Western Libraries
Collections Management Policy
History

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Subject librarian: Elizabeth Mantz

Purpose of the collection

The History collection of Western Libraries is intended to support the research activities of faculty, students and staff, and the instructional requirements of Western’s Department of History’s undergraduate and graduate programs.

The D.B. Weldon Library is the primary location for materials supporting the research and instructional needs of the department. Weldon Library serves the Faculties of Arts & Humanities, Information & Media Studies, and Social Science, and is the largest of the eight physical locations of Western Libraries.

Program Information

The Department of History in the Faculty of Social Science offers degrees at the undergraduate, Masters, and Doctoral levels, and maintains vigorous research activities among faculty and graduate students.

Undergraduate Studies

The undergraduate program offers four standard modules:

- Honours Specialization in History
- Specialization in History
- Major in History
- Minor in History

Course offerings cover all aspects of Canadian, American, European, and Latin American history, as well as an expanding range of courses in Asian history, Jewish Studies, and the history of the Islamic world. Special attention is paid to key thematic research areas such as environmental, political, military, and women’s history, the history of medicine, the history of technology, and business history.

The Department of History offers an additional specialized modules, including:

- International Relations
- Jewish Studies
- Middle East Studies
Additional opportunities for undergraduates to participate in collaborative programs with other disciplines include:

- American Studies
- Women's Studies
- First Nations Studies

**Graduate Studies**

The Department of History offers graduate programs at the MA and PhD levels, and is recognized nationally and internationally for the quality of its faculty, programs, and graduates.

Long-standing departmental research activities and strengths encompass myriad fields of study: society and culture; international relations and conflict; business and economics; technology, health, and environment; gender; religion; and public and digital history. Faculty research and teaching involves the study of Canada, the United States, Europe, Latin America, Asia, and the Islamic world.

- MA in History
- MA in Public History
- PhD in History
- Combined JD/MA in Law and History

The Department of History also offers graduate students the opportunity to participate in collaborative programs with other disciplines, including:

- Environment and Sustainability
- Migration and Ethnic Relations
- Transitional Justice and Post-Conflict Reconstruction

Research and teaching in the area of History requires access to primary texts in print and electronic formats, as well as availability of a wide range of secondary materials related to those texts.

**Subject areas covered**

The collection supports all aspects of History taught in the Department of History, as outlined above.

The D.B. Weldon Library’s extensive print and microform collections are two components of the resources available to History faculty and graduate/undergraduate students. Weldon Library’s primary users also have online access to an extensive number e-books, as well as bibliographic and full-text databases that contain major collections of primary and secondary source materials relating to the study of history.
Physical format

Acquisitions include resources in all types of formats with a preference for digital format when suitable. Examples of frequently acquired materials include, but are not limited to, books, journals, databases and other digital resources. Alternative formats, such as DVD or streaming video, are considered on the basis of individual requests.

Accessibility

Western Libraries is committed to providing an environment for all library users to engage in research and scholarship. Accordingly, preference will be given to e-resources with interfaces that are accessible via screen readers and those which offer accessible format download options (i.e., versions that are machine-readable). Further information about research support through Western Libraries’ Accessibility Services is available at: http://www.lib.uwo.ca/accessibility.

Language

English is the primary language of the collection, although materials in other languages may be acquired to support the curriculum. English translations of major works in other languages are also selectively acquired.

Source of publication

Sources of publication are primarily Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Western Europe. Material published in other regions may be considered on request, and will be evaluated for quality and relevance.

Date of publication

Materials with a recent imprint date are preferred. Due to the nature of the subject matter, older materials may be requested. The Subject Librarian for History may request items through the used book market to satisfy these requests.

Geographic scope

The preferred geographic scope of the collection includes Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Western Europe, Russia and former Soviet countries, the Middle East, Latin America, and Asia. However, no regions are explicitly excluded, and research resources from all countries may be selectively considered based on research need.
Chronological period

Material acquired to support the teaching and research of faculty and students in the Department of History typically includes the period from 1000 A.D. to approximately the last 25 years. Requests for materials dealing with late 20th century topics, as well as 21st century issues, are selectively considered.

Exclusions

With the exception of individual requests and selective acquisitions, the following types of material are not acquired:

- course textbooks
- popular treatments
- manuscripts
- genealogical handbooks and manuals
- unpublished dissertations
- conference proceedings
- ephemera

Related collections and cooperation

The Western Libraries collection for History is supplemented by research collections in related disciplines, such as Anthropology, Classical Studies, Philosophy, Visual Arts, and Women’s Studies, as well as by access to research materials held by Western’s affiliated University College Libraries.

Western Archives

Western Archives provides a range of services supporting research and teaching, and includes two collections of particular research significance and value to History researchers:

- The J.J. Talman Regional Collection – includes local municipal records, private papers, and related published secondary source materials pertaining to the City of London, as well as Middlesex County and surrounding counties in Southwestern Ontario, particularly the counties of Huron, Elgin, Oxford and Lambton.
- The James Alexander and Ellen Rea Benson Special Collections – includes French Enlightenment and Revolutionary materials, the Hannah Collection on the History of Science and Medicine, the Beatrice Hitchins Memorial Collection of Aviation History, and the Richard Maurice Bucke Collection of Medical, Philosophical and Literary Papers.
Government Information

Government information provides a rich primary resource for teaching and research in History. The D.B. Weldon Library is a full Canadian depository library under the federal Depository Services Program (DSP); Western’s John & Dotsa Bitove Family Law Library participates as a selective depository library. Weldon Library receives all electronic and print publications distributed by the Canadian DSP, and provides bibliographic access, long-term preservation, reference services, and Inter-Library Loan services to ensure free and ongoing access to published federal Canadian government information.

**Canadian Federal Publications Collected in Weldon Library (electronic and print):**

- Parliamentary materials: debates, committee procedures, and reports
- Statutory materials: bills, acts, regulations, cumulative revisions of acts and regulations, gazettes
- Statistical publications: monographs and serials
- Royal Commissions and Task Force reports
- Department and/or agency reports
- Reference publications
- Publications of Canadian crown corporations
- Maps accompanying government publications such as ethnographic, census, demographic, land use, etc.
- Maps distributed through the Map and Chart Depository Library program ([Map and Data Centre](#))
- Special studies, policy statements, and periodicals of departments, commissions, crown corporations, and agencies.

**Canadian Provincial Publications:**

- Weldon Library has selective depository status only for provincial publications from Ontario. The Law Library comprehensively collects all Canadian provincial statutes, regulations and official gazettes, journals, and debates.

**Canadian Municipal Publications:**

- The D.B. Weldon collects municipal documents of the City of London and surrounding municipalities on a selective basis. Other municipal publications are acquired if considered of importance to faculty or graduate students.

**Other Government Publications:**

- Selected federal publications are collected for the United States, as are selected official publications of the United Kingdom. The D.B. Weldon Library is a selective depository for various regional and international organizations,
including: the United Nations, the World Bank, the European Union, the Asian Development Bank, and the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). For other countries, collection criteria are highly selective.

Western Libraries participates in cooperative agreements for Inter-Library Loans, and offers a subsidized Inter-Library Loan service through the Ontario Council of University Libraries' (OCUL) RACER system.

In addition, Western Libraries participates in consortial buying agreements with OCUL and other university consortia that allow Western Libraries to take advantage of group discounts for a wide range of online information resources and services.

**Gifts**

The D.B. Weldon Library gratefully accepts gifts of materials in good condition which are within the scope of coverage for its collection and which the library either does not already own or does not own in sufficient depth to support teaching and research needs.

Receipts for tax purposes are issued in accordance with Western Libraries policy for gifts. Those wishing to make donations should contact the Subject Librarian for History.

**Managing the collection**

In order to ensure that collections remain optimally useful for our patrons, it is necessary to analyze collection usage and available space regularly. Items will be selectively removed from the active collection from time to time.

Serial subscriptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis and the active collection is based on a number of criteria that include, but are not limited to, a review of usage and the level to which the title supports research and/or teaching.

Requests for new journal subscriptions, subject specific databases, or digital collections are subject to library approval and are contingent upon available funds.

Duplicate items that are no longer required to support the curriculum, and damaged items that can no longer be replaced may be removed from the active collection at the discretion of the Subject Librarian for History. Items that are unique to Western may be transferred to a storage facility. Material housed in these storage facilities is available on request through the Shared Library Catalogue.
Criteria for transfer selection include, but are not limited to, the following:

1) outdated or previous editions of titles
2) medium- to low-use items
3) materials that are available in alternate formats, i.e., online
4) materials that would benefit from storage in a more controlled environment.

Consult the Subject Librarian for further details about these criteria.

**Resources to aid in acquisition of material**

The majority of monograph purchases for History are received through the use of a monograph approval profile that is established and regularly reviewed by the Subject Librarian for History. The Subject Librarian makes discretionary purchases for material requested by faculty and students, as well as for items identified through regular review of publications such as *H-Net Reviews, History: Reviews of New Books*, and *ChoiceReviews.online*.

In addition, patrons have two avenues for becoming involved with the acquisition of materials: they are encouraged to make recommendations for the collection through the online form available at [https://www.lib.uwo.ca/acquire.html](https://www.lib.uwo.ca/acquire.html). Patrons may also select books through the Demand Driven Acquisition process, in which bibliographic information about e-books is seamlessly added to the Shared Library Catalogue. Once an e-book’s content is accessed, the title is automatically purchased and added to the library’s collection.