Collection Policy for Film Studies

1. Overview

This subject-specific Collection Policy operates within the context of the overall Bodleian Libraries Collection Management Policy (www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/about-us/policies/collection-management-policy).

1.1 General coverage of subject in the Bodleian Libraries

Film Studies is a growing academic discipline in Oxford, with a recently-established MSt in Film Aesthetics, a number of permanent post-holders doing research on film, several undergraduate film courses (including the Paper 6 Film Criticism option in the English Faculty and the Paper XII European Cinema option in Modern Languages), and an increasing number of graduate students coming to Oxford to work on film each year. Academic staff are seeking to develop Oxford as a centre for the comparative history of European and World Cinema and theoretical work in film aesthetics.

Current Bodleian Libraries film collections are dispersed across a number of different sites, principally in the English Faculty Library (Anglo-American film), the Taylor Institution Library (European and World cinema) and the Bodleian Library, as well as other parts of the Bodleian Libraries, particularly Area Studies libraries such as the Bodleian Japanese Library, the Indian Institute Library collection (held within the central Bodleian) and the Bodleian K B Chen China Centre Library.

It is anticipated that the Taylor Library and English Faculty Library film collections will eventually be integrated in the proposed new Humanities library at the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, which will house the main teaching collections for film (films, critical works and journals) as well as first-level research material. Given that completion of the Humanities Library will not take place before 2020, in the interim period, the Subject Consultant for Film Studies will continue to manage and develop separate film collections in each library (based on current divisions by national cinema), and will maintain established Bodleian Libraries-wide policies for film materials regarding borrowing procedures and classification.

1.2 Legal deposit

As a library of legal deposit, the Bodleian provides virtually comprehensive coverage of all British and Irish publications. This includes all scholarly publications in the field of Film Studies but not DVDs/Blu-rays. There is a small collection of film books and journals on the open shelves in the Bodleian Library’s Upper Camera; the remaining legal deposit material is held off-site in the Bodleian Book Storage Facility; items at the BSF can be requested via SOLO for delivery to reading rooms.

At midnight on 5/6 April 2013, new legislation came into force allowing the Bodleian Libraries and the other Legal Deposit Libraries in the UK and Ireland to access electronic books, articles, web pages and other electronic documents published in the UK. The 2013 Regulations are being implemented gradually over several years, as the Legal Deposit Libraries agree collectively to accept electronic versions from each UK publisher.

Monographs on narrow or specialised topics will not normally be duplicated in other Bodleian libraries; titles acquired by the Bodleian which are expected to be in heavy use will be duplicated where possible in order to provide at least one loan copy in Oxford. It is anticipated that some legal deposit material will be transferred to the new Humanities library for reference-use only.
1.3 Electronic Resources

The relevance and availability of networked databases and other electronic resources will be investigated regularly and decisions about acquisitions made accordingly and in consultation with the Film Studies COLP. The University currently subscribes to one bibliographic database specifically for Film Studies (FLAF International Index to Film Periodicals), and film students also have access to other relevant resources including Art Full Text, the British Humanities Index, Literature Online and the MLA International Bibliography, as well as additional specialist Film Studies electronic resources, such as the Early Russian Cinema online archive of Russian film periodicals, and the Oxford Bibliographies Online Cinema & Media module. There are also a growing number of Film Studies e-books available via SOLO. These are acquired both as part of large multi-disciplinary packages such as University Press Scholarship Online and ACLS Humanities e-books, and as individual titles chosen where demand makes an e-copy of a particular book desirable.

1.4 Notes about particular formats or collections

Collections for Film Studies are in a range of formats from printed books and journals to DVDs and videos [see section 2.4].

1.5 Languages

Monographs written within the main European film cultures (e.g. France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain, etc.) and other World cinema cultures (e.g. Egypt, India, Japan, etc.) will be routinely acquired, since one of Oxford’s assets as an institution vis-à-vis other universities is that it is multilingual. Foreign material in translation will not generally be purchased, with the exception of key critical works on film theory and aesthetics which will broadly be purchased in the original language for the Taylor Institution Library and in translation for the English Faculty Library. Decisions about what constitutes a key critical work will be made by the Subject Consultant for Film Studies in close consultation with academic staff. Non-English language films will be purchased with subtitles in English wherever possible.

2. Teaching collections

The main teaching collections for Film Studies are housed at the English Faculty Library (Anglo-American film) and the Taylor Institution Library (European and World Cinema), and are fully integrated with related research collections. Film students and researchers from different faculties can borrow film books from any of the Bodleian Libraries with lending collections.

2.1 Text books

Text books from reading lists will be purchased and housed in the appropriate library. Purchasing takes into account developments in the subject area, and new teaching initiatives and courses.

2.2 Journal articles

Many journal articles recommended on undergraduate reading lists will be found either in print in one of the Bodleian Libraries or electronically via SOLO or OxLIP+. Individual articles not held in Oxford will normally be obtained through the Bodleian or Taylor Institution Library’s inter-library loan service rather than taking out a new subscription, unless the journal as a whole is considered to be a useful addition to the collections, in which case a subscription may be started and efforts made to obtain back issues, in either electronic or print form.
2.3 Levels of provision

The Bodleian Libraries will endeavour to purchase multiple copies of key reading list books where possible, appropriate to the numbers of students taking a particular course. There should always be one reference copy available of key text books, either in one of the Faculty libraries or on the open shelves in the Upper Camera. It is expected that college libraries will purchase additional copies of key text books and to facilitate this college librarians are kept informed about titles in heavy demand.

2.4 Films on DVD/Blu-ray

Films will be purchased to support current and future teaching/research needs across faculties, in close consultation with academic staff.

The film collection will focus primarily on genre film, key directors and national cinemas; existing gaps will be filled so that the collection will eventually reflect the overall history and development of world cinema from early silent and classic Hollywood film through to the present day.

The Bodleian Libraries will identify key DVD and Blu-ray labels and distributors for purchase (e.g. Artificial Eye, BFI, Criterion, Eureka Masters of Cinema, Fox Studio Classics, Second Run) as well as researching other distributors for world cinema on DVD.

Films will usually be purchased on DVD (all regions) wherever possible, as they can be played on PCs and lap-tops as well as DVD players. The Taylor and EFL VHS collections will be gradually replaced by DVDs where possible. New developments in film formats will be monitored including online provision.

In the interests of holding the most scholarly edition available of classic films, and given the superior quality of Blu-ray, it is desirable for the Libraries to also purchase certain Blu-ray releases of films which are already held in DVD format. To this end, the Libraries will aim to purchase all Blu-ray releases in the Eureka Masters of Cinema series and any Artificial Eye Blu-ray releases of classic films or films by celebrated modern directors, in addition to DVD editions held. This policy recognises the current need to hold DVD copies for ease of use by students, and Blu-ray copies for scholarly purposes, of these key films.

Only one copy of a film will be purchased unless the film is in particularly high demand, or unless a superior edition of an important film is released on either Blu-ray or DVD, in which case additional copies may be acquired as necessary.

Films may occasionally be recorded off-air and added to stock under the terms of the Educational Recording Agency (ERA) Licence. This work will ideally be undertaken by technical support staff. Films which have aired on UK television since 1998 may also be requested from the British Universities Film & Video Council’s off-air recording archive (subject to availability), as part of the University’s BUFVC membership. Requests are made via the University’s Media Production Unit.

Film students and researchers from different faculties are able to borrow films across the Bodleian Libraries; however, DVDs/Blu-rays/VHS cassettes are not available to other members of the University wishing to watch films for leisure purposes only.

This is a condition of the EU Rental and Lending Directive 92/100/EEC 1992 which exempts the University from certain restrictions relating to the purchasing and viewing of films on the condition that films are lent for educational rather than entertainment purposes.
3. Research collections

Research collections are housed across a number of the Bodleian Libraries, principally the English Faculty Library (Anglo-American film), the Taylor Institution Library (European and World cinema) and the Bodleian Library (as well as in Area Studies libraries such as the Bodleian Japanese Library, the Indian Institute Library collection (within the central Bodleian) and the Bodleian K B Chen China Centre Library).

3.1 Research books

- Given the range of film studies undertaken at both undergraduate and research level, the Bodleian Libraries will aim to collect as widely as funds allow: monographs on the theoretical discipline of film aesthetics and the general cultural history of film (by country and director) as well as other specific areas recommended by academic staff.

- Monographs on film aesthetics will be acquired at both the EFL and the Taylor; otherwise monographs on individual countries and directors will be purchased by library according to subject (e.g. Anglo-American film at the EFL). The Taylor will also purchase books on World cinema.

- As well as establishing a core monograph collection for Film Studies, the Bodleian Libraries will actively identify new academic publications in the subject area (through key publishers’ catalogues, book reviews, etc.) and will ensure that current research in Film Studies is reflected in its collections.

3.2 Monograph serials/standing-orders

The Bodleian Libraries Subject Consultant for Film Studies will identify and purchase relevant monograph serials and standing orders, in accordance with research and teaching needs.

3.3 Journals

- The Bodleian Libraries will acquire film journals to support the research and teaching collections for Film Studies, within the current Bodleian Libraries guidelines for journal acquisitions. Journal collections will primarily represent academic film studies, current film criticism, and the film industry. There will be an initial emphasis on journals from countries where academic staff are currently offering graduate supervision.

- Since the film journal is an important historical object of study in its own right, the Bodleian Libraries will aim to acquire complete back issues of a number of key European and Anglo-American film journals.

- Journals will be reference-use only and any electronic versions will be made available through the Bodleian Libraries-wide portal (currently SOLO or OxLIP+).

4. Special Collections

The Bodleian currently houses some special collections for Film Studies including the Raymond Chandler archive and some related material in the John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera. In order for Oxford to differentiate itself as a unique centre for the study of World Cinema and film aesthetics and to satisfy potential future research requirements, it will be important to develop the depth and range of the collections by acquiring primary source materials from as broad a background
as possible. All such retrospective acquisitions will be made in close consultation with academic staff. Special Collections acquisitions have included early Egyptian film journals to support research into the history of Egyptian cinema and film criticism.

5. Subject coverage of selected purchased material

In addition to the legal deposit intake and general works, the Bodleian Libraries will purchase non-deposited material in the following specific subjects:

- Anglo-American, European and World Cinema (comparative history, directors and films)
- Film theory and film aesthetics

6. Name of subject consultant responsible for collections:

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