

# On-line catalogue

by Tom Wilson

Instead of lining up to use one of the library's microfiche machines, students can now line up to use one of the library's new computers.

The U of A Library is testing a computerized system designed to make the search for books easier.

Currently, there are more than 1.3 million titles in the libraries, and roughly 10 per cent of these titles are now available in the On-Line system, according to Jim Heilik, head of library systems. "We're just trying out the

system now," says Heilik.

The headings on the computer are the same as on the microfiche system: Author, Title and Subject. The difference is that the computer makes it easier to locate a book. There is even a "help" button (pf14) that will display the instructions for operating the terminal for those of us who are not in computing science.

The testing began in the Education library in October, 1982, and is now being tested in Rutherford and in Cameron

libraries. "It's faster and easier than the microfiche system," says Heilik.

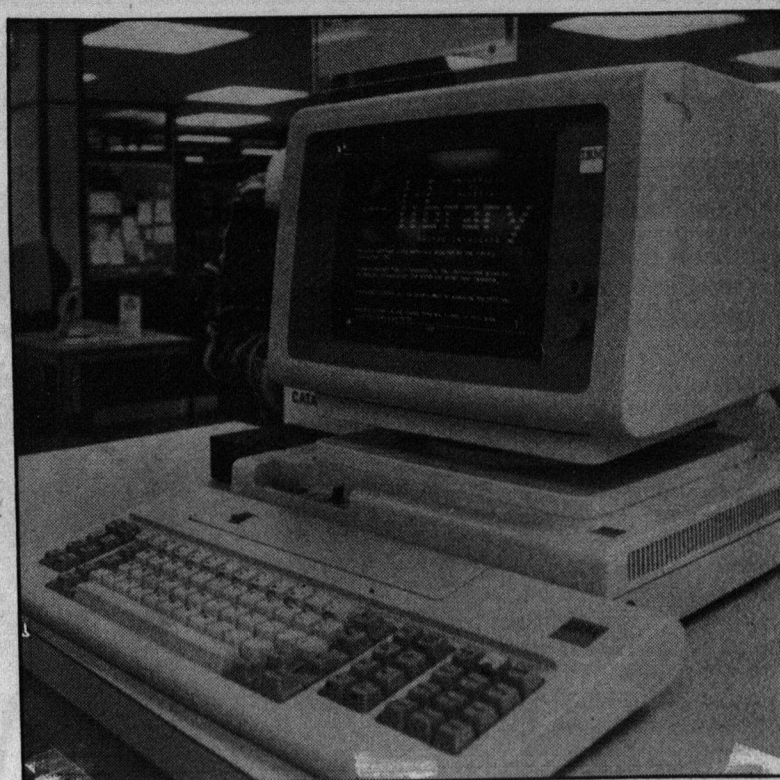
Presently, the system is only being tested as a fast and simple way of finding a book, but it has a number of valuable uses.

The University of Calgary uses the On-Line system to monitor the circulation of library books. The system can also be used to catalog and new shipment of books so that "the instant we receive a new book it can be typed into the computer and a minute later it is made available to the student."

The only problem with this system, according to Heilik, is that the system is too fast. The compensate for the computer's speed, a one week delay has been built into the computer, so that the library staff has had enough time to place the book in its proper location.

During the testing of the system there has been a problem with the IBM terminals and the underground wiring system. There are other minor problems that Heilik expects can be solved with the proper attention and a little time.

"It's a European system and they do things differently than we do (in North America)." The system is called the DOBIS system and was developed by Dortmund Bibliothek System at the



One of Cameron Libraries new computer terminals surveys its surroundings.

## Science threatened

OTTAWA (CUP) — Inadequate funding is threatening the future of Canada's scientific community says the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council president.

"It is critical that NSERC get increased funding for employment training to ensure the future health of the scientific community in Canada," Gordon McNabb said recently at the University of B.C.

NSERC received no funding increase from the federal government last year, McNabb said.

McNabb said NSERC needs additional funding because some programs were launched under the assumption more money would be added continually to further programs.

NSERC funds the training of scientists, engineers and researchers purchases of equipment and research operating grants.

NSERC provided \$19 million to the University of B.C. for 1983-84 — a sum only exceeded by the University of Toronto, McNabb said.

He said one negative aspect of static funding will be limits on the amount institutes may give to foreign students for research.

To ease the funding squeeze McNabb also suggested undergraduates should be placed in industrial labs for training rather than at universities.

About 1,500 students work in university labs while only 300 currently work in industrial labs.

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Leuven University in Belgium, the centre of library research in Europe.

The DOBIS system is a valuable and versatile system but it comes with a price tag. When asked if he foresaw any opposition to implementing the system on a full scale, Heilik replied: "Oh sure. This is expensive."

Each IBM terminal costs \$5000 and one hundred terminals would be needed to handle the demand of students looking for books.

"The decision has to be made this fiscal year," says Heilik, and although he believes that the DOBIS system is invaluable to Library Sciences, he is not getting his hopes too high.

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