NOTES FROM THE
JOHN MARTIN RARE BOOK ROOM
April 2020

We hope that this month's issue of the newsletter finds you all healthy and safe. Like the rest of the University of Iowa Libraries, the John Martin Rare Book Room and the Hardin Library for the Health Sciences are physically closed. Much of Hardin Library's current collection is available online, and Library staff continue to work virtually, assisting our users by email, Zoom, and other electronic means.

We are also mailing physical books to our users, when possible. These circumstances mean that the Rare Book Room's collection is currently unavailable, although we encourage you to explore the digital exhibits, illustrations, and books available through the website at http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/hardin/rbr/

Thank you for your support and interest in the John Martin Rare Book Room, and I look forward to seeing all of you in person again someday soon. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at janna-lawrence@uiowa.edu.

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GIROLAMO MERCURIALE (1530-1606)
De arte gymnastica libri sex.
illus. 23.6 cm.

Mercuriale, professor of medicine at Bologna and Pisa, is probably best known to modern students of medical history for the present work, first published in 1569. It was the first complete text on gymnastics and stresses the importance that all forms of exercise have in maintaining good health. Relying heavily on ancient practices, this work is an excellent compendium of the physical therapy of earlier times. Mercuriale describes ancient gymnasia and baths and discusses mild exercises such as dancing as well as more strenuous pursuits such as wrestling and boxing. He also gives full consideration to the health benefits of proper exercise and concludes the book with a section of therapeutic exercises.