

Louisa May Alcott Collection Development Policy

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I. Introduction

The Louisa May Alcott Collection is a collection of primary and secondary works relating to the life and career of Louisa May Alcott. In the mid-1980s, the collection was developed with the acquisitions from the rare book dealer Leona Rostenberg and her associate, Alcott scholar Madeleine Stern. The collection contains printed works as well as a small amount of primary source manuscript material created by Alcott and her family.

II. Position Responsible for Collecting Decisions

The Curator of Rare Books is responsible for collecting the material contained in the Louisa May Alcott Collection.

III. Scope and Focus of Collecting

The Louisa May Collection is comprised of primary and secondary works relating to the life and career of Louisa May Alcott. The collection supports teaching and research through the Ph.D. level in 19th century American Literature and 19th century children's literature. Expanding areas of interest include modern adaptations of Alcott's novels, including adaptations in genres like graphic novels and theater.

IV. Priorities and Limitations

a. Priorities

i. Areas of Specialization

The Louisa May Alcott Collection seeks to collect editions of Alcott's poetry, prose, and correspondence as well as secondary sources on Alcott's life and works, including criticism and reference works. The Alcott Collection also collects printed works by and about Louisa May Alcott's father, philosopher and educator Amos Bronson Alcott, as well as printed works by and about her immediate family members.

ii. Major Faculty Research Interests

19th Century American Literature
Juvenile literature

b. Limitations

Though the Louisa May Alcott Collection contains a number of manuscript items acquired from Stern and Rostenberg, the Alcott Collection is primarily a print collection and time and financial resources will be devoted to developing print holdings.

V. General Selection Guidelines

a. Treatment of Subject Depth

Special Collections seeks to collect for and maintain the Louisa May Alcott Collection at a level which supports undergraduate and graduate-level teaching and research.

b. Specific Delimitations

i. Type

Collected at a comprehensive level: American and British editions of works by Louisa May Alcott

Collected at a research level: Adaptations of works by Louisa May Alcott (including plays, graphic novels, ephemera, artist's books, and parodies); first editions of works by Amos Bronson Alcott; secondary works about Louisa May Alcott, Amos Bronson Alcott, and the Alcott family, including biography, criticism, bibliography, and fictional representations.

Collected at a representative level: Translations of works by Louisa May Alcott

ii. Physical Format

Collected at a research level: Monographs, periodicals, ephemera.

Collected at a teaching level: Reprints of secondary works are added to the collection only if the original cannot be obtained for the collection. Audiovisual materials (film and television adaptations of Alcott's works).

Collected at a representative level: Artwork and illustration; print-on-demand editions; ebooks.

Excluded: Realia.

iii. Date

Subject to limitations outlined above, any imprint date is collected, but generally 1830-present.

iv. Geographical focus

Collected at a comprehensive level: United States, Great Britain

Collected at a representative level: Materials published elsewhere in the world

v. Subject Emphasis

Collected at a comprehensive level:

Louisa May Alcott: prose, poetry, correspondence, biography, criticism and interpretation, bibliography.

Collected at a research level:

Louisa May Alcott: adaptations of prose and poetry, homes and haunts

Bronson Alcott: prose, poetry, correspondence, biography, criticism and interpretation, bibliography.

New England Authors; Transcendentalism

vi. Languages

Collected at a research level: English.

Collected at a representative level: Languages other than English.

VI. Deaccessioning Guidelines

The Curator of Rare Books will make proposals to deaccession materials to the Special Collections Coordinating Committee. Materials may be deaccessioned if they do not comply with the Louisa May Alcott Collection collecting policy or if they are duplicates of material already in the collection.

VII. Cooperation with other Individuals

The Curator of Rare Books is responsible for collecting the material contained in the Louisa May Alcott Collection. The English Language & Literature librarian is responsible for collecting duplicate copies of works by and about Louisa May Alcott for the general stacks. This is done with coordination and cooperation on the part of the two librarians.

Fine press editions of Alcott's works are acquired in consultation with the Curator of the Fine Press Collection. Manuscript material created by or related to Louisa May Alcott falls under the Literary Manuscripts Collection Development Policy and would be acquired by the Curator of 19th Century Mormon and Western Manuscripts in cooperation with the Curator of Rare Books.

VIII. Revisions

Alcott Collecting Policy, approved Nov. 2010
Louisa May Alcott Collection Collection Policy, no date