

John Barth Literary Manuscripts
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2008

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm82050971>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms008022>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff
Revised by Margaret McAleer with the assistance of Lena H. Wiley
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Revised 2010 April

Collection Summary

Title: John Barth Literary Manuscripts

Span Dates: 1955-1978

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1955-1968)

ID No.: MSS50971

Creator: Barth, John, 1930-

Extent: 90 items

Extent: 11 containers plus 2 oversize

Extent: 8.4 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm82050971>

Summary: Author. Holograph and annotated typed manuscripts and corrected galley and foundry proofs of several of Barth's early novels, short stories, nonfiction writings, and speeches.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Barth, John, 1930-

Barth, John, 1930- End of the road. 1958.

Barth, John, 1930- Floating opera. 1955.

Barth, John, 1930- Giles goat-boy; or, The revised new syllabus. 1966.

Barth, John, 1930- Sot-weed factor. 1960.

Borges, Jorge Luis, 1899-1986.

Subjects

American essays.

American fiction.

American literature.

Literature.

Short stories, American.

Titles

John Barth papers

Occupations

Authors.

Provenance

The literary manuscripts of John Barth, author, were given to the Library of Congress by Barth in 1968. Additional material was given by James L. W. West in 1979.

Processing History

The literary manuscripts of John Barth were arranged and described in 1984. The collection was rearranged and rehoused and the finding aid was revised in 2008 when items formerly on deposit by Barth were removed from the collection.

Transfers

Audiocassette recordings have been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division where they are identified as part of the John Barth Literary Manuscripts.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of John Barth in these papers and in other collections in the custody of the Library of Congress is reserved. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division for further information.

Access and Restrictions

Restrictions apply governing the use, photoduplication, or publication of items in this collection. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division concerning these restrictions.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, John Barth Literary Manuscripts, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

The literary manuscripts of John Barth (1930-) span the years 1955-1978 with the bulk of the material dating from 1955 to 1968. The collection consists of holograph drafts, annotated typed manuscripts, corrected galley and foundry proofs, and miscellaneous editorial material from four of Barth's novels: *The Floating Opera* (1955), *The End of the Road* (1958), *The Sot-Weed Factor* (1960), and *Giles Goat-Boy, or, The Revised New Syllabus* (1966). Other literary manuscripts include several of Barth's short stories, nonfiction essays, and speeches. Among the speeches are drafts of "Jorge Luis Borges and the Literature of Exhaustion" that Barth delivered at various universities in 1966 prior to the publication of his essay "The Literature of Exhaustion" in 1967.

Arrangement of the Papers

The collection is arranged as fiction, nonfiction, and speeches and alphabetically thereunder by title or type of material. Oversize material is arranged and described according to the containers and folders from which the items were removed.

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|-----------|--|
| BOX 1 | Fiction |
| BOX 1 | Novels |
| BOX 1 | <i>The End of the Road</i> (working title "What to Do Until the Doctor Comes") |
| BOX 1 | Holograph draft (probable first draft), 1955 (5 folders) |
| BOX 1 | Typescript revised first draft, undated (7 folders) |
| BOX 1 | Typescript final draft, carbon copy, undated (6 folders) |
| BOX 1 | <i>The Floating Opera</i> |
| BOX 1 | Holograph first draft, circa 1955 (4 folders) |
| BOX 2 | (3 folders) |
| BOX 2 | Typescript revised first draft, 1955 (10 folders) |
| BOX 2 | Typescript final draft, undated (7 folders) |
| BOX 3 | Revised edition, 1966 |
| BOX 3 | Preface |
| BOX 3 | Setting copy <i>See also Oversize</i> (2 folders) |
| BOX 3 | <i>Giles Goat-Boy</i> |
| BOX 3 | "Test borings," prospectus, 1960-1965 |
| BOX 3 | Holograph first draft, 1965 |
| BOX 3 | Vol. 1 (12 folders) |
| BOX 4 | Vol. 2 (10 folders) |
| BOX 4 | "Posttape" |
| BOX 4 | Typescript first draft, undated |
| BOX 4 | "Publisher's disclaimer" and "Cover-letter to the editors and publishers" |
| BOX 4 | Vol. 1 |
| BOX 4 | "Reels" 1-2 (7 folders) |
| BOX 5 | "Reel" 3 (8 folders) |
| BOX 5 | Vol. 2 (10 folders) |
| BOX 5 | "Posttape" |
| BOX 6 | Final typescript with corrections, undated |
| BOX 6 | "Cover-letter to the editors and publishers" |

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|-----------|---|
| BOX 6 | Vol. 1 (15 folders) |
| BOX 7 | Vol. 2 (10 folders) |
| BOX 7 | "Posttape" |
| BOX 7 | Miscellaneous editorial material, including style sheet, list of corrections, table of contents, and instructions to the proofreader from the copy editor, 1966 <i>See also Oversize</i> (3 folders) |
| BOX 7 | Final galley proofs, 1966 |
| BOX 7 | Corrected reader's set <i>See Oversize</i> |
| BOX 7 | Uncorrected <i>See Oversize</i> |
| BOX 7 | Foundry proofs, 1966 |
| BOX 7 | With notations <i>See Oversize</i> |
| BOX 7 | Uncorrected <i>See Oversize</i> |
| BOX 7 | <i>The Sot-Weed Factor</i> |
| BOX 7 | Character notes, plot notes, and synopsis, 1958, undated <i>See also Oversize</i> (2 folders) |
| BOX 8 | Holograph first draft, 1958-1959 |
| BOX 8 | Parts 1-2 (19 folders) |
| BOX 9 | Parts 3-4 (11 folders) |
| BOX 9 | Typescript final draft with revisions (setting copy), 1960 |
| BOX 9 | Part 1 (4 folders) |
| BOX 9 | Part 2 |
| BOX 9 | Chapters 1-5 (2 folders) |
| BOX 10 | Chapters 6-32 (12 folders) |
| BOX 10 | Part 3 |
| BOX 10 | Chapters 1-8 (4 folders) |
| BOX 11 | Chapters 7-21 (6 folders) |
| BOX 11 | Part 4 |
| BOX 11 | Final galley proofs, corrected, 1960 <i>See Oversize</i> |
| BOX 11 | Foundry proof, 1960 <i>See Oversize</i> |
| BOX 11 | Revised edition, setting copy, 1966 |
| BOX 11 | Miscellany, 1958-1968, undated |
| BOX 11 | Short stories |
| BOX 11 | "Ambrose His Mark," 1961, undated |
| BOX 11 | "The Invulnerable Castle," 1958 |
| BOX 11 | "The Song of Algol," 1958, undated |
| BOX 11 | "Water-Message," 1960, undated |
| BOX 11 | Nonfiction |

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|-----------|--|
| BOX 11 | "Jorge Luis Borges," 1966 |
| BOX 11 | <i>New York Times</i> book review statement, 1967 |
| BOX 11 | "Publish or Perish," 1965 |
| BOX 11 | "Tobias George Smollett," 1963 |
| BOX 11 | Speeches |
| BOX 11 | Introductions at writers series, State University of New York, Buffalo, N.Y., 1967 |
| BOX 11 | Borges, Jorge Luis |
| BOX 11 | Heller, Joseph |
| BOX 11 | Updike, John |
| BOX 11 | "John Barth Speaks to Young Writers," 1977-1978 |
| BOX 11 | "Jorge Luis Borges and the Literature of Exhaustion," 1966-1967 |
| BOX 11 | Readings |
| BOX 11 | Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., 1967 |
| BOX 11 | Library of Congress, 1967 |
| BOX 11 | University of Maryland, College Park, Md., 1967 |
| BOX OV 1 | Oversize |
| BOX OV 1 | Fiction |
| BOX OV 1 | Novels |
| BOX OV 1 | <i>The Floating Opera</i> |
| BOX OV 1 | Revised edition, 1966 |
| BOX OV 1 | Setting copy (Container 3) |
| BOX OV 1 | <i>Giles Goat-Boy</i> |
| BOX OV 1 | Miscellaneous editorial material, 1966 (Container 7) |
| BOX OV 1 | Final galley proofs, 1966 |
| BOX OV 1 | Corrected reader's set (Container 7) |
| BOX OV 1 | Uncorrected (Container 7) |
| BOX OV 1 | Foundry proofs, 1966 |
| BOX OV 1 | With notations (Container 7) |
| BOX OV 2 | Uncorrected (Container 7) |
| BOX OV 2 | <i>The Sot-Weed Factor</i> |
| BOX OV 2 | Character notes, plot notes, and synopsis, undated (Container 7) |
| BOX OV 2 | Final galley proofs, corrected, 1960 (Container 11) |
| BOX OV 2 | Foundry proof, 1960 (Container 11) |