

Building Collections: Acquiring Materials and Working
with the Antiquarian Book Trade
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Workshop Organization and Goals

I: Context and History

II: Practical Matters

III: Goals



Special Collections and Collection Development


- Context
- Past drives strengths and priorities
- Wide range of collections

Life Cycle of Primary Sources

- Creation
- Entering the market
- Institutions

Institutional Life Cycle

- Decision to acquire
- Accession
- Catalog
- Research
- Exhibitions (onsite and online)
- Outreach (teaching, presentations, tours, visits)
- Reference
- Digitization



Library History: 17th - 18th centuries

- Subscription or society libraries
- College libraries
- Individual collectors



Library History: 19th century

- Founding of specialized libraries focused on the past
- College libraries
- Early public libraries
- Collectors' libraries become institutions
- Historical Societies
- Mercantile Libraries




Library History: Pre-World War II

- Donor-based rare book libraries
- "Golden age" of book collecting
- University and college rare book rooms



Library History: Post WWII

- Expansion of academia (libraries and rare book collections)
- Government funding
- Large scale institutional buying
- Farmington Plan
- Changes in academic research
- Favorable tax laws
- World War II



Library History: 20th - 21st centuries (1970-present)

- Decline in available funds
- Digitization and digital collections
- Increasing prices
- Scarcity
- General economy
- Expansion of what is considered "rare"
- More complex responsibilities
- Greater reliance on others
- Outreach
- Changes in tax and export laws
- Deaccessioning
- Backlogs; hidden collections

Antiquarian Book Trade

- Booksellers
- Bookseller Organizations (ABA, ABAA, ILAB)
- Beyond books (map, print, autograph dealers)
- Foreign booksellers
- Auction houses



Antiquarian Book Trade Today

- Specialization
- Expanded number of booksellers
- Decline of open shops
- Decline of institutional buying
- Internet
- Used vs. Rare
- Aging profession

Antiquarian Book Trade and Libraries

- Selling of material
- Buying of material
- Appraisals
- Representatives at auctions
- Scholarly advice
- Bibliographic advice
- Security related
- Digitization

Care and Feeding of Bookseller and Librarian Relationship

- Communication
- Accuracy
- Timeliness
- Understand challenges that each faces
- Acquisitions only one part of librarian responsibilities

Contexts of Collections

- Institutional history and mission
- Type of institution
- Audience or purpose of collection
- Availability of funds
- Other institutions or libraries




Collection Development Policy

- Mission statement
- What is it
- Purpose
- How to create
- Who is involved
- How is it used



Materials on the Market

- Dealer catalogues, lists
 - Websites
 - Direct quotes
 - Visits
 - Bookfairs
 - Auctions
- 



Descriptions

- ▶ Bibliographic information
- ▶ Condition
- ▶ Binding information
- ▶ Provenance
- ▶ Bibliographic citations
- ▶ Price
- ▶ Potential interest
- ▶ Accuracy of data; up to date information



Research

- ▶ What to look for
 - Prices
 - Accuracy
 - Dealer's description
- ▶ Online resources
 - Worldcat
 - Other catalogs (COPAC, CCFR, KVK)
 - Bibliographies (online & printed)
 - Institutional websites
 - Dealer and conglomerate websites
 - Google
- ▶ Printed resources
 - Bibliographies
 - Catalogs
 - Auction records



Dealer and Auction Catalogs

- Purpose
- Thematic
- General
- Brief/detailed

Direct Quotes

- Email
- Limited number of items
- Focused subject
- Shows understanding of institution
- Institution's holdings searched before quoting

Dealer and Auction Websites

- Dealer
- ABAA/ILAB website
- ABEbooks, Biblio, Amazon
- Bookfinder, Vialibri

Visits

- Bookseller to library
- Librarian to bookseller
- Networking
- Expectations

Bookfairs


- General characteristics
- Type of bookfairs (ABAA, regional, etc.)
- Networking
- Wide range of booksellers
- Other collecting formats (ephemera, prints, antiques)

Acquisition Process

- Description
- Review considerations
- Research
- Funding
- Order
- Receipt
- Pay
- Accession
- Catalog
- Uses



Auctions

- History
 - Examples (international, regional, multi-format)
 - Sources of material
 - Catalogues and descriptions
 - Terminology
 - Advantages and disadvantages
 - How to participate
 - Bookseller's role
 - Current trends (high end, retail)
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Provenance

- Definition
- In descriptions
- Importance or not (history, legitimacy)
- Effect on price
- What to expect and ask
- Export license

Appraisals

- Definition: Estimate of value
- Purposes – donation/IRS 8283, possible purchase, insurance
- Role of appraiser/bookseller
- Role of library

Deaccessioning

- Definition
- Why
- Donor relations
- IRS rules regarding gifts
- State or institutional policy
- How(including record keeping)
- Role of bookseller

Acquisition of Collections

- Definition
- Gift
- Purchase
- Advantages and disadvantages
- Role of booksellers

Manuscripts and archives

- Definition
- Prices
- Role of booksellers
- Considerations

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