

Thursday, May 4, 1989

Student antics enliven library during finals

By Katsy Pittman
FEATURE WRITER

It's that time again. Mild-mannered students who ordinarily wouldn't consider putting a book in a non-shelving area are once more going crazy at Sterling C. Evans Library.

Yes, exams are here and A&M students are back to relieving stress in bizarre ways.

Perhaps none are as strange as the mysterious "Toe Biter," who terrorized the library several years ago.

His victims were unsuspecting students who removed their shoes as they relaxed while studying. "T.B." would then silently crawl under desks and nibble their toes before they could run away. He was never apprehended.

Dr. David Chapman, an associate archivist at A&M, joked about the situation.

"We think he died of athlete's foot of the throat," Chapman said.

Whether disappearance of "T.B." should be credited to graduation or oral fungal diseases, the library staff may never know. But they've had other deviants to deal with since.

Several flashers have been reported over the years. One of them surprised female librarians on several occasions as he streaked through a walkway in the back of the library. He later was apprehended by a female security guard and has not made an appearance at the library since.

Stefanie Ravet, a senior accounting major from Pearland, says she witnessed an unusual study break earlier this semester. It occurred when she and a friend were studying late one night near a couple who was hidden by a large study carrel.

"All of a sudden we heard this giggling," says Ravet. Apparently, the

couple was relieving exam stress in a rather intimate way.

Not all the criminal mischief has been quite so entertaining. Dr. Chapman says many students have been breaking into the archives division of the library for years. Some do it as a prank. Some do it to steal things.

As far as pranks go, library jokes apparently have taken a lot of time and effort.

Jokes have included the removal and stacking of all the ceiling tiles in the archives. Another joke consisted of removing the door locks and putting them in backwards, effectively locking in the library workers from the outside.

Are you thinking of pulling a few pranks on the library staff? It's a risky business.

"We take a dim view of those who break the rules," says Dr. Chapman. "We prosecute to the full extent of the law."

Chapman says two students were apprehended breaking into the library last year, right before exams. They were thrown in jail over the weekend, missing their exams in the process. There apparently is a lot of emphasis on "criminal" in criminal mischief.

But not all study breaks are quite so illegal. Some are just annoying.

Most library visitors are familiar with the group of girls whose idea of an "all-nighter" is a library slumber party complete with pillows and popcorn.

Dr. Irene Hoadley, the director of Evans library since 1974, says the slumber parties are a common occurrence at final exam time. But the parties are not encouraged. In fact, "bouncers" are now being used in the library, and the concept is working.

Library workers aren't the only ones who do not tolerate late-night



Photo by Scott D. Weaver

Sandy Hurta, a junior who works at the circulation desk in the Evans library, looks over returned books she must check in.

study revelers.

It's not uncommon for students who are trying to study to reach the breaking point when neighboring "studiers" get too loud. The noisy offenders often are told to go entertain themselves in a playground instead of the library. This will usually be followed by a cacophony of applause, then utter silence — at least until the next offenders come along.

One kind of fight is not quite so noisy. This is the fight for any available couch space on which to take a nap during exams.

The best place to review these

nappers is on the second floor between the main stairwell and the student lounge. Encased behind a glass wall, anyone going for a quick snack can view the envied spot on the "C" shaped couches, which comfortably sleep three. During exams, this number is often doubled.

If these things go on in the public view, one can only imagine what goes on in the 400 study cubicles, reserved for graduate students and faculty members.

Dr. Hoadley says at least one graduate has been caught actually living in a cubicle.

This student was sleeping on couch cushions in his cubicle at night and showering in the gym by day — a pretty cheap deal if you can get away with it. But when you do get caught, it's goodbye library, hello authorities.

So where does one go to do some peaceful studying?

If there are any truly peaceful spots in the library, those who know about them aren't talking. Some of the better places for studying are behind the LRD on the 6th floor, behind the stacks on the first floor, and as far away from the group study

areas as one can get.

Another quiet area a few students go to is the Templeton Collection on the third and fourth floors in the back of the library. The books may be gone, but the bookcases are still there. Thus, each student has their own individual bookcase to cram into.

So there is hope for those who wish for a little successful studying over the exam period. If you can avoid the gigglers, the sleepers, and the toe biters, there is a place somewhere in the six floors of Evans library for you.

Special library departments offer unusual information

By Don Kopf

FEATURE WRITER

Sterling C. Evans Library is well known as a place of study and research for Texas A&M students, but there is more information at the library than many people realize.

Most students know about the stacks of books on each floor, but few people know about the special departments hidden in various corners of the library. These obscure departments hold much information that cannot be found elsewhere in the library.

For example, if you were looking for a street map of downtown Berlin or suburban Moscow, the stacks would not be much help. The map room would be a better place to search.

Located on the second floor of Sterling C. Evans Library, the map room has nearly every kind of world map. There are soil survey maps of the earth, aeronautical-navigation maps, street maps of every town and city in America, vegetation maps of every country in the world and satellite photographs of continents.

But the map room has more than land maps. There are bathymetric

maps of the ocean floor, commemorative Texas sesquicentennial maps and, at one time, maps of the A&M utility tunnels.

Another department not well-known by most students is the archives department. Located in the old library building on the south end of Sterling C. Evans Library, the archives contain records that have administrative or legal importance to the University. The archives have a copy of every A&M yearbook (the first one was produced in 1903), as well as issues of *The Battalion* dating

See Library/Page 13



Photo by Scott D. Weaver

Hundreds of books are returned to the Sterling C. Evans Library each day. The books in this

stack towering behind the circulation desk were all returned on Wed., May 3.



Photo by Scott D. Weaver

Jeff Millard refiles maps in the Sterling C. Evans Library map room, which is located on

the library's second floor. The map room contains nearly every type of world map.