

## Highlights from Special and Area Studies Collections

The Department of Special and Area Studies Collections reports considerable activity and accomplishments during the past year, in the areas of acquisitions and collection development; processing and description; bibliographic instruction and teaching; outreach and public programs; and professional development and research activities. The department continued participating in activities related to a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support the digitization of Baldwin Library materials. Fund-raising continued for its ambitious Caribbean initiatives (anchored by the Cuban National Archives project). The chair and several faculty and staff worked with the Director of Library Development to explore development opportunities with donors (of materials and money). Projects related to the creation of commercial products of important manuscript and rare book collections held by Special Collections were discussed and an on-site team from Thompson/Gale digitized papers from the Braga Brothers Collection. Faculty and staff within the department reached out to maintain contacts with traditional supporters and users as well as cultivated relations with new constituents and friends—on campus, in the Gainesville community, and other parts of the nation. Progress was made to provide digital reference and research materials to researchers via the Internet and the department website was re-designed. The department hosted or facilitated several stimulating educational programs, exhibits, and other events during the period under consideration.

The department's Special Collections unit continued its development as an integrated and well-coordinated research facility (collections, services, personnel). The Price Library of Judaica and the Latin American Collection remained vibrant "branches" of the department's Area Studies unit as preliminary discussions were held with managers of the Judaica, Latin American, African, and Asian Studies collections regarding the possible creation of an Area Studies Research Center. Florence Turcotte was hired as Research Services Archivist (a position re-designed to complement the Descriptive and Technical Services Archivist position filled the previous year). There were many significant meetings and other activities regarding numerous initiatives related to the collecting and preserving of African American research materials. Joel Buchanan was selected to fill a permanent, full-time staff position in Special Collections. Dina Benson was hired to assist Mil Willis with Public and Support Services responsibilities. Graduate students from the English Department participated in arranging and describing materials from the Comics Studies Collection; and graduate students from the School of Architecture enhanced their educational experience at UF by working with primary source materials held by the Department.



Robert A. Shaddy, Chair  
Special and Area Studies Collections

## Area Studies Collections

### Price Library of Judaica

A highlight of the Judaica Library's acquisitions this past year was the addition of forty-five memorial books of East European Jewish communities reprinted as part of the Steven Spielberg Digital Yiddish Library initiative, which was successfully launched by the National Yiddish Book Center in cooperation with the New York Public Library's Jewish Division.

### Latin American Collection

UF's Latin American Collection librarians were responsible for local arrangements for the historic fiftieth annual conference of SALALM (Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials). In attendance were librarians and booksellers from 20 different countries spanning the Americas and Europe, as well as librarians and booksellers from 30 states of the USA. It is important to point out that UF Libraries hosted the initial SALALM meeting in 1956, and once again received SALALM in 1977. Other hosts of SALALM conferences over the years have included Princeton, UCLA, Texas, Cornell, Michigan, Banco de la República (Colombia), and the Universidad Centro Americana (Costa Rica).



Also, the Latin American Collection, with generous support from the UF Center for Latin American Studies and the U.S. Dept. of Education, once again received visiting scholars for one-two week library research stays this past fiscal year. Recipients of library research travel grants this past year were from institutions such as Bucknell, UNC-Greensboro, Puerto Rico, Tulane, Mississippi, and Syracuse.

### African Studies Collection

During the past year, processing was ongoing for the Donald Abraham Collection (with items being directed to the General Collection and Special Collections). The Abraham Collection comprises approximately 6,000-7,000 volumes, of which an estimated 10% are rare book material. The collection coverage is between 1830-1990, consisting of various types of government documents, monographs, some serials and a few maps, and predominantly in the Portuguese language, as well as English, French, and German. The subject area is predominantly Lusophone Africa, but also includes Latin America, the Sciences and Art.

Graduate students consulted Rikli, Berner and Manis manuscript/photo collections for theses and course projects/term papers (six graduate students in Professor Chalfin's ANG5352 Urban Ethnography/Peoples of Africa course). Visiting researchers increasingly have been coming to campus to use our unique collections (e.g. Fortune Shona materials circulating and manuscripts, and the Lemarchand manuscripts relating to Burundi) or have requested additional information about related materials.

The graduate course in Africana bibliography—taught by Africana bibliographers Peter Malanchuk and Dan Reboussin—had seven students enrolled this term. This was the sixth year the course was offered (to a total of 49 graduate students). The bibliographers and the African Studies Collection have been supporting more than 15 graduate theses/dissertations per year over the last decade.

## Asian Studies Collection

In mid-October 2004, Asian Studies bibliographer, David Hickey, visited many publishers and libraries in Shanghai and Beijing, courtesy of the fieldwork follow-up to the Henry Luce Foundation-University of Pittsburgh-funded “Institute for East Asian Librarians with a focus on China” that took place the previous August. He gained insights and valuable contacts in the world of Chinese book publishing, including more cost efficient approaches for acquiring materials suitable for the UF Chinese Collection.

## Special Collections

### Manuscripts and Archives

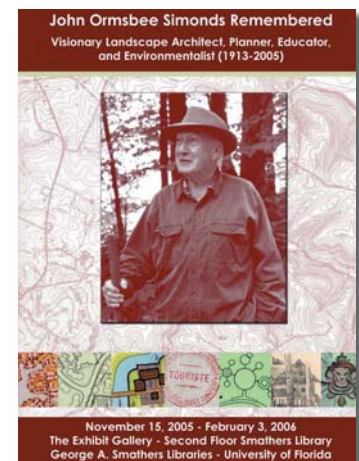
John Nemmers, Descriptive and Technical Services Archivist, created a new online discovery method for manuscript and archival finding aids on the department’s web site (<http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/spec/sascfas.htm>). The new web pages include collection finding aids listed alphabetically by subject and by curatorial unit. The new “Finding Aids” pages also include a search form and a help document describing the new pages and the contents of a typical finding aid. Nemmers created approximately 168 EAD (Encoded Archival Description) finding aids, of which 34 were original finding aids and 134 were older finding aids converted to EAD encoding. Out of 274 finding aids currently on the departmental web site a total of 207 finding aids, just over 75%, are encoded as EAD XML documents, the current international standard for electronic finding aids.

Nemmers also completed processing activities for a total of 34 collections, reducing 299.5 linear feet of the processing backlog. Some of the larger collections include the Spessard Holland Papers, the Manning J. Dauer Papers, the Melvin J. Fregly Papers, and Bob Graham’s Florida legislative papers (we also acquired his Senatorial Papers on deposit). Manuscripts and Archives also completed processing activities for a large portion of the John O. Simonds Collection, reducing another 138.75 linear feet of the backlog (approximately). The unit has established a strong relationship with the School of Architecture and the Department of Landscape Architecture, working closely with them to acquire and process several new archival architecture and landscape architecture collections.

### P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History

Dr. James Cusick, Curator of the Yonge Library, helped the Florida Humanities Council move Florida history into the nation’s classrooms. For the second year in a row, Dr. Cusick and resources from the collection played a major role at summer workshops for teachers in St. Augustine, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities under its Landmarks of America Program. The workshops, organized and run by the Florida Humanities Council, brought in 200 K-12 teachers from around the country, housed them at Flagler College, and introduced them to Florida’s Spanish colonial heritage.

Colonial records of Florida history were mounted on the Web. A large English-language index to Florida’s Spanish colonial past is going up on the web as part of collaboration between Smathers Libraries and the St. Augustine Foundation/Flagler College. More than 50,000 abstracts, describing the daily life of Spanish East Florida between 1784 and 1821, will soon be available in full-text search. Plans are now underway to persuade the Library of Congress to digitize the original Spanish records, and link them to their online abstracts, to bring colonial history alive to researchers around the country.



## Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature

The Curator of the Baldwin Library, Rita Smith, served on the 2005 Caldecott Award Committee. The award honors graphic design in children's books. At the same time, the Baldwin Library purchased over 850 "Big Little" books, so that UF now holds almost all those every printed. Also, Phase II of the NEH grant to catalogue children's books from the Baldwin Library which were published between 1870 and 1889 was awarded last year, began October, 2004 and continues apace this year. It is a two-year grant, so we are approaching the beginning of year two. We are also digitizing about 1200 books as well as cataloging approximately 7,000 that fall within those date parameters.



## Belknap Collection for the Performing Arts

A copy of the television script for the landmark ABC Novel for Television: Roots (1977)—signed by the entire original cast—was acquired. Among the signing actors appearing on the first three pages of the script are LeVar Burton, Edward Asner, Louis Gossett, Jr., Ren Woods, Moses Gunn, Lorne Greene, John Amos, Lloyd Bridges, Brad Davis, Chuck Connors and Raymond St. Jacques. This wonderful artifact is combined with a first edition copy of the original novel inscribed and signed by author Alex Haley.

A series of original Underwood and Underwood promotional photographs of the first television transmission between Washington DC and New York City (1927) were added to the Belknap Collection along with a copy of the first English language publication to deal exclusively with the subject of television: Television: Seeing by Wireless, by Alfred Dinsdale, written and published November 1926 (London, by Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons Ltd).

## Rare Book Collection

The Collection continues as one of the premier gatherings of its kind in the nation. Notable rare and scarce items of Africana and Latin Americana were added along with collections of Victorian poetry and biographies, individual works that document American nineteenth-century cultural and social history, and several works from fine presses collected by the department.

During the past year, efforts to provide greater intellectual access to the collection continued and the number of books cataloged increased due to procedures developed and coordinated with the Libraries' Resource Services division. We have also increased efforts to provide provisional records for books waiting for full cataloging, thereby providing additional information about holdings to researchers.

## Caribbean Initiatives

Bruce Chappell, Coordinator of Initiatives, was involved in working with James H. Haskins (UF Professor of English) and his family during the past year. Activities included negotiation, appraisal, and removal of the Haskins Library and Papers from the residences in Gainesville and New York City and shipment to Special Collections. Mr. Chappell was also involved in planning activities related to the memorial ceremony held on campus following Prof. Haskins's death.

Although the microfilming/digitization project with the Cuban National Archives has been postponed due to political conditions, the Cuban Oral History program continues with the recording of an actual "asiento" or initiation ceremony in Regla de Ocha (Santería) this last June.

## Public Programs and Events

The Department was responsible for or assisted with several public programs, including exhibits, lectures and presentations. Major events are listed below:

Exhibit Gallery, June - September 2004, "Early Botany Illustrated" (Rare Book Collection)

Special Collections Research Room, October 2004, Commemoration of Brown v. Topeka Civil Rights Case

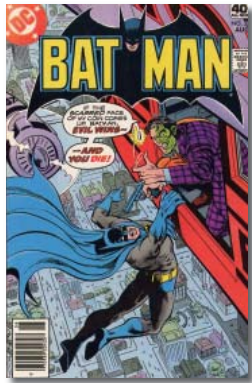


Exhibit Gallery, October – December 2004, "Help is On the Way: Comic Books and Superheroes in Special Collections" (Comic Studies Collection)

Exhibit Gallery and Special Collections Research Room, February 2005, exhibit (Rare Book Collection), remarks, and reception related to an international symposium at the University of Florida, "The Scientific Revolution: Between Renaissance and Enlightenment"

Special Collections Research Room, February 2005, Florida Writers Festival (hosted, with English Department)

Special Collections Research Room, March 2005, Howe Society Annual Dinner (speaker: noted author and bibliophile, Nicholas Basbanes)

Special Collections Research Room, April 2005, Remarks by and reception for Sol and Penny Davidson (Comic Studies Collection)

Exhibit Gallery, April – June 2005, "Caribbean Collections in Special Collections" (Special Latin Americana); related events in Smathers Library to mark the SALALM conference

Special Collections Research Room, June 2005, Howe Society Lecture Series (Dr. Gary Mormino, "Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams: A Social History of Modern Florida")

Collaborative exhibit/preparations with Historical Museum of Southern Florida, ongoing, "Caribbean Collage: Collections Connecting with History" (Special Latin Americana, opening in February 2006)

Exhibit Gallery, October 1 – 30, 2005, "75 Years of Blondie," (Comic Studies Collection)

Exhibit Gallery, November 15, 2005 – February 3, 2006, "John Ormsbee Simonds Remembered: Visionary Landscape Architect, Planner, Educator, and Environmentalist," (Manuscripts Collection)

