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

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5860/rbm.7.2.268

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The Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library is the rare book library and literary archive of the Yale University Library in New Haven, Connecticut. Situated on Yale University’s Hewitt Quadrangle, the building was designed by Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and completed in 1963.[1][2] Established by a gift of the Beinecke family and given its own endowment, the library is financially independent from the university and is co-governed by the University Library and Yale Corporation.[3] It is one of the largest. Security measures were significantly increased after the well-known antiques dealer Edward Forbes Smiley III was caught cutting maps from rare books with an X-acto blade in 2005. Weighing materials in rare book and manuscript libraries to prevent theft / Everett C. Wilkie, Jr. Thieves : who and why / Everett C. Wilkie, Jr. Legerdemain : how did they do that? / Everett C. Wilkie, Jr. Dealing with a theft : before and during / Everett C. Wilkie, Jr. ACRL guidelines regarding security and theft in special collections ; ACRL guidelines on the selection of general collection material for transfer to special collections ; MAGERT map collection security guidelines. Personal Name: Wilkie, Everett C. Rubrics: Rare book libraries Security