From Plugs to Bling
STUDENT FASHION ON DISPLAY

Cal men in their crushed "plug" hats, which were all the rage around 1900. "The more beat-up they were, the higher status they held," curator William Benemann comments.

This summer, examples from a hundred years of student fashion are parading through the display cases of the Bernice Layne Brown Gallery in Doe Library. The exhibit was curated by archivist William Benemann, whose decades-long history at UC Berkeley encompasses an array of roles as a student and a staff member.

"The minute I set foot on campus as a new freshman," Benemann says, "I felt for the first time in my life that I was where I was supposed to be. I knew I was home. And I've always felt that way."

Benemann earned his BA and MLS degrees from UC Berkeley. After serving at the libraries at Golden Gate University and Harvard, he returned to Berkeley as head of cataloguing at the Bancroft Library. A subsequent position as head of technical services at the Law Library gave rise to the creation of his current position as its archivist.
A GOOD DEED PUNISHED

A century ago, Andrew Carnegie offered to build a library in thousands of American communities if they would promise to support operations. More than 1600 libraries were built, to the delight of citizens: “It will be an inheritance for our boys and girls, it will be an object of pride to everyone, it will be a credit to the town, and it will stand forth as an emblem of culture and intelligence, a fountain at which everyone can drink.” For several generations now, young people who read their way through Carnegie Libraries (such as my wife) have been grateful.

But many towns turned down a free public library. Nearly half of the communities that applied in Carnegie’s home state of Pennsylvania never broke ground, and seven towns voted not to take the gift. What were they thinking?

It was possible to turn down a library with real feeling. Working-class Americans said there was a taint to Carnegie’s money, “wrung from the blood and tears of thousands of underpaid and underfed American toilers.” City fathers were bothered by a commitment to support the running of the library, year in and year out. Digging sewers, paving streets, and stringing electric lines were cited as higher priorities. Libraries could also fall in cultural wars. Libraries might be “simply a fad among the women” or “for women, for children, and idlers among men” and “a loafing place for boys and girls,” a few “rabid” critics of the Carnegie Library insisted.

A published survey of community leaders reaching out for Carnegie money around 1910 reveals barriers we have not yet risen above. I shall give modern names to these challenges for Victorian America: the messy desk and the scrum of helpers.

Correspondence got lost in small towns, confusing the civic builders no less than Carnegie’s aides. The great philanthropist’s staff did not get the hang of carbon paper and so when there was confusion, there were no copies. Bickering over architectural details was robust. Library boosters got in each other’s way and never agreed on next steps. Cryptic guidelines puzzled the good citizens on America’s Main Street who hoped to see a library materialize.

Newspapers in picture-perfect towns found “spite” and “personal enmities” defeating Carnegie’s good deed. In one Indiana village, library friends collected signatures to petition Carnegie to fund a library on their site and to withhold dollars for the site favored by other library boosters. The Hoosiers did build their library, 47 years later. The record for missed chances may be in Columbia, Tennessee, whose oldest civic festival is Mule Day. Columbia went 53 years from declining Carnegie to opening a library.

This happened in villages smaller than Berkeley’s population of graduate students and teaching faculty, often smaller, even, than the folks in one field on our campus. It is a wonder that Berkeley libraries, though not built quickly, have triumphed over the forces that stopped Carnegie.

Beginning with Doe Memorial Library, built in the same years that Carnegie was most active, and ending with the C. V. Starr East Asian Library that welcomed its first readers this spring, Berkeley has got the job done. On some days, we have noticed that the messy desk and the scrum of helpers hold us back, but we would not trade for what Carnegie ran into.

Thomas C. Leonard
Kenneth and Dorothy Hill University Librarian

Quotations are from Carnegie Denied: Communities Rejecting Carnegie Library Construction Grants 1898-1925, edited by Robert Sidney Martin.
Over the years, Benemann’s library and archival responsibilities have dovetailed with his work as a historian. Daily access to one of the world’s great library collections, coupled with his lively curiosity about the day-to-day lives of people in the past, has inspired two books. The first was a collection of Gold Rush-era manuscripts published as *A Year of Mud and Gold: San Francisco in Letters and Diaries, 1849-1850* (University of Nebraska Press, 1999). Next was *Male-Male Intimacy in Early America: Beyond Romantic Friendships* (Harrington Park Press, 2006).

“Absolutely fascinating” is how Benemann describes his work as archivist for the Law School. Through detective work and networking, he locates archival publications and photos, memorabilia, clothing, and student newsletters, and finds ways to “both get people to value their own past—and to give it away.”

Very popular with Doe Library visitors, “From Plugs to Bling: A Century of Cal Student Fashion” illustrates Benemann’s understanding of how history is embodied in artifacts. In the comments book available in the gallery, visitors from Vienna, Cameroon, Norway, and Italy — as well as closer to home — have noted their delight in the exhibit.

One of the six “plugs” or top hats on display belonged to the young Robert Sproul, who later served as president of the University of California from 1930 to 1958. Also on display are the bright yellow drum major’s uniform, affectionately known as “the banana jacket,” from the 1959 Rose Bowl; a 1930s women’s swimsuit; and a 1898 athletic sweater with the letter “C” that belonged to football player and bohemian writer James Hopper.

One exhibit case includes an enlarged copy of a 1913 disciplinary report that a female student received for wearing too much make-up and suggestive clothing. She was asked to remove her make-up and lower her hemline because she was distracting law students as she walked past Boalt Hall.

**GOT CAL?**

Interested in donating your special memorabilia to Cal? Let the University Archives staff know what you have, and they will consider adding selected items to the permanent collections. For more information contact David Farrell (510/643-9498; dfarrell@library.berkeley.edu) or Kathi Neal (510/642-8173; kneal@library.berkeley.edu). For Law School materials, contact William Benemann (510/642-8722; benemann@law.berkeley.edu).

William Benemann at the “From Plugs to Bling” exhibit he curated in Doe Library’s Brown Gallery. The exhibit, which runs through August 29, has proven immensely popular with students, Bay Area media, and visitors to campus.
UCB “Lifer” Exults in its Library

GEORGE BRESLAULER ON “THE LIBRARY’S ROLE IN MY LIFE AT BERKELEY”

I will not talk in generalities about UC Berkeley’s magnificent libraries, for I know I would be telling you nothing you don’t already know. And I will not laud the breadth, depth, and quality of Berkeley’s collections, or the extremely high quality of our colleagues who staff the libraries, for I know I would be preaching to the converted.

Nor will I talk about the Library as the laboratory for humanists and many social scientists, for that is a task for another day.

So let me instead speak a bit about the role of the Library in my research life during my 36 years at UC Berkeley. In 1971, I was an acting assistant professor, still working on my dissertation. My focus was contemporary Soviet politics; specifically, I was seeking to understand the leadership strategies employed by Khrushchev and Brezhnev in their efforts to tackle the problems facing the USSR at home and abroad.

Here at Berkeley, I found an extraordinarily complete collection of materials. First was the vast array of books and journals in English, many of which I tapped in order to understand the technical aspects of the problems facing Khrushchev and Brezhnev as they sought to reform agriculture, rationalize industry, build a modern military, manage societal pressures, and engage abroad with both friends and enemies. For this purpose, roaming the stacks and poring through the card catalogue was the name of the game, during which I came across many book-length gems that deepened my understanding of these issues.

To understand how Khrushchev and Brezhnev perceived these issues, and how they sought to justify their leadership and the solutions they proposed, I was blessed, here at the Library, with an enormous collection of Russian-language books from the Soviet Union, including all the documentary volumes of party congresses and meetings of the central committee of the communist party that the censors allowed to be published, and also the collected volumes of Khrushchev’s and Brezhnev’s speeches. In addition, I consulted the Soviet daily newspapers, Pravda, Izvestiya, and others, including local and regional newspapers from within the USSR and its republics. These were all available in a room in which I could get microfilmed copies of entire years and decades of each newspaper.

My research in the University Library was a challenging but exhilarating experience. I was transported by all these works and sources onto the ground in the Soviet Union, and into the minds of the leaders of that country. The Slavic librarians helped me when help was needed. They were like faculty colleagues, having publication credentials of their own, and exceptionally eager to assist the faculty with their research. The dissertation eventually turned into a book — after much additional research — a book written on an electric typewriter with carbon paper!

Later, I became especially interested in the intellectual history of my field: western Sovietology. This was not a matter of research in Russian sources. Rather, it entailed going...
back through the journals and books in my field from the 1950s and 1960s in order to understand the dominant ways of thinking during those formative years of the field. Oh, what a pleasure it was to roam through the stacks and to read systematically through two decades of issues of the leading journals in my field, with names like *Problems of Communism*, *Slavic Review*, *Soviet Studies*, and others! How fortunate I was to be at a university that had been collecting so systematically in my field for so many decades!

We have, since the mid-1990s, turned the corner sharply and determinedly into the digital age. Today the Library provides Berkeley's students, faculty, and staff with both the traditional delights of research within its walls and with easy access, from a distance, to databases, research reports, and online journal articles. For the social scientist, the basic method of scientific analysis remains the same, but the Library makes it ever more convenient to search materials from the comfort of your home. I would never trade away the opportunity to roam the stacks in search of unexpected nuggets. But it is wonderfully convenient to have such a broad menu of choices for how to access hidden knowledge.

Today, as Provost, I take great pride in what we have built here at Berkeley: the finest library of any public university in the world. And as a UC Berkeley lifer, I am deeply grateful that I have always had such a magnificent resource at my disposal.
A brand-new library opened its doors to the first users this spring — the C. V. Starr East Asian Library. Its position facing Doe Memorial Library across Memorial Glade fulfills one of John Galen Howard’s aspirations for the campus he designed at the turn of the 20th century.

With Doe Library “as the intellectual center of the University” established at the heart of the budding campus, Howard conceived of a major building balancing it on the north side of the axis on Observatory Hill — just where the Starr Library sits today.

With its massive bronze screen evoking Asian latticework, the new library balances the imposing Greco-Roman neoclassicism of Doe Library. The counterpoint is especially apt, given the global nature of scholarship and research today.

The Starr Library unites under one roof vast collections assembled by the university over the past century that have been housed at several locations on and off campus. Now, students and other scholars will have easier and faster access to one of the top East Asian library collections in the United States.

These collections contain more than 900,000 volumes, primarily in Chinese, Japanese and Korean. The Starr Library houses thousands of manuscripts, rubbings of stone and bronze objects and of inscriptions, and the largest and most valuable collection of historic Japanese maps outside of Japan.
The new library also incorporates UC Berkeley’s Center for Chinese Studies Library, the largest academic repository in the United States of materials on the People’s Republic of China.

The new library is named for the late Cornelius Vander Starr, an insurance pioneer with a deep interest in Asia who studied at UC Berkeley as an undergraduate. An $8 million gift from the C. V. Starr Foundation was pivotal in the library’s fundraising success. More than 1,200 individuals also contributed to the $46.4 million library, which was funded entirely by private donations. Many donors gave in honor of the late Chang-Lin Tien, UC Berkeley’s seventh chancellor, the first Asian American to head a major U.S. research university.

The Starr Library collections support faculty and students in Berkeley’s programs in East Asian studies, which have been ranked first in the nation by the U.S. Department of Education.

Find more photos and details about the Starr Library, including a video and a slideshow of treasures from the collection, at www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2008/03/14_cvstarr.shtml

“...”
Making Friends with the Distant Past
NEW BOOK PORTRAYS LIBRARY’S EAST ASIAN COLLECTIONS

*Impressions of the East* was published last fall by Heyday Books, to coincide with the dedication of the C. V. Starr East Asian Library. The lavishly produced book serves as a comprehensive introduction to the wealth of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean rare materials housed in the Starr Library, as well as to the literary and artistic history of the cultures that produced them.

Rudolph, who manages editorial and administrative services at Starr Library, grew up among a vast personal collection of East Asian materials owned by her father, Richard Rudolph. He was chair of what was then named the Department of Oriental Languages at UCLA, whose East Asian Library is named after him. He was also a passionate book collector.

Growing up, Rudolph heard innumerable stories about her father’s exciting new acquisitions and favorite volumes. He was such an ardent book buyer that the incoming books outpaced available shelving; Rudolph recalls the guesthouse behind their home being occupied by hundreds of books stored on every available surface, including the bathroom sink!

Her father’s zeal was clearly transmitted to Rudolph. Pacing through some of her favorites in *Impressions of the East*, she pauses at the Japanese woodblocks, commenting how “each illustration is more charming and interesting than the next.” Of a thirty-foot handscroll, she says “you can just get lost in it.” With a perspective that mingles scholarly precision with warm appreciation, she was clearly the ideal person to author this book.

With that in mind, it’s even more impressive to learn that her education encompasses law (JD from Berkeley) as well as library school (MLS from UCLA) and classical

“The pleasantest of all diversions is to sit alone under the lamp, a book spread out before you, and to make friends with people of a distant past you have never known,” the medieval Japanese priest Kenkō writes in his *Essays in Idleness*. Readers of *Impressions of the East: Treasures from the C. V. Starr East Asian Library*, University of California, Berkeley can readily imagine the pleasure taken by author Deborah Rudolph in compiling the exquisite color woodblock prints, scrolls, manuscripts, rubbings, and maps included in her lovingly detailed volume.
Starr Library staff member Deborah Rudolph, author of *Impressions of the East*. The book’s photography and design were generously contributed by Diana Chen ’87, founder of SF Digital Studio. Published by Heyday Books, the volume recently won the “Notable Contribution to Publishing” prize from the Commonwealth Club.

Chinese (MA and PhD from Berkeley). Her doctoral dissertation focused on Song dynasty travelogue.

Rudolph has a special appreciation for the stories behind the books and their owners. One volume she was working with turned out to have been owned by her husband’s father, a well-known book collector based in Japan. In fact, many of the books bear two or three seals from various well-known owners — antiquarians, scholars, collectors — enabling the reader of today to draw connections back through culture and history.

Want to learn more?
Join the EAL newsletter mailing list by emailing give@library.berkeley.edu or phoning 510/642-9377.
Recalling the archival research she did for her Library Prize-winning paper, Cécile Evers (’07) speaks of “the magic of touching original documents. As I study them, I’m always amazed that I have access to texts that were penned on this very paper by scribes hundreds of years ago.”

Cécile won a Library Prize for Undergraduate Research for her honors thesis on “Slave Language Acquisition in the 18th Century, Gobernación of Chocó, Colombia.” The multidisciplinary project examines the linguistic aspects of slavery in the Colombian Pacific region, drawing on resources in history, linguistics, and anthropology.

Her initial research was conducted at the Bancroft Library at Berkeley, using a collection of Colombian slave trade documents. History professor William Taylor, with whom Cécile had taken a graduate seminar in historiography, tutored her in how to read the colonial Spanish of these 17th and 18th century manuscripts. This was invaluable preparation for her research at the national archives in Colombia, which she visited over a winter break from Cal. She also consulted resources in the Moffitt and Anthropology Libraries on campus, as well as the Gardner stacks in Doe Library.

The research for Cécile Evers’ Library Prize-winning paper called on many of her languages, including French, Spanish, and Portuguese. She has also studied Arabic and Wolof, the language most widely spoken in Senegal. Her 2007 B.A. is in International and Area Studies, with a minor in Linguistics. Cécile hopes to pursue either a career in diplomacy and foreign relations, or a doctoral degree in Atlantic History.

“I love the whole research process,” Cécile says, “hunting for books, being in the library, and so on....”
These two images show the growth of the London plane trees on the Campanile Esplanade. The trees were planted in 1915, after being shipped across the Bay from San Francisco’s just-closed Panama-Pacific International Exhibition. Most notable for their pruning, or pollarding — a technique of trimming new growth back to the ends of the main branches each year — these striking trees also line Sproul Plaza.

WANT MORE TREES?
View the famous Wheeler oak and the dawn redwood, among others, on the slideshow at berkeley.edu/news/multimedia/2004/01/map.swf

“I love the whole research process,” Cécile says, “hunting for books, being in the library, and so on. I got so immersed in the project that I had over 135 books checked out to me during my work on it!” By exploring a given book’s bibliography, new research directions would open up — “an invaluable and never-ending chain of journal articles, books, and maps, tantalizingly replete with citations.”

The originality of Cécile’s research was confirmed when she was invited to present at a 2007 linguistics conference in Amsterdam, the only undergraduate thus honored.
A green thought in a green shade

A sunbathing couple catches up on their reading while soaking up the springtime sun in Faculty Glade. In the foreground is the campus’s venerable California buckeye; planted in 1882, it shows its age but carries on — blooming profusely each year in early summer. Last year, the tree hosted six of Berkeley’s seven living Nobel laureates for a photo that ran in Vanity Fair’s “Green Issue.” The magazine saluted UC Berkeley’s tremendous scientific brilliance, and characterized it as “the nation’s premier academic institution for the discovery and delivery of alternative energy.”

berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2007/04/10_vf.shtml