

Interlibrary Loan Code—1940

IN 1939 the Association of College and Reference Libraries appointed a committee with Harold Russell, reference librarian of the University of Minnesota, as chairman, and Mary B. Brewster, Peyton Hurt, and Winifred Ver Nooy as other members, to study the Code of Practice for Interlibrary Loans, adopted in 1917, and recommend such changes as were necessary to bring it up to date. The discussion of the code by Harold Russell brings out many of these points.¹ After considerable correspondence and discussion of the changes the tentative draft of the code was published in March 1940.² Many librarians sent in their comments, which were carefully considered, and as far as possible the ideas were incorporated in the code which was then approved by the A.L.A. Council at the Cincinnati meeting in 1940. The revised code which appears below was first published in the *Library Journal*.³ It is printed in *College and Research Libraries* at the request of the Board of Directors of the A.C.R.L. Reprints may be secured for a nominal charge from the American Library Association, 520 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago.

1. Purpose

The primary purpose of the interlibrary loan service is to aid research calculated to advance the boundaries of knowledge by the loan of unusual books, after due provision has been made for the rights and convenience of the immediate constituents of the lending library.

It is often taken for granted that the needs of the graduate student should be met as a matter of course. But it would seem at least equally reasonable that the graduate student should choose his subject of study largely according to the means he has at hand. Not that he should be prevented from making use of an occasional interlibrary loan, but that his choice of a subject ought not to be such as to involve securing a large part of his material from a distant library.

Some libraries may find it desirable to lend material for other than research purposes to institutions within their own territory or toward which they may have some particular obligation. Such transactions should be considered as part of an extension service rather than as interlibrary loans.

¹ Russell, Harold. "The Interlibrary Loan Code." *A.L.A. Bulletin* 33:321-25, 354, May 1939.

² "Proposed Interlibrary Loan Code." *A.L.A. Bulletin* 34:199-200, 216, Mar. 1940.

³ "Revised Code." *Library Journal* 65:802-03, Oct. 1, 1940.

2. Scope

Almost any material possessed by a library, unless it has been acquired on terms which entirely preclude its loan, may be lent upon occasion to another library; and it may be assumed that all libraries are prepared to go as far as they reasonably can, or as their regulations permit, in lending to others. Still, the lender alone must decide in each case whether a particular loan should, or should not, be made.

When applying for a loan, librarians should state whether a photographic reproduction, photostat, photoprint, or microfilm would be a satisfactory substitute. In the case of microfilm, the type of reading equipment available should be indicated. Reproductions can frequently be obtained at small cost and have an advantage over an actual loan in that they become the property of the borrower; furthermore, manuscripts, very rare books, and newspapers are often not to be had in any other way. Assurance should be given, however, that full responsibility is assumed by the institution for which reproductions are made that they will be used in accordance with the provisions of copyright law. Libraries making reproductions should observe the provisions of the copyright law and the right of literary property.

3. *Material Which Should Not Be Requested*

Libraries ought not to ask to borrow: current fiction; books requested for a trivial purpose; books in print which can readily be purchased and for which there is a natural demand in the library which owns them. No material of any kind may be borrowed for class use.

4. *Material Which Will Be Lent Only under Exceptional Circumstances*

Libraries are usually unwilling to lend: material in constant use; books of reference; books which are not to be taken from the library except by special permission; material which by reason of its size or character requires expensive packing; material which by reason of age, delicate texture, or fragile condition, is likely to suffer from being sent by mail or express.

5. *Music*

Music is lent on the same conditions as books but, if copyrighted, must not be used for public performance, except as permission for such use is secured from the copyright proprietor.

6. *Manuscript Theses*

Manuscript theses which are uncopyrighted may require the consent of the authors or of the graduate school before they may be lent. When borrowed they should be used in such a way that the authors' rights are not infringed.

7. *Applications*

Libraries will apply to other institutions expected to possess the desired material in order of their relative distance from, or relative duty to, the community in which any particular request originates; the nearest library, whether in respect of duty or of distance, should be approached first. Some care may need to be taken, however, to avoid asking libraries of great size to assume an undue proportion of the interlibrary loan burden.

Unless it is known where desired material may be found, a regional union catalog or the Union Catalog in the Library of Congress ought to be consulted in order that useless correspondence may be avoided.

Application for loans of books should give the author's full name, or at least his surname correctly spelled and accompanied by initials, title accurately stated, volume number if in a set, date of publication, publisher, place of publication, and edition, if a particular one is desired. Applications for periodicals should cite the author and title of the article, the complete title of the magazine, the date of the issue, volume and page numbers. All citations ought to be verified; when this proves to be impracticable, the statement "Not Verified" ought to be made and a reference given to the source of the information. Applications should be typed on sheets of letter paper. All correspondence subsequent to the initial request should repeat the important parts of the original citation.

Applications for loans should state the name and status of the person for whose use the material is desired so that the lending institution may be helped in determining whether or not a loan may be made.

8. *Limit of Number of Volumes*

Each library must fix a limit for itself. It is highly desirable, however, that no greater number of volumes should be asked for at one time than could be used effectively in the customary loan period.

9. *Duration of the Loan*

This will vary with the nature and purpose of the loan. The time allowed will be stated in each case by the lender when a loan is made. Two weeks is, perhaps, an average period. The period is counted from the day the book reaches the borrower to the day when he returns it. An extension of time may usually be obtained for good reasons. An application for such an extension must be made early enough to permit an answer from the lending library to be received before the book's return is due. Arrangements may be made for an initial loan of a longer than usual period if circumstances seem to warrant it. The lender always reserves the right of summary recall.

10. *Notices of Receipt and Return*

Receipt of books borrowed should be acknowledged at once; and when books are
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1941-42:

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returned, notice should be sent by mail at the same time. Promptness in this respect is necessary to permit books to be traced if they go astray. Notice of return should state *author and title* of each book sent, the date of return, and conveyance, e.g., parcel post, prepaid express. The method of conveyance and the amount of insurance should correspond with that adopted by the lending library.

Books should be protected by cardboard and wrapped in heavy paper. The package should be marked INTERLIBRARY LOAN and addressed to the department or division from which the loan came.

11. *Expenses in Connection with Loans*

All expenses of carriage in both directions, and insurance, must be borne by the borrowing library which may properly seek reimbursement from its patrons. Some libraries make a charge to cover the cost of the service. This practice is justifiable, particularly when loans are made to commercial concerns or to individuals who intend to use the material borrowed for financial gain.

12. *Safeguards*

The borrowing library is bound by the conditions imposed by the lender; these it may not vary. When no conditions of use

have been made, it may be assumed that they have been left to the discretion of the borrowing library. In any case, the borrowing library will safeguard borrowed material as carefully as it would its own; and its librarian will require to be used within its own building whatever would be so treated, in the interest of safety, were the borrowing library its possessor.

13. *Responsibility of Borrowers*

The borrowing library must assume complete responsibility for the safety and prompt return of all material borrowed.

In case of actual loss in transit, the borrowing library should not only meet the cost of replacement, but should charge itself with the trouble of making it, unless the owner prefers to attend to the matter.

14. *Violations of the Code*

Disregard of any of the foregoing provisions, injury to books from use, careless packing, or detention of material beyond the time specified for its return, will be considered a sufficient reason for declining to lend in the future.

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