No food, no drinks

Food + drinks in libraries = pests + damage. Librarians everywhere are concerned with this problem: patrons who bring in food and drinks that attract pests that destroy library materials. One solution to the problem is a “No food, No drinks” campaign.

The Henry Madden Library at California State University, Fresno, has fought the good fight for several years with a continuing campaign using various poster designs and messages, ranging from an Uncle Sam finger pointing caricature of Library Dean Michael Gorman declaring “I want YOU to stop eating and drinking in the library” to Winnie the Pooh with a honey pot stuck on his head.

The success of such a poster campaign is hard, if not impossible, to gauge, but the most recent one apparently made some impression on the patrons of the Madden Library, if theft of the posters is any indication.

The popular posters depicted two well-known campus coaches and the (Bulldog) mascot. Besides appealing to the recognition factor of the subjects, the posters projected a sense of campus community spirit—that everyone uses, and should therefore help care for the library.

The athletic “celebrity” posters, with a variety of captions, lend a lighter, more friendly, chiding tone to the stern “No food, No drinks” admonition.

Photographs were obtained through the campus Sports Information Office; permission to use the images (with photo credits) was granted by that office and the coaches after mock-ups of the posters were submitted.

Twelve posters were placed throughout the four-story library; five posters were stolen. No other posters in the library’s campaign have proven to be as attention-getting. We can only hope that the real message—that food and drinks should not be consumed in a library—was appreciated, as well.

Notes
1. Basketball coach Jerry Tarkanian with his trademark towel-biting gesture. Captions included “The library’s out of bounds to eating and drinking” and “Foul! No eating or drinking allowed.”
2. Olympic Gold Medalist and softball coach Margie Wright blowing bubble gum on the sidelines.
3. Time out, the Bulldog mascot, pointing a big foam finger.

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