

LIBRARY DILEMMA

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At present the U.P.E.I. library is suffering from substantial losses due to a continuous theft of both books and periodicals. The problem now faced by the library staff is how to curtail this loss. To give you some magnitude of this problem last year the loss if replaced would cost in the area of \$15,000. However, the solution is not just a monetary one for most materials in the library at the present time cannot be bought. This is due to the fact that most of books are not in print at the present time and cannot be acquired through publishing houses. Also periodicals are not kept in stock after they have first appeared. even current editions. Very few people seem to realize this. "So What!" you say! However, give some thought to the consequences of removing a book without it going through circulation, even if you do bring it back at some future date. The fact is that if a book is not in the stacks and it is also not checked out, it is considered lost as far as the library is concerned. This of course means that any one else who requires the book is just out of luck. You are thus imposing your own personal desires on others, not exactly a product of the age of aquarius. Are you really beating the system or are you just beating yourselves? The latter is the case if you think about it.

The problem does exist so what can be done about it. The university librarian, in a memo to the senate, stated some of the alternatives, which are:

- 1) Continue at present and just absorb the loss.
- 2) Install turn-stiles with one way entrance gates and exiting traffic flowing past the circulation desk. Persons and briefcases
- 3) The above but use commissionaires to do the checking.
- 4) Have closed stacks and runners to retrieve requested materials.
- 5) Have supervised entrance to and from stack areas.

6) Installation of technical devices viz. metallic strips, wires, paint, etc. in library materials which trigger warning devices at the exit.

Of the above there is only one which does not in some way hinder the use of the library by its patrons. This is statement 1). However, the loss is no longer possible if the library is to function in the best interests of its users. Therefore one of the alternative methods of surveillance will have to be used. (Given that to close the stacks is just not acceptable to anyone.) We now can throw out the ideas of hidden materials to trigger alarms because this is just too expensive and it is not foolproof. Also students, though cheap labour, cannot be employed as checkers due to personal bias. Therefore, what is the answer?

3)...the commissionaires do the checking. Or what is popularly known as the K-Mart mentality. Is this what you want? Of course not! You will be the first to say that your human liberties are being jeopardized when each of you is considered guilty by a guard until proven otherwise.



IS THIS WHAT YOU WANT?

Therefore the onus is on you to stop this from occurring. You, who frequently the library must change your borrowing habits by:

- 1) checking out all materials
- 2) returning non-processed material which is out at this time.
- 3) make an effort so that others do not take advantage of the "policy of trust" at the library and thus cause the library to enforce one of the aforementioned policies

Warning has been given therefore act now to keep your library the most liberal in Canada.

Richard O'Brien

ELSEWHERE.....

TORONTO (CUP) - The University of Toronto Library Council yesterday (Feb. 2) voted to refuse undergraduates access to the stacks of the John Roberts Research Library, ignoring nearly 4000 petitions demanding entry.

In the aftermath of the Council decision students were reported planning more direct action to press their demand for open stacks.

A meeting of the University's senate will also be asked to reconsider the Council's decision. However, there is little chance that the non-student body will reverse yesterday's decision.

The petitions, printed in a recent issue of the student newspaper were dumped on the council table shortly before the faculty-dominated council voted 19-5 to reject the student demand.

University officials have sought to keep undergrads out of the thirteen storey library, claiming that the stacks would be overcrowded and that the undergrads would be likely to misplace books as they glanced through the stack collection.

About 4500 graduates and faculty members will have full access to the library's stack collections. Other students will have to order books from the stacks, using the card catalogues as their sole source of information about what material is hidden away in the library's bowels.