U.B.C. LIBRARY NEWS

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This newsletter appears once a month as an information service for faculty and other people outside the Library. It contains news items about current developments in the Library system which we feel will be of interest or concern to the larger community.

A CLOSER LOOK AT RESERVES

Like most compromises, the reserve book system in the U.B.C. Library is probably not completely satisfactory to anyone, although it may well be the only practical answer the Library can make to an increasingly difficult problem. The following survey may help to clear up widespread misunderstandings about the function and value of reserve books in the university library.

The rationale of "reserving" is simply stated: it is an attempt to assure equal exposure to identical content. When certain readings are assigned to all students in a course, and when there is reason to believe that the normal loan period would not permit access to this material by all the students within the time allowed, the books are placed on short-term loan. Often duplicate copies are provided to make it easier for all students to complete their required reading assignments.

Putting this simple idea into operation takes up an enormous amount of staff time. Hundreds of reading lists must be called in from faculty members and then checked against the catalogue to determine which items are already in the library. Those which are must be retrieved from the stacks; those which are not must be ordered and processed. All reserve holdings must be entered as such in the library catalogues, and central records set up for the collection.

For this year's winter session over 26,000 course items were processed for reserve in Sedgewick and the Main Library. Establishing and maintaining such a collection requires a disproportionate amount of staff time, and there are strong indications that much of this may be wasted effort. Almost every study of university reserve collections done in the past 40 years has shown that between 40 and 80 per cent of all items did not circulate often enough to warrant the reserve loan period. Coming closer to home, we have the results of a research project by Lois Carrier, the head of the Library's Social Sciences Division, on use of selected undergraduate social science reserves from September 1966 to May 1967. She concludes:

> No title was ever continuously justified for reserve over the entire 8-month period. Of the 171 sample titles, 38.6% were never justified for reserve at any time. . . . Reserve materials for courses in anthropology, economics, geography, political science, psychology and sociology in the undergraduate library of the University of British Columbia are not used frequently enough in comparison with their possible non-reserve use to warrant the special treatment accorded them. . . . It is singularly revealing that the 1-day reserve materials could have circulated more than 3 times as often on normal stack loan (1 week) than they actually did from reserve, and the 2-hour reserves more than 5 times as often.

Even items which seem to have circulated heavily are often found to have been renewed a number of times by the same borrower.

Reasons for this surprisingly poor use of reserve materials are not hard to find. Students often complain that the arbitrary 1-day or 2-hour loan periods do not give them sufficient time to absorb the material. Many prefer purchased texts or stack books, which allow them to reread, annotate, and compare material for what they feel is a more reasonable length of time. Again, due to the Library's limited budget or to unexpected demand, not enough copies may be available, and material may be out when the student asks for it. Enough experiences of this kind, and a student will avoid using reserve books despite the strongest urging from faculty.

Low student use is only one of the factors which have led many librarians and faculty members to question the value of reserve books. It is also charged that dependence on reserves keeps a student from learning how to find information on his own and to use the other library resources available to him. In this sense, he is not getting the education he has a right to expect.

In view of these arguments, the Sedgewick Library has made some changes in the standard reserve procedure. All assigned readings are listed in a special course file, but not all are put on a shorter loan period. Those that *are* have been shelved side by side with regular stack books on the same subject, as a means of encouraging wider reading. The result has been a decline in reliance on reserves combined with a great increase in the circulation of regular stack books.

It seems unlikely that the reserve book system will ever be discarded altogether. In spite of its drawbacks, it will remain the only method of supplying required readings which faculty members feel their students cannot afford to buy. But alternative methods of putting many other readings into students' hands will soon have to be developed if the reserve book collection is not to expand beyond the size which can be handled with the staff and space available.

However required readings are to be handled, the following should be borne in mind:

a) Reserving should never be used just as a means of gathering required and/or recommended readings in one place. If the demand does not absolutely require a shortened loan period, chances are that the material would really be better off in the regular stacks. Although it is seldom easy for a faculty member to predict in advance which books will be used heavily, the Library's IBM circulation records are often useful guides.

b) Lists of books for short-term loan should be submitted well in advance of the session for which they are required. Standard Library forms for the next summer session are normally sent out to each faculty member in January, and in March for the winter session.

To sum up, then: whatever else a reserve book collection may be, it is not a cure-all. In attempting to solve one set of problems, it may well create others. But with a greater understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of reserve collections, faculty members can do much to help the system function effectively.

ABOUT THOSE CARDS . . .

As almost everyone on campus knows by now, all library cards had to be replaced in mid-November after it was learned that a number of the original cards bore incorrect information. It is hard to say how many of these irregular cards were in existence, but to the best of the Library's knowledge only a few were ever used to borrow books.

Fears that use of the cards might be resulting in large-scale theft of library books are not borne out by the circulation records. Only a few irregular borrowers' numbers have turned up in the course of checking overdues, and none of these had a large number of books outstanding.

However, a complete record of overdue books will not be available until the general call-in, which normally takes place in December.

CHANGES IN LOAN REGULATIONS

The Senate Library Committee has spent much time this fall reviewing the Library's loan regulations. At the November 15th meeting the following changes were approved, effective immediately:

1) First and Second Year students may now borrow periodicals for one-day use, the same as upper year students. Material may be signed out at any time during the day (not just after 4:30), and Main Library periodicals will be due back at 8:30 the following morning. Those borrowed from Sedgewick must be returned before 1:30 p.m.

   Periodicals in the Music Library will still be restricted to use in the library.

2) "Library Use Only" material belonging to reference collections in the Main Library will be identified by a stamp (where the book pocket would normally be found) specifying the division to which the book belongs. Faculty members should not remove such items from the Library without permission from the reference division.

Other proposed changes in loan regulations will be discussed again in February. They include:

1) A possible raise in fees for individuals and organizations requesting extra-mural borrowers' privileges.

2) A proposal to extend graduate borrowing privileges to students in professional schools on campus.

It must be stressed that these two changes are only under consideration so far. Any final decisions will be reported in the *News* as they are made, but none will be implemented before September, 1969.

THE SPACE RACE

Last month's *News* reported that during 1967/68 the Library's catalogue card production had broken all records. This has proven to be something of a mixed blessing, since 40 drawers of cards a month have had to be added to the already crowded catalogues in the Main Library. The situation has now reached the point where drawers in the Author/Title Catalogue are too full to permit filing, and by spring the Subject Catalogue will be in the same state.

Eight new cabinets are already on order, and should arrive in about six weeks. Meanwhile new author and title cards will be filed in two temporary cabinets which have been set up outside the Interlibrary Loan Office, facing the Author/Title Catalogue.

Once the new cabinets have been added, the catalogue will have reached its maximum size in its present location. Further expansion in years to come will involve a move, either to parts of the Main Concourse now used for office space or to the South Reading Room. Although this is not likely to happen until the 1970's, a preliminary study of possible new locations has already been made.

WANT A SERIALS LIST?

Now that the 1968 *U.B.C. Serials Holdings* list has been published, copies of the 1967 list are no longer needed in the Library. They are still useful to readers, however, as many of the 1967 entries have been reprinted without change in the 1968 volume.

Anyone interested may obtain a free copy of last year's list at the Main Library's Information Desk.

CRANE: SOMETHING SPECIAL IN LIBRARIES

If U.B.C. is beginning to be nationally known as a centre for blind students, one of the chief reasons is certainly the Charles Crane Memorial Library. Housed in the north wing of Brock Hall, it is the most comprehensive library for blind students in Canada. The aim of the Crane collection is twofold: first, to provide equal library resources and study facilities for the blind on campus; and second, to attract more blind students from other countries to U.B.C.

Although the library was not officially opened until the spring of 1968, its history really began three years earlier. Charles Allen Crane, the first totally deaf and blind Canadian to enter university, had spent a lifetime building up the largest private Braille collection in the world. After his death in 1965 it was donated to U.B.C., which Crane had attended in 1931-32.

For the next two years the books remained in temporary storage, unsorted and unclassified. In 1967, however, a team of two students and a faculty member began the monumental task of arranging and cataloguing the collection. Because the Crane Library is not directly connected with the U.B.C. library system, much of the cataloguing had to be done by volunteers from the Delta Gamma women's fraternity. Delta Gamma also joined with the P.A. Woodward Foundation in donating funds to help furnish the three-room library.

Today the collection numbers roughly 3,700 volumes. The subjects covered range from philosophy, literature and history to botany and medicine, but the library is especially strong in the Greek and Latin classics. Because it operates outside the U.B.C. library system, none of these books will be listed in the Main Library's card catalogue. Instead the collection has its own catalogue, and a unique one it is. Each entry appears on two large cards—the first having the information in large type, and the second repeating the same entry in Braille. Subject and title files have already been completed, and work is still in progress on an author index.

Materials in Braille and on tape which are not held in the Crane Library can often be borrowed from other collections in Canada and the U.S. Major sources for interlibrary loans are the C.N.I.B. National Library in Toronto, the Recordings for the Blind Library in New York, and the Seattle Public Library's Division for the Blind.

The U.B.C. Library's own books and periodicals may, of course, be borrowed by blind students too. To help them use this material, the Crane Library has set up a system of volunteer readers who can be called on whenever necessary.

At present the library serves 18 blind or near-blind students—the largest single group now attending university in Canada. By next fall their number will have risen to at least 15. In addition, the Crane collection is a major source of material for blind students in Vancouver high schools and other B.C. universities. Although it has been open for less than a year, its reputation outside the province is growing fast, and loan requests now come in from all across Canada.

Next month the library will gain another room: Brock Hall's old College Shop, which is to be used for book storage, study space, and a staff working area. This coming year should also see the addition of many more Braille reference works, and (hopefully) the start of a new tape library. The Crane Library has come a long way in a short time, and its growth shows no signs of slowing down.

FURTHER WORD ON GRANTS

In last month's issue of the *News* it was mentioned that the U.B.C. Library had received a Canada Council grant to support book purchases in the humanities and social sciences. The annual report of the Council, just received, shows U.B.C. to be one of the top three universities, each of which received $64,000 for 1968/69. The other two are the University of Toronto and Université de Montréal.

Applications for the 1969/70 grants were sent off last week, and indications are that the volume of requests from this university's teaching departments will again be high. The council has stated, however, that those disciplines not considered within the area of the social sciences and humanities will be excluded this year. Subjects specifically mentioned are architecture, education, librarianship and social work.

CHRISTMAS LIBRARY HOURS

The schedule below has been confirmed for the Main Library and branch libraries (Curriculum Laboratory, Institute of Fisheries, Forestry/Agriculture, Law, Mathematics, Music, Sedgewick, Social Work, Woodward). Please note, however, that some branches may begin 5:00 p.m. closing earlier than December 20th. Any such changes will be announced when the examination time-tables have been set.

December 20th	8 a.m.–5 p.m.
December 21st–22nd	CLOSED
December 23rd–24th	9 a.m.–5 p.m.
December 25th–29th	CLOSED
December 30th–31st	9 a.m.–5 p.m.
January 1st	CLOSED
January 2nd–3rd	9 a.m.–5 p.m.
January 4th–5th	CLOSED
January 6th	Regular hours resume

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P.S.

The *U.B.C. Library News* welcomes all comments, criticisms, and suggestions for future articles.

So far the *News* has been distributed only to U.B.C. faculty and staff. If you know of anyone else who would like to receive copies regularly during 1969, please contact the editor.

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Information & Orientation Division

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