

The History of Science Collections

University of Oklahoma Libraries



The History of Science Collections, located on the 5th floor of Bizzell Memorial Library, is a premier research collection in its field. Holdings of nearly 100,000 volumes from every field and subject area of science, technology and medicine range chronologically from Hrabanus Maurus, *Opus de universo* (1467) to current publications in the history of science. The Darwin collection illustrates the capacity of the holdings to support research: it consists of all of Darwin's works in their first editions and several autograph letters. In addition, it includes hundreds of subsequent editions and translations (for example, the *Descent of Man* in Yiddish, 1928). These rare works, along with current works about Darwin, are all shelved together in the same area to facilitate browsing and research.

The History of Science Collections offer outstanding access to rare books and early printed serials, and to modern journals, monographs and reference sources in the history of science, all conveniently located within a single facility. The Roller Reading Room provides a quiet and secure environment for using Collections materials. In addition, long-term researchers are offered access to non-public spaces. With research privileges, one may browse the Stacks, and directly check out items for convenient in-house use. The Commons provides a comfortable place for conversation, lunch, or browsing recent journal issues. The Harlow Room provides a secure location for classes in which rare books may be used in instruction. It is also used for colloquia and a variety of special events.

History of the Collections: In 1949, Everette Lee DeGolyer founded the OU history of science program by lending 129 rare works to the University in exchange for the establishment of a teaching and research program in the history of science. The University complied with his stipulation by hiring Duane H.D. Roller to serve as both curator of the DeGolyer Collection and as the first professor of the history of science. DeGolyer was pleased with what he saw, and eventually donated 6,000 volumes. By the time Marilyn B. Ogilvie became the second curator in 1991, the program had expanded to consist of a distinct Department of the History of Science with a half-dozen faculty, and a special collection numbering 79,000 volumes. The DeGolyer Collection was renamed as the History of Science Collections (plural) to recognize the role of additional donors. With continual University support, by Ogilvie's retirement in 2008, the

Collections had grown to over 94,000 volumes. Most of these are housed in two climate-controlled areas located in a highly secure facility designed to accommodate the needs of students and researchers.

Hours: Typical hours during the academic year when classes are in session are 9-7 Mon-Thurs, 9-5 Fridays, and noon to 4 on Saturdays.

Contact us: For more information about the Collections, contact the Curator, Dr. Kerry Magruder, or the Librarian, Dr. JoAnn Palmeri.

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