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Weighing Materials in Rare Book and Manuscript Libraries as a Security Measure against Theft and Vandalism

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Abstract

Rare book and manuscript materials have long been and continue to be obvious targets for thieves.¹ No system for completely deterring or detecting such people has ever been devised, despite numerous security improvements over the years and heightened awareness of the problem among custodians of these materials. Any number of highly effective measures to prevent theft seem obvious and well known. One could, for example, completely collate every book before it was issued to a reader and then collate it again when the book was turned back in. Or, one could completely inventory the contents of a manuscript folder when . . .

Full Text:

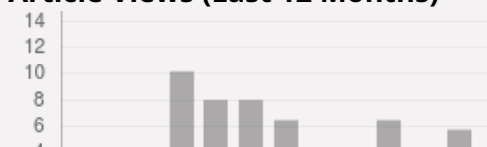
[PDF](#)

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Article Views (Last 12 Months)





Contact [ACRL](#) for article usage statistics from 2010-April 2017.

Article Views (By Year/Month)

2020

January: 4
February: 5
March: 13
April: 10
May: 10
June: 8
July: 5
August: 3
September: 8
October: 3
November: 7

2019

January: 8
February: 11
March: 18
April: 7
May: 2
June: 6
July: 5
August: 2
September: 4
October: 7
November: 9
December: 4

2018

January: 6
February: 6
March: 9
April: 5
May: 2
June: 3
July: 4
August: 4
September: 5
October: 12
November: 56
December: 3

2017

April: 0
May: 0
June: 1
July: 4
August: 1
September: 1
October: 2
November: 2
December: 1



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Theft and Vandalism in Libraries, Archives, and Special Collections. "Stealing library books and other materials has always cut across social lines. From available evidence, library book thieves throughout recorded history have included high-ranking officials and church elders, as well as librarians themselves" (Shuman, 1999, p. 6). Observations of this kind, as well as classics such as Nicholas Basbanes' *A Gentle Madness* (1999) and the more recent bestseller *The Man Who Loved Books Too Much* (2009), encourage the misleading belief that many intellectuals and some of those affiliated with the book profession suffer from bibliokleptomania, the unc Security, Inventory, and Provenance. Confronting the hidden truth about theft in libraries. By George M. Eberhart | August 17, 2016. "As a group, booksellers know intuitively what a book is worth, both financially and culturally, and we know how the market works," he said. "It is a difficult and time-consuming task to share lists of missing books with the book trade, but most of our members are good actors and an excellent resource." Edwin C. Schroeder, director of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, said that reducing the risk of theft should be the goal of all special collections managers. "Sometimes the university's risk management unit can help the library secure funding for needed security measures by advising the administration," he said. Theft, mutilation and vandalism are highly covered by research articles. Boss (1984) highlighted theft and arson as threats to collections and proposed that libraries formulate a planned security measure to protect their collections. Boss also identified physical weaknesses in libraries in terms of unsecured windows, faulty emergency exits, unstaffed computer rooms, poor policies and procedures, lack of security plans, poor security points (exits, loading areas, windows, special collections) inadequate loans and renewal periods, lack of security manuals and poor signage as some of the causes o