The Sophia Smith Collection continues to grow by donations of new collections and additions to existing holdings. Prospective donors are invited to call, write, or visit to discuss placing papers with us.

The Sophia Smith Collection reading room is on Level A of Alumnae Gymnasium where it shares facilities and staff with the Smith College Archives. The wheelchair-accessible entrance is through Neilson Library. Directions, campus maps, and information on transportation, accommodations, and parking are available on our Web site or by calling or emailing the SSC.

For more information, please contact

THE SOPHIA SMITH COLLECTION
Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts 01063
telephone: 413 585-2970 · fax: 413 585-2886
e-mail: ssc-wmhist@smith.edu
web site: http://libraries.smith.edu/libs/ssc

Sophia Smith COLLECTION
Women’s History Manuscripts

Marchers at a Gay Rights demonstration, 1970s. Photo by Cary Herz. Herz Papers


Women Strike for Peace, Washington, DC, 1969. Photo by Diana Davies. Davies Papers

Monaghan Mills illustration, circa 1904. YWCA of the USA Records

Cupcake #3 by Jocelyn, 1996. Girl Zines Collection

Henrietta Roelofs, undated. Photographer unknown. Rhoda McCulloch Papers


Vera Barger and an unidentified YWCA of China staff member, circa 1925. Photo by Grace Steinbeck. YWCA of the USA Records

Staff members are glad to make appointments and give group or class presentations about the holdings and the use of primary sources. We request that Fire College and Smith faculty arrange orientation sessions for their classes when planning assignments using the SSC.

The SSC Web site features an up-to-date list of collections, numerous subject guides, news, exhibits, and lesson plans for teachers. Also from the Web site, researchers can access full inventories of processed collections and brief descriptions of all SSC collections.
at Smith College is an internationally recognized repository of individuals’ papers, organization records, oral histories, periodicals, and other primary sources documenting women’s history. It was founded in 1942 to be the library’s distinctive contribution to the college’s mission of educating women. Under the inspired leadership of its first director, Margaret Storrs Grierson, the Sophia Smith Collection evolved from a collection of works by women writers into a historical research collection of archival resources documenting the lives and activities of women. In 1946 it was named to honor the founder of Smith College.

Today, the Collection consists of over 9,500 linear feet of material in manuscript, print, photographic, and audiovisual formats. The holdings document the historical experience of women in the United States and abroad from the colonial era to the present. Subject strengths include women’s rights and suffrage; reproductive health and justice; U.S. women working abroad; the arts (especially theatre); the professions (especially social work and journalism); middle-class family life in nineteenth- and twentieth-century New England; and the contemporary women’s movement across categories of race, class, and sexual orientation. Many of these collections are rich sources of visual as well as manuscript and printed material.

The Sophia Smith Collection’s manuscripts and archives document the lives of individual women and families and the work of organizations whose focus is on women and women’s issues through letters, diaries, scrapbooks, photographs, minutes, reports, publications, and a host of other materials. Oral histories capture compelling life stories and demonstrate the persistence and diversity of grass-roots organizing on behalf of women. Over 1,000 current and historical periodical titles include nineteenth-century “ladies’ magazines,” mainstream twentieth-century women’s magazines, 1970s women’s movement newsletters, and late-twentieth century self-published Zines. A complete list of collections is available on our Web site at http://libraries.smith.edu/libs/ssc.