“When I teach about the scientific revolution, the resources in Special Collections allow me to show students how the presentation and dissemination of scientific information changed with the advent of printing. The collection is especially rich in zoology and veterinary medicine, so I can discuss not only the scientific study of animals, but how that knowledge filtered down to the people actually involved in animal husbandry and the care of livestock. The students enjoy being able to examine the actual historical texts, and it forms the core of my teaching.”

Liam Brockey, Associate Professor, MSU Department of History
Dear Friends,

Several of the articles within this issue of Insight focus on Special Collections. If some of these “collections within Special Collections” strike you as somewhat different than what you might imagine an academic research library would seek to acquire, that’s actually a good thing. The Association of Research Libraries, of which the MSU Libraries is a member, monitors the special collecting interests of its member libraries with the hope of avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort. This should, in the long run, allow our collective holdings to include a broader representation of materials. Put more simply, if all of the ARL libraries focused on cookery materials, for example, then other areas would go unattended.

Now many of you might logically equate “special collections” with rare and older works, such as classic first editions, and the MSU Libraries Special Collections does house a sizeable collection of items fitting this description. However, many of our areas of collection emphasis within Special Collection have a more contemporary or popular focus. The reason for this is straightforward. The MSU Libraries did not begin to emerge as a serious research library until the 1950s. By then, numerous other research libraries around the world had been collecting contemporary or popular focus. The reason for this is straightforward. The MSU Libraries did not begin to emerge as a serious research library until the 1950s. By then, numerous other research libraries around the world had been collecting traditional rare books for decades and sometimes centuries. To have focused primarily on those types of materials, coming so late to the game, would have been difficult, expensive, duplicative and somewhat pointless.

So instead, several more contemporary collecting areas were appropriately identified and pursued, some of which you will read about within this issue, plus many others that you will be hearing about in the future. Enjoy, and if your curiosity is piqued, please stop by Special Collections for a first-hand look.

Clifford H. Haka
Director of Libraries

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

“I am deeply grateful for all the help and support I’ve received from the director and staff of the MSU Libraries’ Special Collections. The collection is fantastic! In Special Collections I found much of the material that is now central to my research, and I devoted two full summers to examining those primary resources on evangelical sexuality. That work resulted in two peer-reviewed articles in the premier journal in my field and a chapter in my new book, Saving Sex: Sexuality and Salvation in American Evangelicalism, forthcoming from Oxford University Press.”

Amy DeRogatis, Associate Professor, Religious Studies

Library acquires Palestinian youth newspaper, with help from faculty member

With welcome assistance from a faculty member, the MSU Libraries have been fortunate to receive a 15-year run of The Youth Times, a newspaper produced and for young people in Palestine. Published in Arabic and English, The Youth Times has a circulation of about 120,000 readers.

The Youth Times is the only second library in the world, and the only library outside the Middle East, known to provide access to The Youth Times. The back issues were a gift from the publisher, the Palestinian Youth Association for Leadership and Rights Activation, facilitated by Saleem Alhabash, assistant professor of public relations and social media. Alhabash was one of the first youth journalists to write for The Youth Times and eventually served as its managing editor.

“The Youth Times is a dynamic experience for everyone involved,” says Alhabash, “and a rare outlet for Palestinian youth to express themselves. It really sheds light on the importance of communication and media in changing people’s lives.”

The young journalists offer a mix of social commentary, youth culture, and political awareness—ranging from one article on curfews in the occupied territories, to another on what teenagers learn from part-time jobs. The Arabic-language content has a similar mix, with everything from tips on better kite-making to a photo of a child standing next to a home damaged by mortar fire.

“The Youth Times is a dynamic experience for everyone involved,” says Alhabash, “and a rare outlet for Palestinian youth to express themselves. It really sheds light on the importance of communication and media in changing people’s lives.”

Clifford the library director meets Clifford the Big Red Dog at a recent American Library Association conference.

SPEAKING OF PEOPLE

Seth Martin
Director of Development for Cynthia A. Ghering & Historical Collections

Director of University Archives & Historical Collections
Cynthia A. Ghering

Director of Development for Libraries & IT Services
Seth Martin

Editor: Ruth Ann Jones
Photography: Harley J. Seeley
Design: Theresa Moore; Shelby Kroske

Printed on recycled content paper.

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Without the steadfast support of donors and generous contributions from comics collectors, our acclaimed Comic Art Collection simply would not exist.

And now, that collection has inspired a brand new opportunity for students! It's the very first book published by the Libraries: The MSU Student Comic Art Anthology, showcasing the work of eleven artists—six current students and five recent graduates.

Students and alumni responded enthusiastically to the call for submissions, and the Anthology officially debuted on March 1–2 at the MSU Comics Forum. It's been featured in the State News, the Lansing City Pulse, MSU Today, and the Comics Reporter—providing terrific exposure for the student artists.

Producing the student anthology was the library’s first step into the emerging field of library publishing. “Technology allows libraries to share the unique materials they’ve acquired and curated more widely than was ever possible before,” said Cliff Haka, director of the MSU Libraries. “We’re delighted to take this one step further by developing a publication that will also benefit MSU students.”

The $12 book is printed on the library’s Espresso Book Machine, and is for sale on Amazon.com, shop.msu.edu and at the Main Library Copy Center. It’s a great way to show your MSU spirit!

MSU’s Poet in Residence, Diane Wakoski, has generously donated many decades’ worth of her personal papers to our Michigan Writers Collection—"an extraordinary addition to our Michigan Writers Collection," as she puts it.

Wakoski retired last year after 37 years at MSU. She was named a University Distinguished Professor in 1990.

Wakoski’s personal papers include correspondence, manuscripts, and copies of her published works—30 boxes in all! The gift also includes Wakoski’s large collection of poetry broadsides: specially-printed copies of a single poem, often with original artwork, signed by the poet, and sized for framing.

Wakoski’s correspondents range from the well-known, such as the writer Jim Harrison, to a college boyfriend. The letters to the college boyfriend were handwritten on lovely gray stationery—an extravagance, Wakoski says, at a time when she had very little money.

As she organized her files for the library, Wakoski was struck by how these letters show her inventing herself in her writing—thus documenting how poets use personal art to create a persona of their own choosing. It is this transformation, Wakoski reveals, that she has loved about working with college students. Her early correspondence illustrates this extraordinary process.

To aspiring poets who may read her materials, Wakoski offers this advice: “Don’t leave your day job, but make poetry your real job. Read everything from high to low—more classics than trash, though—and write everything as if it’s for an audience, for you lower your standards when you write just for yourself.

“Finally, give yourself some privacy. Poetry is not a group effort.”

Wakoski photo courtesy of Robert Turney.

Collection built by donors inspires creativity

Ryan Claytor, Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Art and Art History, and Director, MSU Comics Forum

“The Special Collections library was one of the highlights of moving from California to Michigan. Now that I teach a Comics Studio course at MSU the first day of class I always introduce them to MSU’s Comics Bibliographer Randy Scott, and the overwhelming collection he’s amassed. Anything my students need for research is there, whether that’s the work of an international artist mentioned in class, periodicals featuring critical essays on the comics medium, reference books teaching the principles of making comics, or short-run mini-comics produced by a local talent.”

Ryan Claytor, Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Art and Art History, and Director, MSU Comics Forum

Below: Detail from “Rapunzel,” a fairy-tale remix by Ryan Eisch.
Dear Friends,

In 1969, the MSU Board of Trustees mandated the creation of the University Archives & Historical Collections to serve as “the depository for university records which are no longer administratively useful…” At the time those records consisted of twentieth-century analog formats such as paper, publications, photographs, ledgers, scrapbooks, with some film and audio media. Transfer of records to the University Archives required an actual physical transfer of the files.

Jump forward in time to today where most business records are created and stored electronically. These records still have long-term historical value, but issues of longevity become much greater than in the paper world. Paper can be left alone for 20, 50, 100 years and still exist. Technology changes so quickly that sometimes we can’t open electronic documents that are only five years old! Transfer and storage practices for university records need to evolve to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

There is no perfect solution yet, but University Archives is working on an answer. Working closely with IT Services, the archives is building a trusted digital repository for materials that are created and used electronically, or as we call them “born digital.” This repository will allow us to preserve MSU’s historically significant digital materials in the same digital environment in which they were created. It will also allow us to contribute in our own way to MSU’s Be Spartan Green campaign by not printing out every electronic file given to us.

The mandate from the Board of Trustees to preserve historically significant records still exists and we are doing our best to work with technology so we can do just that!

Yours in MSU history,

Cynthia A. Ghering
Director, University Archives & Historical Collections

Cynthia A. Ghering
Director, University Archives & Historical Collections

Location: 101 Conrad Hall
Phone: 517.355-2330
Email: archives@msu.edu
Reading room hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: 9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 10:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.
Website: archives.msu.edu
MSU Archives on Facebook: www.facebook.com/MSUarchives
MSU Archives on Flickr: www.flickr.com/photos/msuarchives
MSU Archives blog: www.msuarchives.wordpress.com
On the Banks of the Red Cedar: www.onthebanks.msu.edu

Above: The women’s fencing team at practice, circa 1926. The young man on the steps is student Joseph Waffa, who coached the women’s team.

Photo courtesy of University Archives & Historical Collections.

Ever notice how records appear in the same basic format across library catalogs everywhere? That consistency is no accident! For decades, libraries around the world have cooperated to develop national and international standards, so that we can share data among ourselves. As a result, the work of describing a given resource only needs to be done once. Any library can download that record to use in their catalog—which saves money too.

But cooperation only works if catalogers stay updated on shared practices. That’s why our Cataloging and Metadata Services team just learned a new international standard called Resource Description and Access (RDA).

“RDA is about the catalog becoming more interconnected and flexible,” said Head of CMS Lisa Robinson. “Our records are evolving from static documents into linking data. We can draw relationships between resources that weren’t expressed before.”

“Cataloging can be a solitary pursuit,” said Emily Sanford after the intensive, three-week training period. “So coming together to discuss the philosophical underpinnings of RDA was awesome and rewarding. We’re all nerdy about cataloging—it was nice to be reminded of that!”

“RDA is less prescriptive than previous rules, and leaves much more to the cataloger’s judgment,” explained Bojana Skarich.

“It’s like drawing back the curtain to find the Wizard of Oz doesn’t really exist! We must trust ourselves and depend on each other to make our way.”

For me, RDA is like picking up a violin for the first time—after twenty years playing the piano. The fundamentals are the same but the approach is totally different. This is a big transition for CMS, but we’re committed to national cooperation. It’s our part in helping MSU Libraries provide the best access possible!”

Boldly going where no catalogers have gone before

Autumn Faulkner, Cataloger

Cataloging & Metadata Services RDA committee members from left: Lisa Robinson, Don Depoorter, Joshua Barton, Emily Sanford, and Lucas Mak.

University Archives & Historical Collections
Digging up MSU history
Whitney Miller, Processing Archivist

Does the word “archaeology” make you think of exotic, distant lands? The pyramids, the Roman catacombs, and maybe Indiana Jones? Think again, because archaeology takes place right here at MSU—and the University Archives are an important partner in its success.

The MSU Campus Archaeology Program frequently uses archival resources to prepare for digs around campus: examining historical photographs, construction documents, maps, and business records.

The partnership took off during MSU’s Sesquicentennial, when Saints’ Rest—the first dorm on campus—was excavated. Once standing in the area between Beaumont Tower and Linton Hall, Saints’ Rest was built in 1856 and burned down in 1876. The building’s foundations were long since covered over, but maps and other documentation in the Archives pinpointed the precise location for the dig. The Archives also facilitated an exciting Eureka! moment for former Campus Archaeologist Terry Brock as he spent an afternoon examining old campus photos. Months earlier, a dig near the Red Cedar River had turned up a chunk of plaster with the letters Moor written across it. What could it be?

Thanks to photographs preserved by the University Archives, Brock was able to identify the fragment as a portion of College Hall, the first building on campus. Sadly, College Hall was not well built, and ultimately collapsed in 1918. In 1887, however, a group of students had teamed up to make repairs—and signed their names on a wall when they finished. “A. Moore” topped the list.

Archives and archaeology: bringing MSU’s history to life, together!!
Eneriti faculty: don’t recycle those papers!
Sarah Roberts, Acquisitions Archivist

Are you a retired faculty member looking for a home for your professional papers? Look no further!

The University Archives would like to acquire your records for our collection. Faculty papers are a wonderful source for researchers, documenting both individual careers and the history of the university.

We are interested in receiving:
• administrative material
• University publications
• photographs
• audiovisual materials
• research files
• syllabi and lecture notes
• correspondence
• articles and speeches by faculty
• committee materials
• departmental records

Your donation can be a single folder, a dozen boxes, or a flash drive loaded with digital files. We gladly accept both paper copies and electronic documents.

There are a few types of material we can’t accept, unfortunately. Confidential information tops that list. We’re also unable to take three-dimensional objects (such as plaques) or your personal reference copies of books and articles written by other scholars.

We’re happy to answer questions! Please contact Sarah Roberts, Acquisitions Archivist, at 517-884-6440 or roberte472@msu.edu.

MSU contributes to Google Books

The MSU Libraries have begun sending monthly shipments to a Google digitization center to be scanned and added to the publicly-available Google Books collection. Google Books has digitized millions of titles from university libraries, and indexed the contents so users can search across the entire set. MSU’s participation is part of Google’s contract with the Committee on Institutional Cooperation, a consortium of Midwestern universities. About 50,000 titles from the MSU collection will be digitized.

“Large-scale initiatives like the Google project make it possible for a significant number of our books to be to digitized,” explains Peter Berg, Associate Director for Special Collections and Preservation. “That helps preserve the physical volumes by reducing wear and tear, and makes them more accessible now and for future generations.”

Books in the public domain—generally those published before 1923—are available in full text. For titles still protected by copyright, the user is shown a few lines before and after the search term, with links to purchase the book or find it in a library.

Cookbooks on the Web: A gift to MSU, and beyond

Ten years ago, the MSU Libraries unveiled Feeding America: The Historic American Cookbook Project—an online collection of significant cookbooks in American culinary history. We were thrilled to have the project featured in Gourmet magazine and Collectors Weekly. Feeding America was just the start of our effort to make the Cookery & Food Collection available to interested users all over the world. We’ve continued to expand our digital archives with Michigan cookbooks and culinary ephemera.

Without the support of many generous donors, the Cookery & Food Collection would simply not exist—and neither would our digital archives. On behalf of our users worldwide, thank you!

Cookery & Food Collection doubles with McDaniel gift

For years, the Cookery & Food Collection has been one of the jewels in our Special Collections crown. Now, the collection will nearly double in size, thanks to an extremely generous gift of 8,000 cookbooks from Donna Dixon McDaniel.

Over several decades, Mrs. McDaniel quietly built an extraordinary collection—ranging from The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy (the most popular cookbook of the 18th century) to a NASCAR cookbook published in 2006.

In retirement, she and her husband enjoyed traveling the country in a pickup truck, visiting estate sales, and used book stores. Their efforts turned up thousands of little-known titles by local cooks and volunteer groups.

The McDaniel gift is particularly rich in Junior League cookbooks, a genre known for its regional flair and next-door-neighbor friendliness. With only 20% of the 8,000 titles cataloged, MSU already has the most extensive collection of Junior League cookbooks in the entire world.

The collection also boasts many fascinating state and local cookbooks from the 19th and early 20th century. Titles like Fifty Years in a Maryland Kitchen (1873), The Hawaiian Cook Book (1896) and The Florida Tropical Cookbook (1896) greatly enhance our Midwest-focused collection.

“Mrs. McDaniel’s gift to the Cookery & Food Collection is priceless,” says Peter Berg, head of Special Collections, “adding tremendous new depth to our holdings.”

Little cookbooks: the Alan and Shirley Brocker Sliker Culinary Collection

Beyond the familiar format of the book-length recipe collection, there’s another entire world for cooking historians to explore: the pamphlet-size “little” cookbooks produced to advertise food products, kitchen tools, and appliances.

In 2005, long-time collector Shirley Brocker Sliker donated thousands of these charming, colorful booklets to MSU’s Cookery & Food Collection. The next year, with her husband, Mrs. Sliker established the Alan and Shirley Brocker Sliker Library Endowment.

“The culinary collection in the MSU Library’s Special Collections is superb, ranking among the best in the world. It is absolutely invaluable to me as a researcher, and I have worked in the collection on topics ranging from food in the Civil War, to the birth of modern weight-loss culture, to a history of children’s food, to Depression-era food culture, to attempts to link diet with longevity— to name just a few.

“As a teacher, it’s been invaluable too. Most of my students arrive on the first day of class having little or no experience with historical research outside the borders of their computer screens. Being able to get them into a world-class culinary collection where they can hold documents that are decades and even centuries old is amazing. I’ve never had students get so excited about the past as they are after working with the materials in Special Collections.”

Helen Veit, Assistant Professor, MSU Department of History

Little cookbooks: the Alan and Shirley Brocker Sliker Culinary Collection

Produced in 1896 by the Ladies’ Society of the Central Union Church of Honolulu, the Hawaiian Cook Book illustrates the fusion of its contributors’ European-American heritage with the native foods of the islands. The book is filled with recipes for traditional favorites with new ingredients: mango brown-betty, sago and strawberry pudding, green “papaia” with fried onions, baked taro cakes, and “pot-pie of ohias or oheloes”—a cobbler made with ohias, also called mountain apples, or with oheloes, a Hawaiian berry.

http://digital.lib.msu.edu/projects/cookbooks/
Changing Men Collections
Endowment established, thanks to you

The Libraries are pleased to announce that an endowment for the Changing Men Collections has been established, thanks to several generous contributions.

“My passion for the Changing Men Collections stems from four decades of work in men’s liberation,” explains Francis Bauml, one of the main contributors to the endowment and a much-published scholar in men’s studies. “This collection not only contains my own writings in the field, it also chronicles much of my life, and the lives of the many men I have worked with.”

The Changing Men Collections are the world’s largest archive on the contemporary men’s movement, covering men’s and fathers’ rights, pro-feminism, and the mythopoetic men’s movement, as well as the activities of men’s movement groups from all over the world. The collection is curated by Edward Read Barton.

This rich collection includes books, newsletters, ephemera, sound and video recordings from important men’s movement events, published and unpublished academic papers, and archival materials from numerous men’s organizations.

“It’s wonderful that the endowment is finally established,” adds Peter Berg, head of Special Collections. “Many generous donors have supported the creation of this fund, Francis being one of the most committed. However, it’s only the beginning of the story. There’s still much material we want to acquire to fully document this international movement, in addition to preserving what we have and organizing the archival portions for ease of use. More support is needed!”

“This collection is more unique than most people realize,” concludes Bauml. “It is the only collection of its kind in the entire world. Housed in the library of a major university, stewarded by excellent personnel, it should exist for many millennia.”

GENDER STUDIES

“The LGBT2 collection at Michigan State was a tremendous resource for my research. I went through the records from Dignity that are part of the collection. I would not have been able to complete my project without these archives. I hope that the university continues to add to its collection as students and scholars from so many disciplines will benefit.”

Michael Horka, Graduate Student, Department of American Studies, The George Washington University

MSU Libraries welcome three new gifts of gay pulp fiction

Within the space of just a few months, the Libraries have been fortunate to receive three important gifts of mid-century gay men’s pulp fiction—putting MSU ahead of most other institutions in the field.

“Before receiving these gifts,” explained Special Collections head Peter Berg, “we had a modest, representative selection of titles from this genre. Now, our collection will support doctoral level research.”

The diverse group of donors include Stuart Itzkowitz, who teaches in counseling education at Wayne State University, and Mike Watts, a retired attorney. The third collection was given jointly by Chris Spencer, an MSU alum, and his partner, Charles Berg, head of Special Collections.

Endowment established, thanks to you

“Hidden within their plots and their characters’ lives were maps, hints, and clues that told gay men how they might live their lives... Reading through these books, we see how gay men dressed, what their names looked like, where they lived, and how they spoke.”

Michael Branski, Pulp Fiction: Uncovering the Golden Age of Gay Male Pulps

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Michael Branski, Pulp Fiction: Uncovering the Golden Age of Gay Male Pulps

Published in Germany in 1561, *Institutiones: Auszug vn[d] Anazaigung etlicher geschriben Kayserlichen vnd des hayligen Reichs Rechte...* with its beautifully tooled leather cover, was protected from theft with a chain attached to the binding.