

Policy on Access & Use of Special & Rare-Book Collections

Registering as a Researcher

Researchers requesting to consult the materials from special collections are required to complete and sign an application for the use of special Collections and provide information about the purpose of the research being undertaken. Researchers are required to present one form of personal identification that includes their name, current address, and photograph to register for the purposes of consulting the collections.

Using the Special Collections Room

The materials in the collections are available for consultation from 9:30 am until 4:30 pm Monday to Friday in the Special Collections Reading Room on the main floor of the Library. We require advance notice in order to retrieve materials from special and rare-book collections.

Researchers working with special collections are provided with one file at a time. Researchers consulting rare books are given access to one title at a time.

While researchers are present, the Special Collections Reading Room is exclusively for the use of materials from special collections and rare books. The room is locked from the outside for security reasons and to ensure researchers remain undisturbed. Manuscript files and rare books must be returned to the reference desk should researchers need to leave the room, even briefly. Closed-circuit television surveillance is in operation in this area.

Digital reproductions, facsimiles and other types of reproductions (such as microfilms) of some materials may be provided, when available, unless an inquiry can be satisfied only by the original document.

For the protection and preservation of the collections, cotton gloves may be required for the use of some materials (such as photographs and film negatives) and will be provided by the Library.

Only pencils and laptops may be used by those consulting special collections materials. The Library staff will provide a pencil if one is needed. Power sources are provided under the table in the reading room. Wireless access is available and researchers are required to set up their eduroam credentials at their home institution prior to travelling to Victoria University.

Obtaining Research Assistance

Librarians are available to assist researchers in reading the finding aids to request particular items from special collections and submitting reproduction requests.

Researchers wishing to consult extensive quantities of materials should plan to conduct research on-site. The librarians are unable to engage in extensive research in response to requests which require an unreasonable amount of time with respect to the priorities of the Library. The librarians and library staff cannot provide evaluative or interpretive analysis and exhaustive information about the contents of the collections beyond what is already available in the archival finding aids, except for the purposes of providing general information and clarification.

Researchers who are unable to visit the Library in-person should consider retaining the services of an

independent consultant to conduct research on their behalf.

Reproducing Materials From Special & Rare-Book Collections

Smartphones, digital cameras, and hand-held scanners may be used for copying the items from special collections, but prior permission must be obtained from the librarians before such copying can take place. The condition of the materials will be assessed to ensure their preservation is not compromised. Researchers must not use flash to take any photographs of the materials.

All requests for scanning and other means of reproduction of the materials will be considered by the librarians. Due to the unique and often fragile nature of the holdings, the librarians may at their discretion choose not to make photocopies, supply digital scans, or employ other means of reproduction of a given item from the collections. Additional information regarding the duplication of the materials, fees, and restrictions on reproduction are outlined in the [Victoria University Library Policy on Reproduction of Special Collections Materials](#).

Publishing Materials From Special & Rare-Book Collections

The Library encourages the proper use and publication of research materials in its possession. Providing access to collections or photo duplication of collection materials does not include or imply permission to use the materials in a publication, broadcast or performance. For permission to use materials in a publication, broadcast or performance, a written application must be made to the Victoria University Chief Librarian using the [Permission to Publish and Associated Fees Form](#).

Whenever possible, researchers will be informed of parallel research being undertaken by other individuals using the same or related materials.

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