

Touching the Past through Old Books...

Message from the Librarian



Exploring great ideas through great books is an important part of what we do in our classes and in our educational programs here at OU. All of us have experienced the thrill of

discovering new facts, of being challenged to re-examine what we thought we knew, of realizing new connections through engagement with great ideas and great books. Yet imagine how thrilling the experience of engaging the past can be when the book in front of you is an original edition published many centuries ago!

It certainly makes one pause to consider that the books in OU's special collections were owned, read, and cherished by real individuals living in centuries past. Think about it – books now on the shelves in OU libraries were around when Shakespeare's play were being performed at the Globe, when Thomas Jefferson was drafting the Declaration of Independence, when Mary Wollstonecraft was addressing the rights of women. In some cases, because of marginalia or other clues, we know that a particular book was actually owned or touched by someone notable like Galileo, or Charles Dickens, or Ulysses S. Grant.

All are welcome to visit the collections during normal business hours to view books and other materials in our many lobby exhibits. Faculty and students are encouraged to consult with us on the use of the collections for teaching and research.

JoAnn Palmeri

Librarian of the History of Science Collections
Acting Curator of the John and Mary Nichols Collection

The University's stewardship of rare book collections as well as other unique resources and archival materials is facilitated through several distinct special collections on the OU campus. These collections are a tangible connection to the past. They are our common cultural heritage. Importantly, these significant cultural resources are available to support our university's mission of research, teaching, and outreach.

It is fitting for the Institute to partner with the OU Libraries and bring history to life through books from the past. There are many hidden treasures among the special collections that helped shape American culture and that relate directly to America's founding. The goal of this partnership is to share literature and inform the greater community of the unique treasures waiting in the University of Oklahoma's libraries.

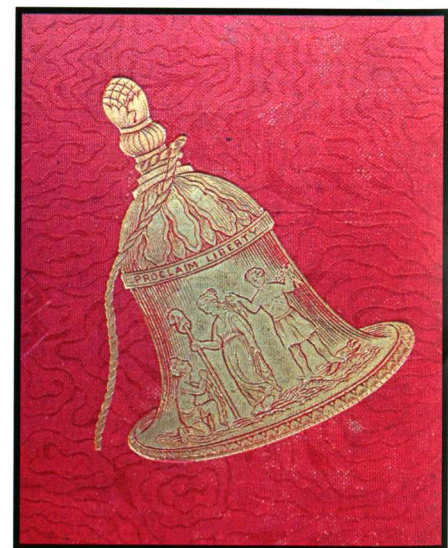
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The books depicted on these pages are part of the John and Mary Nichols Rare Books and Special Collections and of the History of Science Collections.

The Liberty Bell, 1846

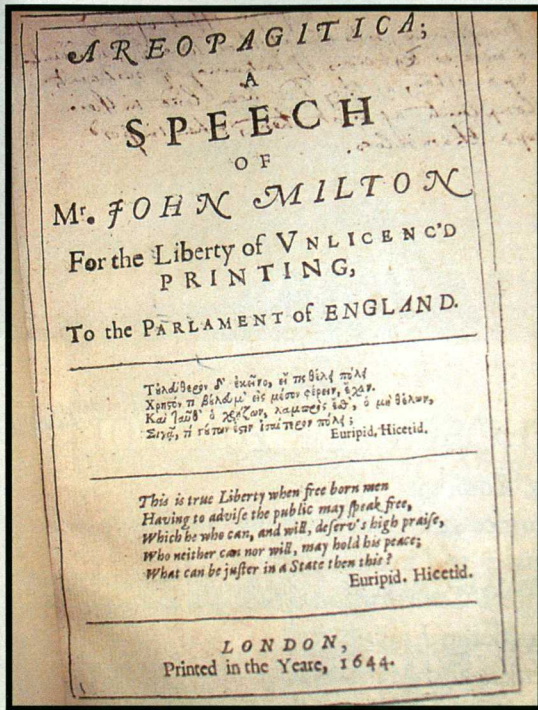
Published by the Friends of Freedom for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Fai, this rare book is a part of a series of literary annuals containing prose and poetry that were published from 1839-1859.

The Liberty Bell



The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA LIBRARIES SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Areopagitica, John Milton

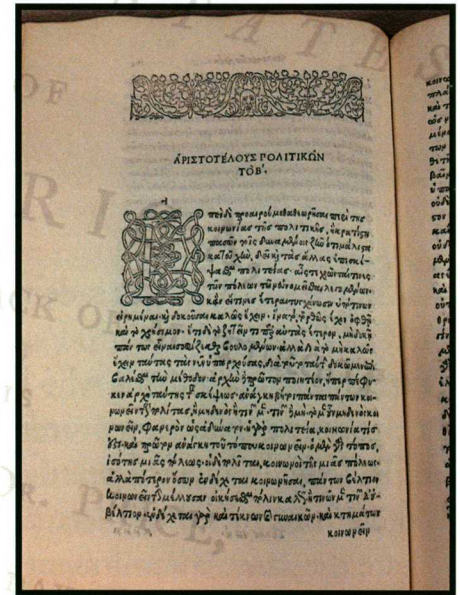


Areopagitica, 1644

This was written as a philosophical defense of freedom of speech and expression in response to censorship. John Milton was arguing against licensing requirements that emerged at the height of the English Civil War.

Politics, 1498

This copy of Aristotle's *Politics*, one of the most well known works of political philosophy, was published in the 15th century and resides in the History of Science Collections.



Aristotle's Politics

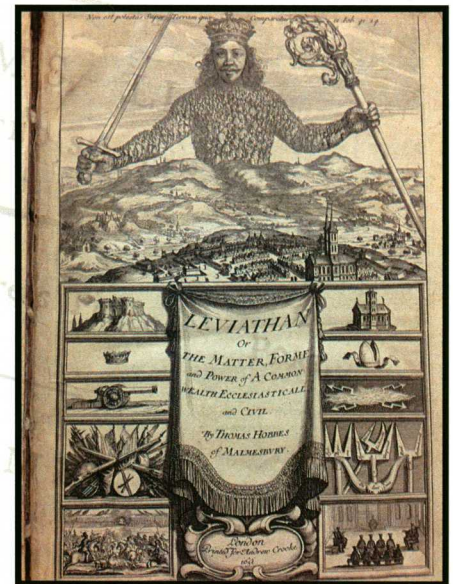
The collections also hold many other works on government, law, politics, and the state, including two works from Thomas Hobbes, the English Philosopher, best known today for his work on political philosophy.

Leviathan, 1651

This work which concerns the structures of society and legitimate government is regarded as one of earliest and most influential examples of social contract theory.

Philosophical Rudiments of Government and Society, 1651

This book is the English translation with minor corrections of *De cive* (1642, 1646), a work which did much to establish Hobbes's reputation as a major figure in European philosophy.



Leviathan

CONSTITUTION EXHIBIT

In honor of Constitution Day, a book display will be presented on the 5th floor of the Bizzell Memorial Library from **September 17th** through **October 10th** featuring books with autographs of U.S. presidents and classics of law, government, and political theory.

Typical hours during the academic year are 9-7 Mon-Thurs, 9-5 Fridays, and noon to 4 on Saturdays. For more information about the History of Science Collections, including future exhibits and events, see <http://ouhos.org>, or contact Dr. Kerry Magruder or Dr. JoAnn Palmeri at 405-325-2741.