

## Ten Commandments

Ah, the beginning of a new academic year. Fresh new faces, entering the law library eager for knowledge. A new crop of student library assistants to train. The annual revision of the *Circulation Manual*, which desk workers must revere and obey, lest they incur my wrath. Sitting here at my computer spewing "do and don't," "always and never," and "only with a librarian's

permission," I wonder about myself. Have I become a tyrant, a dictator? Is it "my way or the highway?" A revelation comes to me—I could be even worse! Delirious from hours spent staring at the screen trying to anticipate and legislate every possible circulation scenario, I climb to the top of the Desk to hand down:

### The Circulation Ten Commandments

1

I am the Circulation Librarian, which brought you out of the land of unemployment, into the house of research. Thou shalt have no other librarians before me.

2

Thou shalt not allow patrons to use the Circulation Desk Phone for any reason, even if "it's only for a minute."

3

Remember the telephone conversation, to keep it professional.

4

Honor thy Circulation Librarian, that thy days may be long upon the Circulation Desk which she hath given thee.

5

Thou shalt put the patron first. Conversations with co-workers shall cease immediately if a patron walks up to the desk, and the patron shall receive your full attention.

6

Thou shalt not allow patrons other than faculty members behind the Circulation Desk without a librarian's explicit permission. (The librarians shall not give permission except in special circumstances!)

7

Thou shalt not hand any reserve material to a patron without first checking the item(s) out to the patron.

8

Thou shalt not use the Circulation PC for *anything* other than library business.

9

Thou shalt not eat or drink at the Circulation Desk.

10

Thou shalt not try to explain the law against perpetuities, but refer patrons with questions to the Reference Librarian; thou shalt not transfer calls to the Reference Librarian's voice mail, but offer to take a message for the next available Reference Librarian.



Of course, these are just the basics, the foundation for a whole body of library laws and regulations, but maybe these new student workers will get the idea until I can write down the rest. Right now the

nice university police officer is asking me to please climb down and take a walk with him. I guess I have time for that before starting on my next project, *Circulation in a Nutshell*.

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