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**The Library Associates**

Join more than 6,000 other friends, book lovers, alumni, and faculty who recognize that the influence of a great research library reaches beyond the university it serves to the many communities of which it is a part.

Library Associates receive complimentary copies of the quarterly newsletter *Bene Legere*, as well as

## A Milestone for our Readers

A few months ago, UC Berkeley libraries reached the 10 million volumes mark. We have, by far, the largest collection in the West. An undergraduate, wishing to look at each of these books for just one minute and reading 8 hours a day, 7 days a week, would be nearly 80 years old by the time she left our libraries.



Thomas C. Leonard

The true test of a library is its richness and breadth, not its bulk. For the Cal freshman, no less than for the professor emeritus, reading is crossing boundaries and most things that are worth studying lead to unexpected places. Students of climate change, for instance, need more than the scientific data from earth sentiments and ice packs. They need the contemporary reports of the weather to be found in church and temple records, traveler tales, and

the accounts of harvests. Economists argue about the performance of school districts by pulling out maps and showing how topography influences learning. Art historians check out medical books to better understand the faces in pre-Columbian art. Scholarship on John Wayne dives into the *contraposto* pose of Renaissance statues.

The only limit on a library's collection should be the curiosity of its readers. We are here to tempt every taste and we should always suggest, "learn more." "Ten Million" is a proud boast because it backs up those words.

In an age of rapid communication, we do this in many other ways than in amassing books on campus. Fully 3.5 million of our volumes are shelved in a modern vault in Richmond and called back overnight, as needed by readers. In one purchase last year, we gained electronic access to every book published in Great Britain in the 18th century, making the contents fully searchable and delivering any page to a computer screen. The professionals in the Library (as well as the 600 students who works for us) are dedicated to access. Indeed, we have joined other UC campuses and attracted outside funding to digitize tens of thousands of our books in 2006 so they will be available to any reader on the internet.

To honor and inspire the readers at Cal, we are featuring ten works that we have acquired in the past year—a small window into their ten million choices.

invitations to special occasions at the Library. For more information on the Library Associates program, please write or telephone: The Library Development Office, Room 131 Doe Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-6000; telephone (510) 642-9377. Or, [check our website](#).

The blessing that Robert Gordon Sproul gave to our 2 millionth fits these selections as well today as when President Sproul spoke in 1955:

*One of the world's distinguished centers of learning has been developed here, largely because the foresight of the founders, the wisdom of the faculty, the planning of its administrators and Regents, and the generosity of donors have consistently combined to build, in a new land and a young university, one of the world's greatest collections of books.*

Thomas C. Leonard  
*Kenneth and Dorothy Hill University Librarian*

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