The Library of Michigan (LM) Foundation has received a $305,000 gift from Lansing’s Talbert and Leota Abrams Foundation to fund acquisitions that will increase the size and breadth of LM’s genealogical materials collection. The new grant brings total gifts by the Abrams Foundation to LM since 1987 to more than $500,000. According to state librarian James Fry, the gift should move the national ranking of LM’s collection from its present number 10 “to one of the top five of all American libraries.”

The New York Public Library’s Oriental Division received a gift of $1.3 million from Japanese publisher Kodansha, Ltd. to expand and increase access to the collections. One of the foremost resources for Asian, Indian, and Middle Eastern studies, the Oriental Division houses nearly 300,000 books, journals, and other materials. Kodansha’s gift will enable the division to continue collecting and preserving a broad spectrum of materials, and to improve public access to its resources by renovating its reading room.

The Smithsonian Institution Libraries (SIL) received $37,500 from the James Smithson Society for a one-year pilot program to establish a post-graduate residency for minorities in library and information science. The residency will improve SIL’s effectiveness in responding to culturally diverse programs, to increase the number of minorities on its staff, and to enhance the career potential of minority members of the library profession.

The School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has been awarded grants of $135,000 and $65,000 respectively from the Henry Luce Foundation to support further library development in the field of Southeast Asian Studies. The Southeast Asian Studies Programs at the two universities, together with the program at the University of British Columbia, make up the Northwest Regional Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies. At UO the funds will be used to support acquisitions activities and to strengthen vernacular cataloging capabilities. The UW will use the money primarily for cataloging activities.

In addition, the Foundation has made available another $80,000 to the two programs: $30,000 for each institution for research assistantships, and $20,000 to be jointly allocated as small grants to support predissertation research and travel.

A gift of 256 early botanical works with an estimated value of over $1 million has been donated to the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C., by collector Mary P. Massey. Given during the Folger’s 60th anniversary diamond jubilee year, the books make up the largest and most valuable collection of rare books ever given to the library. The collection of early herbals dates from the 15th to the 19th centuries and represents many European countries. It is particularly strong in the earliest printed botanical works, including a copy of the first printed herbal De virtutibus herbarum (Naples, 1477). Other gems include the Hortus sanitatis.
(Strassburg, 1497), one of the most comprehensive 15th-century works on natural history.

More than 40 original works of art by the late illustrator Charles Addams (1912–1988) have been acquired by the New York Public Library. Many of the items have appeared in the New Yorker and date from the 1930s to just before Addams’s death. The drawings are the gift of the Lady Colyton, the artist’s former wife, and Marilyn Addams, his widow. The Lady Colyton’s gift is accompanied by an endowment to support the conservation, preservation, and exhibition of the works.

The papers of Saxe Commins, an editor at Boni & Liverwright, Random House, and Modern Library who died in 1958, have been acquired by the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections at Princeton University Libraries. His papers contain 224 letters from Eugene and Carlotta O’Neill, Sherwood Anderson, W. H. Auden, Sinclair Lewis, John O’Hara, W. Somerset Maugham, and others. Also included are galleys of Mourning Becomes Electra and other O’Neill plays; an annotated typescript of Auden’s poem “A Lullaby”; and Gertrude Stein’s corrected manuscript of In Savoy.

An exhibition of editorial cartoons first displayed in 1991, “Cartoonists Celebrate the First Amendment,” has been donated to the permanent collection of the Ohio State University Cartoon, Graphic, and Photographic Arts Library. Eighty-three works by cartoonists from across the country make up the collection which toured the United States for 18 months.

A collection of eight ancestral portraits has been given to the Redwood Library and Athenæum, Newport, Rhode Island, by descendants of Countess László Széchényi, a daughter of Cornelius Vanderbilt (1843–1899). Originating 270 years ago in 18th-century Newport, the paintings were executed between 1722 and 1809 by major American painters—including Robert Feke and Washington Allston—as well as lesser-known Colonial artists. Subjects of the paintings include Newport businessmen Henry Collins and Ebenezer Flagg, and Rhode Island Governor Richard Ward.

The papers of author James A. Michener were recently acquired by the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin. The collection contains notes and drafts for many of Michener’s works including The World Is My Home and The Eagle and the Raven. The archive also contains clippings, correspondence, and other materials.

A 57-volume collection of the works of Roman author Boethius (ca. 480–524 A.D.), including two 15th-century manuscripts, eight incunables, and 30 16th-century editions has been donated to Washington University, St. Louis. The earliest printed text is the 1476 Koberger printing of the Consolation of Philosophy. Also included is the first illustrated edition of the Consolation (Strassburg, 1501). The collection is the gift of Philip M. Arnold of Oklahoma, who has been donating his Semiology Collection to WU for nearly 20 years.

WU also received a collection of illustrated books concentrating on the age of Thomas Rowlandson and George Cruikshank from Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Grossman of St. Louis. Included in the 200-book collection are many early editions of books with hand-colored illustrations by these artists, their contemporaries, and their emulators. Also included are a number of monographs about these artists. Of particular interest are volumes in the Doctor Syntax series and an unusually nice set of The English Dance of Death (London, 1815–16).