

Consult the Cat

by Shannon Roy, Editor

While the Kansas Legislature recently passed legislation making it illegal to carry a concealed weapon into a library, some librarians have asked about the status of Kansas law regarding unconcealed weapons and whether it is legal to bring them into the library.



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The Cat has lived in places where rifles and shotguns and large knives were hauled around like candy bars and were just about as threatening, since they were being carried by friends and neighbors. She has also lived in places where such behavior would cause considerable concern, to say the least. In her present workplace, the State Capitol, nothing resembling a weapon would ever make it past the entrance. Context is obviously important when considering this issue.

The Cat's neighbor and colleague, Marc Galbraith, recently addressed this question in the State Library's new Law for Librarians Blog. If you haven't looked at this excellent resource, you might want to go to:

<http://lawforlibrarians.blogspot.com>

Marc answered the question this way.

The short answer to this question is that Kansas statutes are silent with regard to unconcealed weapons.

That means there is no state law that makes it illegal to carry an unconcealed weapon in Kansas; therefore, it is presumably legal to carry a firearm or gun on your person, so long as it is visible.

The longer answer to this question is that local governments can regulate such activity by ordinance. Generally speaking then, the question of whether it is legal or illegal to carry an unconcealed weapon or firearm in a library has to be answered at the local level. In fact, a number of cities in Kansas have passed such ordinances. Libraries should inquire with their local city attorney, or prosecutor, as to whether their city has such an ordinance.