

# Libraries Questioned in Search for Unabomber

Ron Chepesiuk

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Investigators are asking four university libraries for help in capturing the serial bomber known as the Unabomber. The FBI says it has contacted the Northwestern University, Brigham Young University, University of Chicago/Illinois, and University of California/Berkeley libraries to see if the Unabomber checked out four books that he cited in his recent 35,000-word anti technological manifesto.

The books are *The Ancient Engineers* by L. Sprague de Camp, *Chinese Political Thought in the Twentieth Century* by Chester C. Tan, *The True Believer* by Eric Hoffer, and *Violence in America: Historical and Comparative Perspectives*, coedited by Hugh Davis Graham and Ted Robert.

Officials at two of the libraries already contacted by the FBI say they were of little help in the hunt for the serial bomber who has eluded capture for 17 years.

“Once we discharge a book, the patron’s I.D. is no longer associated with it, so we don’t have any circulation records,” explained Bob Daugherty, head of the circulation library at the University of Illinois/Chicago.

“The FBI would need a subpoena to look at circulation records, but even if they did that we couldn’t help them,” said. Robert Michaelson, head of Northwestern’s Science and Engineering Library. “We only have circulation files for books that are currently checked out.”

When the FBI asked the Northwestern Library the date it acquired *The Ancient Engineers*, Michaelson sent the agency a fax informing them that the library bought the book in 1963. “I told the FBI I doubted the information would be useful,” Michaelson explained. “It is a common book that has been reprinted many times. The Unabomber could have found it in a bookstore, public library...anywhere.”

Michaelson added that the FBI inquiry may have revealed more about its investigation than it did about the Unabomber. “I told the FBI official about an article in the *Summer Northwestern* [a student newspaper] that revealed Thomas Tyler [a University of California/Berkeley professor who has received letter bombs from the Unabomber] was formerly on the Northwestern faculty. It was my impression that the agent didn’t know about Tyler’s association with Northwestern.”

—Ron Chepesiuk, *AL* contributing editor

A critique of his ideas & actions.



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