

Bib·li·o·Tēch

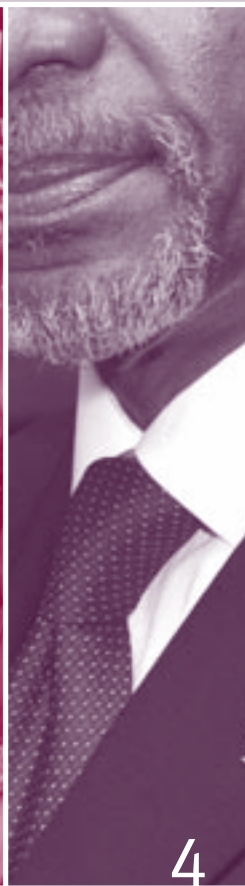
NEWS FROM THE MIT LIBRARIES

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY VOLUME 17, NUMBER 2

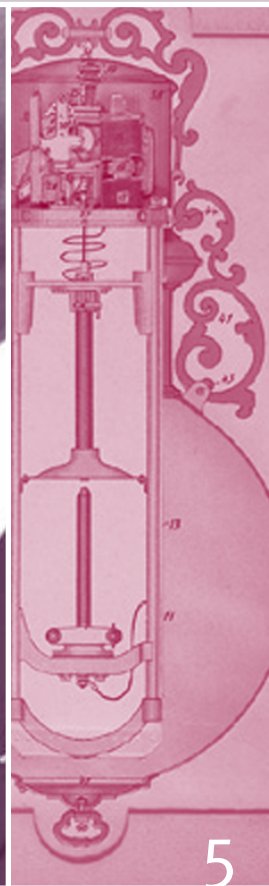
FALL 2005



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FROM THE DIRECTOR



Photo by Richard Howard

When MIT was chartered in 1861 it had no library. Dr. Thomas Webb, Secretary of the Corporation, donated the first seven volumes in 1862 and encouraged others to do the same. By 1865, as the first classes were offered in Boston's Mercantile Library, MIT's library contained all of 75 volumes.

As we well know, MIT's founders were deeply committed to a remarkably innovative approach to educating students. Less well known is that they were equally innovative when it came to designing a system for MIT's libraries. At a time when the Institute's classics-oriented competitors were building libraries in the tradition of great monuments, MIT's faculty designed a highly distributed system of discipline-oriented library collections.

Despite the fact that large, visible collections of books could not only serve to legitimize a young institution's commitment to education, but would also cast an aura of scholarly respectability over the whole enterprise, MIT's founders staunchly defended their distributed system of libraries on both pedagogical and practical grounds.

The record of science "must be continuously extended, it must be stored, and above all, it must be consulted." Vannevar Bush

Mens et Manus graphically illustrates the pedagogical rationale for this distributed library model. Writing to the Corporation in 1893 about the virtues of MIT's distributed libraries, then-president Francis Amasa Walker argues that "under such a system the students learn to use books with freedom; and I need not say...that this is, of itself, no inconsiderable part of the education of a scholar."

And from a practical standpoint, the distributed library model may well have assisted in the growth of the collections, as donated volumes could remain in close proximity to the faculty member who supplied them. In the years between 1865 and 1916 (when the Institute began its relocation from Boston to Cambridge) the MIT libraries grew steadily, benefiting from important donations of books and collections by faculty, officers, corporation members, and alumni.

The Gaffield Collection of glass and glassmaking was among the more notable collections donated to the libraries during those years. The Baldwin Collection, containing volumes on nineteenth-century civil engineering, was loaned to MIT during that period as well. The impressive and significant collection of Theodore N. Vail was presented to MIT in 1912. The Vail Collection contains many early works on telecommunications, electricity, ballooning, aeronautics, and animal magnetism.

Preserving and conserving these wonderful works is no small challenge. Thanks to the extraordinary support of our donors, MIT Libraries have a state-of-the-art preservation and conservation facility dedicated to the care of these marvelous books.

None of this would be possible without the generous support of friends, whose donations now sustain the gifts of works that date to the earliest years of the Institute.

We curate these works because they deserve professional stewardship. But just as importantly, we curate them so that MIT faculty might teach from them and about them. And we are determined that MIT students should have an opportunity to appreciate both their wonder as works, and the extraordinary expression of ideas in science and technology over the centuries. As Vannevar Bush reminded us in 1945, the record of science "must be continuously extended, it must be stored, and above all, it must be consulted."

An institution like MIT will always be focused on the future. The MIT Libraries are deeply grateful to each and every donor who contributes to the success of our mission in all of its facets. Certainly our work and our position at MIT demand that we look to the future and address the significant research and service challenges of the digital age.

But at the same time we must preserve the past, so that it too can be consulted. As the MIT Libraries celebrate with gratitude the progress in their preservation efforts, we give special recognition to those visionary donors who, like Vannevar Bush, can look to the past and see its relevance to the future.

Ann J. Wolpert, Director of Libraries
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CELEBRATING A 34-YEAR CAREER AT MIT LIBRARIES

Passionate, graceful, witty, tenacious...these are all words that have been used to describe Margaret dePopolo, a friend and colleague, who retired in June after thirty-four years at MIT's Rotch Library for Architecture and Planning.

Margaret's MIT career began when she was hired as Assistant Rotch Librarian for Reference. In 1972 she was promoted to Associate Rotch Librarian, and a year later she became the Head of Rotch Library—a role she would hold for over three decades.

Margaret's accomplishments and contributions to MIT are many. In the mid-seventies she was successful in negotiating space to create the Rotch Visual Collections. In 1979 Margaret was a guiding force behind the establishment of the Libraries' Aga Khan endowment that supports the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard and MIT.

The major project that Margaret is probably most associated with is the addition to Rotch Library in 1991. Margaret worked many years with the School of Architecture and Planning, and others at the Institute, to make the vision for a new space a reality. "Some qualities that stand out from the planning process for the Rotch addition/renovation was her tenacious and deeply informed grace in asking critical questions," said former dean John de Monchaux. The result was an award-winning design that used an

innovative structural system to provide a unique, column-free interior. This design tripled the number of book stacks, increased reader and office space, and created a rare books room.

She is off into the deepest reaches of the collection in search of treasure and always comes back with more than I would have expected

MIT faculty member



Photo by Kay Barmed, M. Arch. '79

Margaret dePopolo,
Head Librarian, Rotch Library, 1976



Rotch Library Staff, 1971

The rare books room was one of the new features that Margaret was most passionate about. She was instrumental in establishing the facility as a prominent feature on the main floor. Set off behind a glass enclosure with its own separate climate control, the section serves to highlight Rotch's collection of rare, fragile and significant books, including many of its architectural treasures (see Limited Access Collection below).

In addition to her devotion to the rare books collection, Margaret was committed to her work as the Libraries' subject bibliographer for urban planning—building the collection into one of the best in North America. She also supported the School's faculty and students with countless instructional sessions and research consultations—earning high praise from all those she worked with. "Whenever I have asked her a question, she truly hears the syllable "quest" in that word—she is off into the deepest reaches of the collection in search of treasure and always comes back with more than I would have expected," said one department head. The Libraries and MIT will truly benefit from Margaret's contributions for many years to come.

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Rotch Limited Access Collection

The Limited Access Collection was established in 1991 after an addition to Rotch Library made it possible to add a climate-controlled space to house rare books and a reader's room for scholars to consult these valuable books and other materials.

Limited Access now houses approximately 2,000 volumes in 4 separate sizes from very small to elephant folio. The collection includes early editions of architectural treatises by Palladio and Serlio, and 21 volumes which were part of the working library of Boston architect Charles Bulfinch from 1763-1844.

Each year with the help and advice of Preservation Services, Rotch sends several valuable volumes to be conserved, cleaned or stabilized so that they may be used as first hand resources by students. Faculty have used the collection for architectural history seminar sessions held in the library's conference room. During the past year a project to box and protect some 200 older travel guides, early bound volumes of threatened architectural journals, and large individual volumes has been a welcome priority.

LIBRARIES ADD OVER 11,000 MIT THESES TO DSPACE

The MIT Libraries have recently added over 11,000 electronic copies of MIT theses to DSpace—doubling the content of the digital archive and providing worldwide exposure to the work of MIT scholars. The MIT thesis collection is already one of the most widely-used collections of its kind. It includes the theses of well-known MIT alumni such as Charles Stark Draper '26, Harold “Doc” Edgerton '27, I.M. Pei '40, Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin '63, Shirley Ann Jackson '73 and Nobel Prize winners Kofi Annan '72 and Richard Feynman '39, to name a few. In DSpace their work, and the valuable research of many others, will now be even more accessible from the Web.

Theses can be found on the DSpace website at <http://libraries.mit.edu/mit-theses>. They are organized by academic department, and can also be easily searched by author, degree, title, thesis supervisor, and keyword. Each thesis has its own Internet address, also called a handle, which can be used as a permanent link, ensuring that the thesis will be preserved and accessible in the future.

Each thesis in DSpace has two PDF files: a printable PDF, freely available to current MIT students, faculty and staff (certificates required), and a viewable, but non-printable PDF, available to non-MIT users. The option of purchasing a printable PDF file or a bound paper copy is available by clicking on the “Purchase a Printable PDF or Paper Copy” link from the summary page in DSpace.

The entire MIT thesis collection, maintained by the MIT Libraries and Institute Archives, contains over 100,000 doctoral, master’s and select bachelor’s theses completed between the years of 1868 and 2005. The 11,000 theses in DSpace represent those



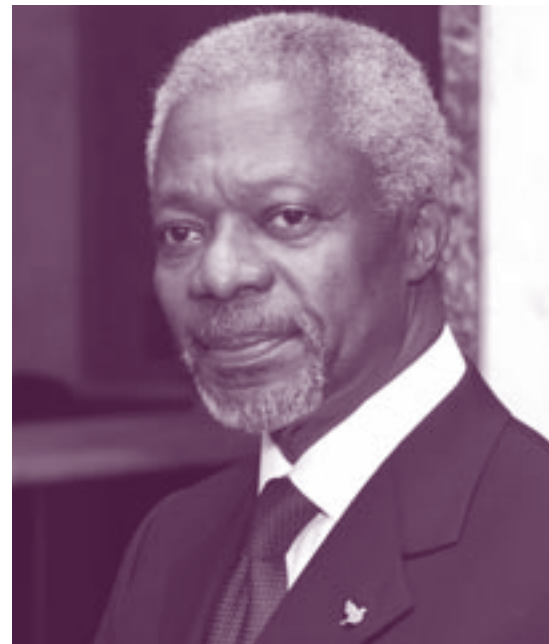
Photo by Donna Coveney/MIT

Shirley Ann Jackson '73



Photo by Calvin Campbell/MIT Museum

Harold “Doc” Edgerton '27



UN Photo

Kofi Annan '72

that have been digitized since 1999, when the MIT Libraries began scanning theses on demand. Earlier collaborations with MIT departments also resulted in the electronic submission of several hundred theses. In 2004 the Libraries began scanning all new theses submitted to the Libraries and will continue to do so and add them to the DSpace archive. Recent MIT graduates or students about to complete their degree may also submit their theses directly to DSpace by following the instructions found at <http://web.mit.edu/etheses>.

DSpace is a unique digital repository that was launched in 2002 by the MIT Libraries and Hewlett-Packard to capture, preserve, and share MIT’s intellectual output with the world. Developed as an open source software platform, DSpace has been implemented and adapted by over 100 institutions around the globe. In addition to the new collection of MIT theses, the content in DSpace continues to grow—it currently contains the digital works of 49 communities representing collections of MIT faculty, researchers, labs and centers. To find out more about DSpace or the MIT Theses in DSpace project, contact dspace-help@mit.edu or visit <http://libraries.mit.edu/dspace-mit>.

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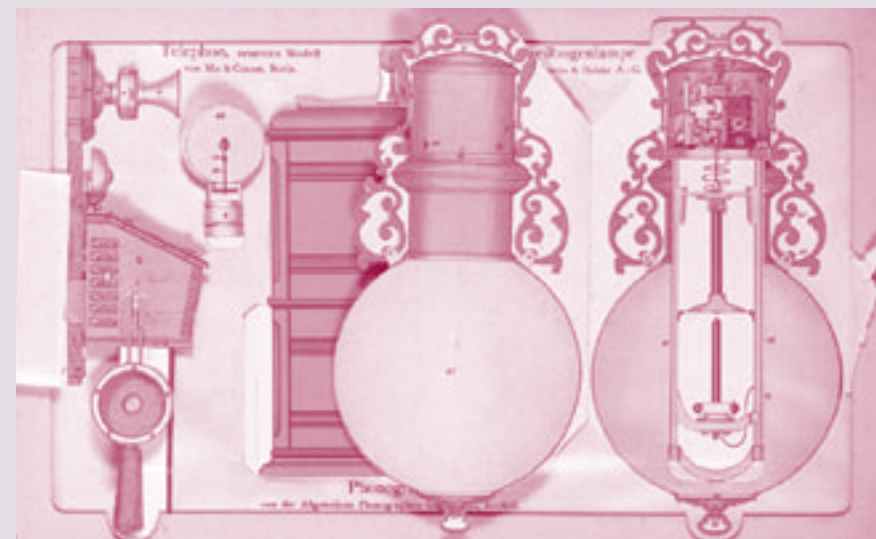


FROM THE ARCHIVES: THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AS A THREAD THROUGH TIME

In the MIT collections, one can follow a research thread through time by examining resources that have been used by scientists and inventors for hundreds of years. Materials in the MIT Institute Archives & Special Collections pertaining to the history of science and technology include rare books dating from the fifteenth century to more recent times; documents from the founding of the Institute; and records from past (and present) departments, labs, and faculty. A researcher can use these materials separately or collectively to examine the evolution of science and technology. Resources that were at one time on the cutting edge of scientific theory and practice are preserved as historical books and documents whose research value becomes more relevant to other disciplines, such as the study of the history of science and technology.

One historical thread that can be followed through numerous resources in the collections is the study of electricity and its uses.

- The Vail Collection of rare books, presented to MIT in 1912 by Theodore N. Vail, president of the American Telephone & Telegraph Company, contains thousands of volumes related to electricity and electrical engineering, including distinguished works by Andre Ampère, Charles Babbage, Michael Faraday, Joseph Henry, Jean Jallabert, and Georg Ohm.
- Within the records of the Society of Arts, which was established at the founding of the Institute as an arena for “the advancement of the industrial arts and sciences,” one can follow scientific developments of the day. These records include an account of an 1876 meeting at which Alexander Graham Bell gave what is believed to be the first public demonstration of the telephone.



Cover of *Dampf und Elektrizität: die Technik im Anfang des Zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts*. 12 Zerlegbare, zum Teil Bewegliche Modelle mit Zeichen-Erklärungen und Erläuterndem (Leipzig, ca. 1900). Title loosely translates to “Steam and Electricity: the Technology at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century, with Twelve Composite Models Containing Movable Parts, plus Explanatory Keys and Illustrated Text.”

- The papers of Elihu Thomson, a life member of the MIT Corporation and lecturer in electrical engineering who served as acting president in the early 1920s, include catalogs, patent information, articles about electrical devices, instructions on the installation and use of machinery, and papers relating to the General Electric Company, formed when his Thomson-Houston Company merged with its rival, the Edison Company of Schenectady.
- Records of MIT’s Research Lab for Electronics (RLE) and the Servomechanisms Lab, and MULTICS (Multiplexed Information and Computing Service) notebooks from MIT Institute Professor Fernando Corbató, showcase more modern advances of the use of electricity in computing.
- MIT theses, such as Claude Shannon’s 1940 “A Symbolic Analysis of Relay and Switching Circuits,” the first “computer science” thesis, reflect the documentation of ongoing discoveries being made at MIT.

All these resources make up pieces of the broad history of the uses of electricity in the development of science and technology.

The MIT Institute Archives & Special Collections is open to the public. Researchers are invited to contact us at 617.253.5690, via email at mithistory@mit.edu, or to visit <http://www.libraries.mit.edu/archives>.

Tom Rosko, Head, MIT Institute Archives & Special Collections
617 253 5688 rosko@mit.edu

An image from *Dampf und Elektrizität* shows a composite model of the telephone, the phonograph, and the filament arc lamp. By lifting multiple flaps the viewer is able to delve deeper into the illustration to see how external and internal parts are positioned.

SUPPORTING THE LIBRARIES: MAJOR GIFT LEADS EFFORTS TO SAVE MIT'S RAREST BOOKS



Photo by Roger Mastroianni

Tom Peterson with collection of antique electrical instruments

Working with dangerous two-million-volt lightning discharges never frightened Tom Peterson, but rather fostered a lifelong passion for science and research that would lead him to MIT and on to successful careers in manufacturing and sound recording. His passion for science and keen appreciation for rare scientific books recently inspired the creation of the Thomas F. Peterson, Jr. (1957) Conservator position at MIT Libraries. “Tom’s generous gift will ensure that MIT’s significant collection of rare books and materials, documenting the history of science and technology, will be properly cared for and preserved for the benefit of many generations of scholars,” said Director of Libraries Ann Wolpert.

Tom Peterson’s fascination with electricity began at an early age. With an electrical engineer/inventor father, he grew up helping with projects in the basement workshop of their Cleveland, Ohio home. Early on he learned how to disassemble and repair a TV. By age 12 he had saved enough allowance money to buy a hand-cranked “Gibson Girl” radio transmitter—the kind dropped by parachute during WWII to transmit emergency signals. He would eventually test the parachute function at MIT by dropping the radio off an East Campus dormitory!

After graduating from high school, Tom spent the summer in California with a former classmate of his father’s, Stanford professor Joseph S. Carroll. Assisting Carroll in Stanford’s High Voltage Laboratory as a lab technician gave Tom hands-on experience with high voltage experiments. He also benefited from Carroll’s impromptu lectures—often illustrated on the back of lunchroom menus or sketched on the lab floor with chalk. Working at the lab and learning from his mentor fueled a growing interest in electrical engineering—an interest that would, in the fall of that year, bring him to MIT.

At MIT Tom immersed himself in his studies, fondly recalling lectures by Doc Edgerton and calculus classes with Dr. Norbert Wiener. Tom also met Jessie, who would become his wife of 47 years, at a dance in Walker Memorial. The family business, Preformed Line Products (PLPC), a manufacturer of components for the energy and communications industries, took Tom back to Cleveland before he could finish his studies at MIT. For the next ten years he worked at PLP, rising to the level of executive vice president. Realizing he didn’t want to stay in manufacturing, he eventually left to start what would become his own successful company, Motion Picture Sound, Inc. Later, he returned to research and obtained three patents—two related to the measurement of electricity and one an improvement on Michael Faraday’s famous “ice pail” experiment.

Tom’s interest in rare books began soon after his father’s death, with a visit to the family home in Brooklyn, New York. There he discovered turn-of-the-century electrical engineering books and other early texts that inspired him to start collecting. Since then Tom has built his own library of over 4,000 books and materials covering a wide range of scientific topics, including electrical theory, physics and electrical measurement. He’s read most of the books in his collection and finds the connections between them to be fascinating. “I came to the realization that I already had almost every source that was referenced in a recently acquired 1700’s book, on my shelf.”



Tom Peterson at age 15 working with his WWII tank radio



An original 1613 Galileo previously owned by the Vatican Library—deaccessioned in 1935

Some of his favorites include an original work by Galileo on sunspots (previously owned by the Vatican Library), an early edition Benjamin Franklin (once owned by Heinrich Hertz, the German physicist whose discoveries led to the development of the wireless telegraph and radio), an original signed photo of Einstein, and a postcard from Lord Kelvin. As his father was, Tom is a member (and currently President-Elect) of the Rowfant Club, a private forum for the “critical study of books,” founded in Cleveland in 1892. He is also active in the Antique Wireless Association and owns an extensive collection of antique electrical instruments, including an Enigma code machine from WWII.

At MIT Tom has helped to fund student research in electrical engineering under Professor Markus Zahn. His generosity has also extended to several other institutions and academic libraries, including Ohio University, Case Western Reserve University, The Burndy Library, The IEEE History Center and The Bakken Library and Museum—an institution devoted to the history of electricity and magnetism in medicine and the life sciences.

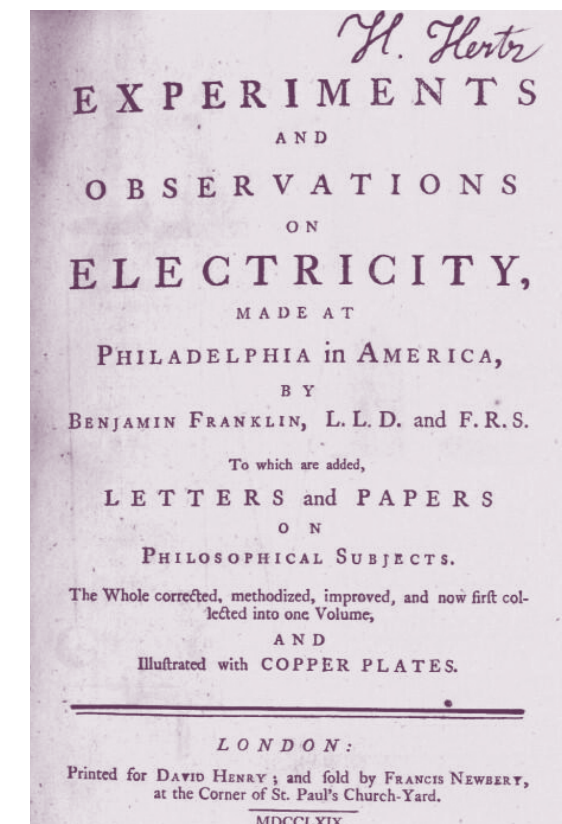
... in my mind, contributing to the conservator position is a guarantee that this will go on forever without having to borrow from other funds

Thomas F. Peterson, Jr.

Tom feels it’s important for scholars and researchers to be able to learn from the past through historical works. He knows the preservation, conservation and cataloging of MIT’s rare books and treasures is of tremendous value, and recognizes that funding for these efforts is not always a priority for an institution. “It would be easy to say that because these are 200-year-old books — what difference will another 10 or 20 years make? But in my mind, contributing to the conservator position is a guarantee that this will go on forever without having to borrow from other funds.”

Conservation work at MIT Libraries is done in the E. Martin (1944) and Ethel Wunsch Conservation Laboratory, a state-of-the-art conservation lab that was established in 2002. Tom’s gift, one of the largest ever made to the Libraries by an individual, will fund a permanent MIT Libraries’ conservator, conservation assistant, supplies, and equipment in perpetuity, ensuring that the Libraries will always have the financial resources needed to fund this important work.

Heather Denny, Communications Officer
617 253 5686 hdenny@mit.edu



An early edition Benjamin Franklin once owned by Heinrich Hertz

WITH APPRECIATION: DONORS TO THE MIT LIBRARIES JULY 1, 2004 – JUNE 30, 2005

I am pleased to acknowledge the support of the many alumni, faculty, staff and friends who supported the MIT Libraries in Fiscal Year 2005. Gifts to the Libraries are vital to our efforts to deliver innovative services and high-impact information resources to MIT's world-class education and research community.

Ann J. Wolpert, Director, MIT Libraries

Photos in this section are from the third annual Honor with Books reception hosted during Commencement 05 by the MIT Libraries and the MIT Parents Association.



Jessica Chiafair and family

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Bruno Sugai and mother

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THERESA TOBIN ELECTED TO ALA COUNCIL

MIT's Head Humanities Librarian, Theresa Tobin, was elected to the American Library Association (ALA) Council in May of this year.

The Council is the governing body of the oldest and largest library association in the world. With more than 64,000 members in total, Tobin is one of thirty-three Councilors chosen to set the policies of ALA and determine programs and activities to be carried out by the divisions. She will contribute to issues that affect libraries nationwide and influence public policy.

Tobin has been a member of ALA since 1981 and head of MIT's Humanities Library for the past 15 years.

IPODS BEGIN CIRCULATING



With the help of the Class of 1982 Library Fund, The Lewis Music Library bought 5 iPods over the summer and loaded them with over 500 tracks of newly received CDs (one track per CD).

MIT students, faculty, or staff members may borrow an iPod overnight to listen to these sample tracks. The library encourages users to come in and borrow those CDs they would like to explore further.

Playlists on the iPods include new CDs received each semester dating back to Spring 2004. Additional playlists are planned, including "top ten" recommendations from the collection as suggested by patrons.

CREDITS

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