars in Canada, England, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Spain as well as the United States. In addition the curator made presentations in Serbia and Bulgaria. Finally, nine doctoral students in Europe defended dissertations that drew upon the collections at HIL.
 - CGA developed and hosted the International Festival of Cartoon Art. It featured fourteen of the nation’s leading cartoonists and editors as speakers on the theme of censorship.

- TRI's curator visited Spain and presented a paper at the International Association for Libraries and Museums of the Performing Arts in Barcelona;
- OSU Archives hosted researchers and provide documentation to researchers from Canada, Germany, and India and also the Center for Dewey Studies in Illinois, Yale University, and Brown University;
- RAR answered reference requests from countries that included Britain, France, Japan, and Australia.;
- Polar Archives had both curator and archivist present papers at the International Polar Libraries Colloquy in Ottawa; meanwhile, about 20% of reference requests came from foreign countries;
- MHC had an internationally prominent scholar in residence who used the resources to write *What is Medical History*.

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, choreographer Twyla Tharp, polar explorer Richard Byrd, the heroic Jesse Owens as well as microfilm from Hilandar monastery. In 2004 curators continued to acquire collections, some of which are :
 - RAR added to its luster as a place for literary scholarship by adding the Stevens-Cox sigla collections, the William Corbett literary archive, the TransPacific literary journal archive and several collections of avant writers;
 - TRI acquisitions included costume and set designs by famed Czech designer Jan Sladek and documentation from Ric Wanetik's *Marlene* and *Jolson* productions, as well as the papers of choreographer Senta Driver, producer Doris Cole Abrahams, and director Meridee Stein, and film critic Hollis Alpert;
 - Polar Archives acquired 114 original negatives of the Wilkins Detroic Arctic Expedition, the effort to fly from Point Barrow to Spitzbergen in 1928;
 - CGA added to its holdings and received \$15, 600 in appraised primary materials. Yellow Kid tear sheets were added as poart of the San Francisco Academy of comic Art purchase. More than 5,000 original Dick Tracy comic strips were donated;
 - HIL received portions of the largest private collection in the US relating to medieval Slavic and early Cyrillic imprints;
 - John Glenn donated another 7 cubic feet of materials.

- *Recognition from national agencies and foundations. In 2004:*
 - The Glenn Archivist continued to serve on the steering committee of Society of American Archivists' Congressional Papers Roundtable and as a member of a taskforce to develop standards for Congressional Research Center;
 - TRI was praised by the National Association of Schools of Theatre, which accredited OSU's Department of Theatre, while the curator continued as a board member of the national Dance Heritage Coalition;
 - CGA curator judged the Scripts-Howard college cartoonists / Schultz Award and the Swann Foundation fellowship applications for the Library of Congress;
 - Polar received \$20,000 in grants from three private foundations;
 - RAR curator continued as a member of the Ohio Center for the Book;
 - MHC completed a \$20,000 matching grant goal for the Columbus Medical Association;
 - HIL continued to be involved in applications for Fulbright Scholarships.
- *Participation with units that have received Selective Investment Awards because of their national prominence. In 2004:*
 - CGA curator continued on the Popular Culture Subcommittee of the College of Humanities Interdisciplinary Studies Committee;
 - OSU Archives assisted many of these departments in answering research requests;
 - RAR hosted classes in History, English and Dance that featured the use of collections in Rare.

Strategy: Enhance the Quality of the Teaching and Learning Environment

- *Classroom instruction by curators in 2004:*
 - TRI curator taught in Theatre 801 (Research Methods) and worked with Professor Mary Tarantino (Theatre) in developing a graduate course in lighting design; while the collections supported Introduction to Theatre, Technical Production Fundamentals, Acting Fundamentals, Acting Studio, Speech and Voice, Self-Images: America on Stage, State Management, Theatre Topics, European Renaissance and Baroque Theatre, Introduction to the Study of Literature and Culture in Spanish, and 18th Century French Literature.
 - CGA provided materials to three classes in Journalism and the History of Art while the curator lectured in History 398 (Intro to Historical Research) and taught the History of Newspaper Editorial Cartoons (JCOM 648.02);

- HIL curator taught two classes in International Studies and in Slavic and East European Studies;
 - RAR, as in previous years, 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 and participated as a guest lecture;
 - MHC hosted class from the OSU schools of pharmacy and College of Medicine mini-modules, in addition to presentations for OSU College of Veterinary Medicine;
 - OSU Archivist was a member of a team that organized and taught “OSU Its History and its World”(ASC 500) and students in architecture, art, art history, journalism, regional planning and history used the OSU Archives.
- *Non-classroom activities.* Exhibits and special events also help to enrich the quality of the teaching and learning environment. In 2004:
 - CGA held three exhibits (*Hoo Boy! Morrie Brickman’s The Small Society; Scrapbook Sampler; drawing Fire: Controversial Cartoons by Milton Caniff*) and the International Festival of Cartoon Art where lectures were available to students;
 - RAR continued its leadership role in the Aldus Society, a community bibliographic society which includes numerous OSU faculty;
 - OSU Archives added to the website concerning the OSU vs. Michigan rivalry in football, and gave presentations regarding the history of OSU to clubs of the OSU Alumni Association;
 - HIL curator initiated a new lecture series “Byzantino-Slavic,” with three presentations open to the OSU community and off-campus;
 - TRI curator served as one of the coordinators for the traveling exhibit of Czech designs (*Metaphor and Irony II*) in addition to hosting *America’s Irreplaceable Dance Treasures*.

Strategy: Enhance and Better Serve the Student Body

- *In 2004, special collections found numerous ways of connecting to students as individuals and as members of student organizations:*
 - OSU Archives has helped numerous student organizations better understand the history of OSU and themselves -- *The Lantern*, Ohio Staters, and its University Museum, AOSCH (student honoraries group) Bucket and Dipper, Forensics Team, Chimes, Orientation, to name a few;
 - HIL, RAR 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;

- The Glenn Archivist presented an exhibit at a dinner for the students in the Living Learning Program of the John Glenn Institute;
- MHC has worked with student groups to aid in better understanding the history of health sciences at OSU, including a feature article in a student newspaper;
- As stated above, curators have been responsible for individual students in independent study arrangements.

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 2004:*
 - Three curators—TRI, CGA, and RAR-- developed an honors course for 2005 that would use primary sources in their collections to illustrate and evidence themes of race and ethnicity.
 - RAR added collections documenting the Japanese-American experience of internment in WW II;
 - TRI hosted a lecture by Toni-Leslie James concerning African-American women in the performing arts;
 - MHC's Warren Lecture focused on women in the history of surgery;
 - RAR continued to consult with prospective donors of nationally important Civil Rights collections who are in New York City;
 - Many students have used the OSU Archives in the past year to study the demonstrations of the 1960's and the issues of diversity and minority concerns that helped to fuel them.

Strategy: Help Build Ohio's Future

- *Service to the state of Ohio and contributions to its future occurred in different ways. In 2004:*
 - HIL curator participated in a 10 week mentorship program of Olentangy High School that partnered a student with HIL;
 - TRI coordinated the national exhibit, *America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures*, at the Columbus Cultural Arts Center, which reached a diverse off-campus audience;

- MHC developed programming for the “Building connections Conference” at the Ohio Historical Society and worked with the Ohio Preservation Council;
- OSU Archives worked with several pre-college students in History Day projects and was one of the hosts (with CGA) of the Cincinnati Heritage Program;
- OSU Archivist continued as one of the governor-appointed members of the Ohio Historic Records Advisory Board and is a member of the Ohio Electronic Records Committee;
- RAR worked closely with Thurber House and the Aldus Society, a bibliographic society, and the curator is a board member of the Ohio Center for the Book
- Glenn archivist continued as advisory to the John and Annie Glenn Museum in New Concord;
- CGA curator made presentations at the Downtown Kiwanis Club, MALE of the Clintonville Women’s Club, and the Aldus Society.