

Houghton Library Collection Development Guidelines

Introduction

Houghton Library is the principal special collections library of Harvard College Library. Including some 600,000 books, more than 10 million manuscripts, and several million prints, photographs, and ephemera, Houghton's collections focus on the study of Western civilization. Materials relating to American, English, and Continental history and literature comprise the bulk of these collections and include special concentrations in poetry, and printing, graphic, and performing arts. Houghton Library collects materials, through purchase and gift, in the several areas listed below to support the teaching and research of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, the broader Harvard community, and an international scholarly constituency. The library coordinates its collecting with other special collections units within the Harvard College Library, with Widener Library, and, particularly for manuscript and archival material, with other special collections repositories within Harvard University. Faculty input and curriculum development also inform Houghton's collecting guidelines.

Early Books and Manuscripts (to 1600)

The Early Books and Manuscripts Department includes material dating from approximately 3000 BCE to 1600 CE and ranges from papyri and ostraca and early and illuminated manuscripts to early printed books. While there is emphasis on Western languages and cultures, the collection is also strong in Arabic, Indic, Persian, and Syriac manuscripts.

The department actively collects printed and manuscript material to support teaching and research in the following areas:

- Bibliography and book history
- History of the spread of printing
- Incunabula
- Early illustrated books and techniques
- English STC books
- Bindings

- Annotated and association books with features of use, provenance, and binding
- Houghton collected authors, including Savonarola, Thomas à Kempis, Erasmus, and Luther
- Vernacular poetry, particularly in dialects
- Neo-Latin poetry
- Folklore
- Early book catalogs and art guidebooks
- Reformation
- Early science, particularly astronomy
- Maps and travel books

Donald & Mary Hyde Collection of Dr. Samuel Johnson and Early Modern Books and Manuscripts (1600-1800)

The Donald & Mary Hyde Collection of Dr. Samuel Johnson and Early Modern Books and Manuscripts Department includes extensive holdings of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century American, English, and Continental history and literature. The Hyde Collection, one of the greatest private collections of eighteenth-century British literature ever assembled, was bequeathed to Harvard by Mary, Viscountess Eccles (1912-2003) along with endowment funds to catalog and add to the collections. The Hyde Collection forms the centerpiece of the department's eighteenth-century holdings.

The department collects printed and manuscript material in the following areas:

- Bibliography and book history
- American history and literature
- English and Continental history and literature
- European Britannica (English books published in Europe, translations of English books into European languages, and European books about English culture)
- Russian belles lettres
- Canadiana
- Central/South American history and literature
- Science (especially astronomy, mathematics, physics, and scientific instruments)
- Drama texts
- Philosophy/political theory
- Enlightenment

- Utopian fiction
- Music
- Samuel Johnson and his circle
- Houghton collected authors, such as Cervantes, Donne, Goethe, Fielding, and Voltaire
- Annotated books and association books with features of use, provenance, and binding
- Maps and travel books
- Harvardiana and Thomas Hollis

The department acquires prints and drawings, broadsides, and chapbooks that relate to the areas listed above. It does not actively collect art and three-dimensional objects.

Modern Books and Manuscripts (1800-present)

The Modern Books and Manuscripts Department focuses on the literature and history of Europe and the Americas. It also includes the Theodore Roosevelt Collection (see below) and extensive holdings of Arabic, Indic, and Syriac manuscripts (the corresponding printed holdings are largely held in Widener Library). The department does not hold all post-1800 material in Houghton's collections, however. The Department of Printing and Graphic Arts, the Harvard Theatre Collection, and the George Edward Woodberry Poetry Room all specialize in some aspect of the modern era, and their holdings overlap and intersect with those of the Modern Books and Manuscripts collection.

The manuscript and archival collections number more than 1,800. Additionally, there are several thousand individual manuscripts, covering a broad array of subjects, languages, and authors. Major subjects represented in the manuscript and archival collections are American and European literature and history, with particular strength in American, British, French, Latin American, Russian, and Spanish literature; the history of missions and missionaries, particularly those of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM); publishing history; music; and philosophy. The department actively collects papers in the following areas, among others:

- Nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature, with an emphasis on Harvard-educated authors

- Philosophy; philosophers with strong ties to Harvard
- Personal papers of missionaries who served with the ABCFM
- American publishers; primary emphasis on those based in New England
- Human rights, particularly focused on the Sakharov Archives

The rare book collection is broader in topical and cultural content than the manuscript and archive collection. In addition to strong collections in American and European history and literature in general, there are strengths in American, British, Danish, French, German, Italian, Latin American, Modern Greek, Portuguese, Russian, Slavic and Spanish literature; the Russian Revolution and pre-revolutionary radical pamphlets; the Vienna revolt of 1848; American Trotskyism; Dreyfusiana; classical music and popular songsters; bibliography and book history; and more. The goal of the department is to form complete collections of the work of major authors, and representative collections of important single books and genres. Duplication is avoided.

The department actively collects printed material in the following areas, among others:

- Aesthetics
- American Civil War (emphasis on New England and Harvard; Abraham Lincoln)
- Annotated and association books with features of use, provenance, and binding
- Ballads and dialectic poetry, particularly of England and Scotland
- Bibliography and book history
- Broad­sides and chapbooks
- Children's literature
- European Britannica
- Gift books and annuals
- Harvardiana
- Latin American literature, particularly Magic Realism and the "Boom"
- Philosophy
- Provençal, Romansch, Cornish, Welsh, Celtic, and Milanese dialect
- Russian literature
- Slavic literature
- History of science
- Science fiction
- Utopian fiction
- Women's history (non-American)

Modern Books and Manuscripts collects historic photographs, prints, and drawings that relate to its major author or subject holdings, such as portraits of authors or newspaper artists' drawings of the American Civil War. With some exceptions (Lewis Carroll and William Makepeace Thackeray being the most notable), drawings for book illustration are not collected, as this is the province of the Department of Printing and Graphic Arts. The department does not actively collect objects such as clothing, furniture, toys, coins, and other three-dimensional material. It may acquire, predominantly through gift, small objects related to an author's work, such as pens, pencils, eyeglasses, and jewelry, largely for exhibition purposes.

Theodore Roosevelt Collection

The Theodore Roosevelt Collection, housed in Houghton and Widener libraries, is a major resource for the study of the life and times of the 26th president of the United States. The collection, the largest of its kind outside of the Library of Congress, acquires manuscripts, archival resources, printed works, photographs and prints, and ephemera relating to both Roosevelt's personal and professional life.

Printing and Graphic Arts

The Department of Printing and Graphic Arts collects materials from all periods illustrating the book arts and the materiality and historical development of the book, whether manuscript or printed. Primary emphasis is on books in languages that use the Roman alphabet, although the collection includes representative examples from other cultural traditions. Collecting is selective in all the areas listed below. Criteria for selection in all categories include the historical importance of the object, its aesthetic qualities, its physical condition, its relationship to existing Houghton Library collections, and its potential for supporting research and teaching.

- Medieval and Renaissance manuscripts: Significant examples of illumination or script
- Printed books: Illustrated books from incunabula to the present, and books regarded as examples of typography or graphic technique. This category includes private press books and modern fine printing

- Book bindings: Not collected systematically, but significant historical examples will be considered
- Contemporary artists' books: Criteria for selection include the quality of materials and execution and the direct involvement of the artist in the production of the book. This category includes archives related to the production of particular artist's books or the work of individual book artists
- Works on typography and graphic techniques: Type specimens, manuscripts or archives relating to type design, printer's manuals, and treatises on printing or graphic techniques
- Writing manuals, 1500-1900: Instruction books for teaching handwriting, and examples of calligraphic handwriting intended for instruction, whether manuscript or printed
- Children's books
- Calligraphy: Historical and contemporary examples of calligraphy
- Drawings: Drawings for book illustration, and drawings by book illustrators
- Prints: Single prints or suites of prints related to book illustration, or by artists involved in book illustration
- Paper: Decorated papers (e.g., marbled papers, paste papers, printed papers) whether historical or produced by contemporary artists, historical examples of plain paper, paper sample books, works on papermaking and decorated papers, and books containing significant examples of decorated papers
- Printing surfaces: Woodcut or wood-engraved woodblocks, intaglio copperplates, lithographic stones, artifacts illustrating the processes of letterpress printing

Harvard Theatre Collection

The Harvard Theatre Collection, founded in 1901, is one of the largest performing arts collection in the world and the oldest theatre collection of international significance in the United States. The collection includes books, manuscripts, artifacts, and audio-visual materials pertaining to the history of the performing arts, including the fields of theatre, ballet, social dance, opera, and musical theatre. Holdings also include many forms of popular entertainment, such as magic and conjuring, music hall and variety, pantomime and extravaganza, puppetry, toy theatre, circuses and menageries, fairgrounds, pageants and outdoor drama, festivals and spectacles, film, and minstrelsy. The Harvard Theatre Collection has always actively collected materials related to all aspects of the American and British stage and continues to do so. In areas of particular

strength, such as dance and ballet, opera and musical theatre, and designs for theatrical costumes and scenes, the Harvard Theatre Collection acquires materials of nearly every country, culture, and period.

The department acquires manuscript material in the following areas:

- Manuscripts and typescripts of musical scores, libretti, and scenarios for ballet, musical theatre, and opera
- Professional and personal papers and archives of playwrights, actors, singers, dancers, directors, promoters and impresarios, and theatre companies and producing organizations

The department acquires printed material in the following areas:

- Musical scores, including sheet music and all manner of performance-related music
- Prompt books, especially annotated copies associated with specific stage productions
- Printed material related to all forms of public amusement and popular entertainment, including minstrelsy, vaudeville, magic shows, exhibitions and spectacles, and the circus
- Playbills, handbills, posters, and other display and advertising material related to commercial aspects of theatre
- Theatre history of Boston and surrounding areas
- Ballets Russes

In addition to manuscripts and printed material, the Harvard Theatre Collection acquires other formats relating to the history of the performing arts, including the following:

- Photographs and prints of performers, scenes from plays and other stage works and films, exteriors and interiors of theatres, and other aspects of the theatre and film
- Works of art based on performers or productions, including drawings and watercolors of designs of theatrical scenes and costumes
- Audiovisual material

- Three-dimensional artifacts (to a limited degree, depending on their research value and if they complement a larger collection)

George Edward Woodberry Poetry Room

Founded in 1931 in honor of Harvard alumnus, poet, and scholar, George Edward Woodberry (1855-1930), the Poetry Room houses an extensive collection of twentieth- and twenty-first-century English-language poetry books, periodicals, audio recordings, and rare materials.

The Poetry Room collects primarily printed and audiovisual materials relating to twentieth- and twenty-first-century poetry, focusing on English-language poets as well as significant English-language translations of international poets from 1900 to the present. The Poetry Room actively collects:

- Monographs, anthologies, chapbooks, broadsides, and reference materials.
- Periodicals
- Audio recordings, with a special interest in Harvard programs, readings, and lectures, in a wide range of formats (reels, LPs, cassette tapes, compact disks, and digital formats) and poetry videos (documentaries, interviews, and raw footage of poets in their milieus)

The Poetry Room has a particular interest in collecting and preserving rare audio and visual materials from American and international reading series (including readings sponsored by universities, not-for-profit organizations, festivals, and small independent venues), poets theatre productions, poetry radio programs, and oral history interviews with poets.

Houghton Reference Collection

The Houghton Reference Collection is designed to serve students, faculty, staff, and an international community of scholars using library collections. Due to the vast reference collections at Widener and other Harvard College libraries and the growing volume of on-line resources, Houghton is selective when acquiring reference materials. While Houghton strives to avoid duplication of resources in other Harvard College libraries, it does recognize that non-Harvard affiliates cannot get access to the resources of these

libraries. Acquisition decisions are the responsibility of the Associate Librarian for Public Services with guidance of Houghton staff and patrons.

There are seven components of the Houghton Reference Collection (Houghton adds to the first five bullet categories only):

- HRR: The Houghton Reading Room Collection includes ready reference and bibliographical sources relating directly to large holdings in the library, as well as certain serials
- B*: Formerly a Widener class that includes titles under the general heading “Antiquarian Bibliography.” It includes books on books, books on printing, and books on publishing
- Departmental and desk reference books – these vary widely, from language dictionaries to subject encyclopedias, ALA manuals, and copyright sources
- HRef: this collection serves as reference for the Printing & Graphic Arts collection
- HTC reference: the Harvard Theatre Collection reference collection.
- *93-HR: additional reference and resource materials for Printing & Graphic Arts collection
- *65J, *65JC, *65JM: library of Houghton’s first librarian, William Jackson, that includes many bibliographic resources

The general areas for selecting materials are outlined below. Only those resources with direct relevance to Houghton’s collections are considered.

- Bibliographies
- Encyclopedias
- Language dictionaries (particularly Western languages)
- Periodicals: *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America; The Library; Harvard Library Bulletin; The Book Collector*
- Biography dictionaries and alumni catalogs
- Other major reference sources on heraldry, typography, book illustration, printing, publishing, paper, bindings, bibliography, and history of the book