

Harry Potter and the academic business library

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Introduction

In 2015, most of the students in UBC's first-year cohort were born in 1997—the year the first *Harry Potter* novel was published. That fall, UBC Library's Rare Books and Special Collections' (RBSC) acquisition of several first editions in the beloved series provided a unique opportunity to introduce students to rare materials at the Library through a two-month exhibition: *Harry Potter and the Rain City*.

Exhibition Goals

- 1) Cross-unit collaboration
- 2) Expose Rare Books and Special Collections to a wider audience
- 3) Expose business students to UBC's wider collections and branches

Multi-branch Exhibition

The exhibition was spread across three UBC Library branches:

- David Lam Management Research Library & Canaccord Learning Commons
- Koerner Library
- Music, Art and Architecture Library

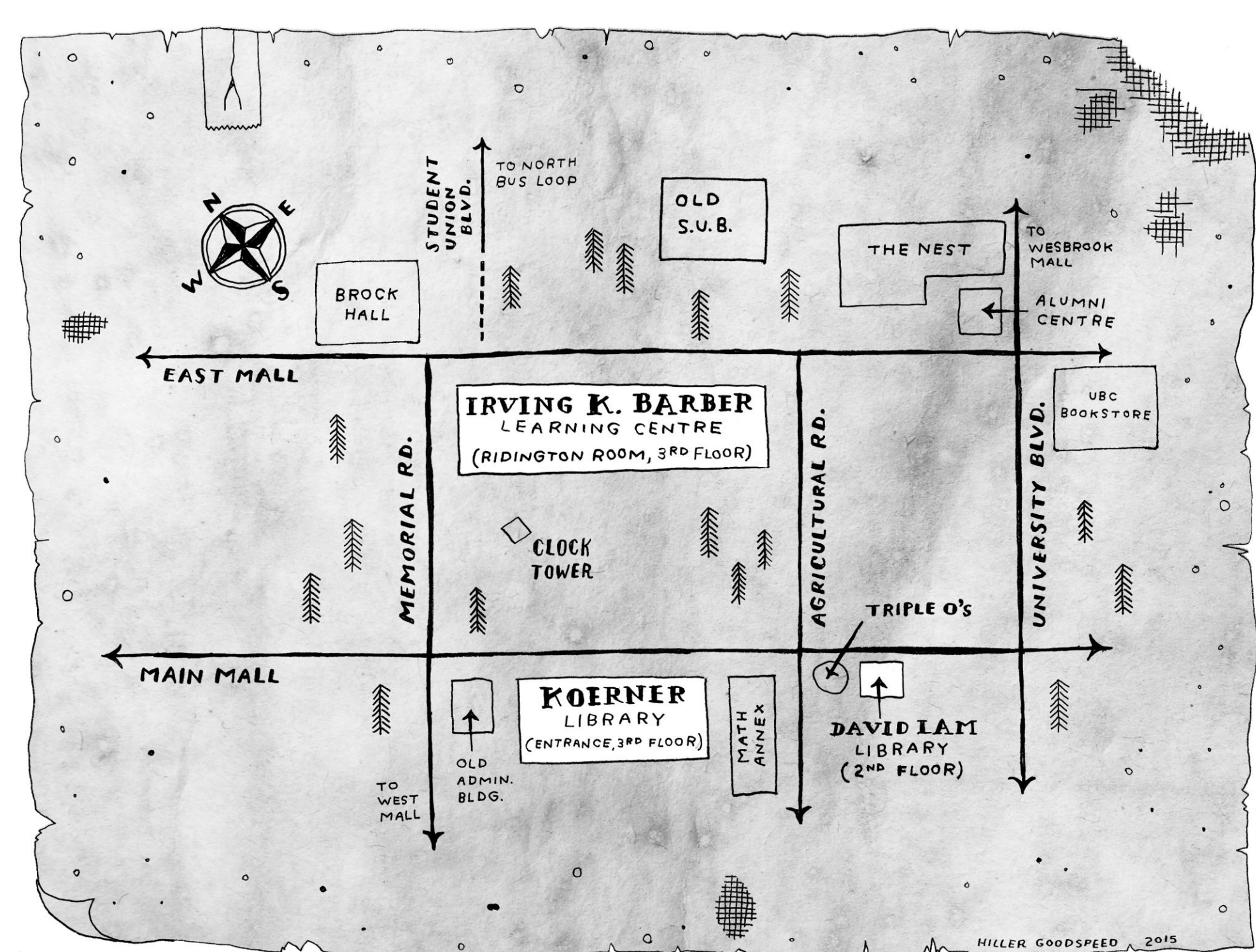
Halloween Parties

Two well-attended Harry Potter-themed Halloween parties were hosted by RBSC: one for students and one for librarians and staff.



Marauder's Map

A custom-made Marauder's Map of the exhibition locations created by a student library assistant helped direct visitors.



David Lam Display

Harry Potter book series has had significant impact on several industries, contributing to profits and growth, and inspiring products and innovation. The David Lam Library and Canaccord Learning Commons display featured first editions, as well as stories and memorabilia from the Vancouver business community, exploring the impact and legacy of the series. This display featured:

- Five exhibition cases
- Two framed quilts
- An audio-visual display
- Documents from local businesses

The exhibition cases contained signed, first edition books, and primary materials and anecdotes from local businesses who were all impacted by the *Harry Potter* phenomenon. Some of these businesses include:

- *Raincoast Books*, the Canadian publisher of the series
- *Kidsbooks*, the first Canadian bookstore to carry *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. It hosted extremely successful book launch events in Vancouver
- *Friesens*, the Canadian book binder
- *Just Imagine*, a local costume retailer

Colloquium

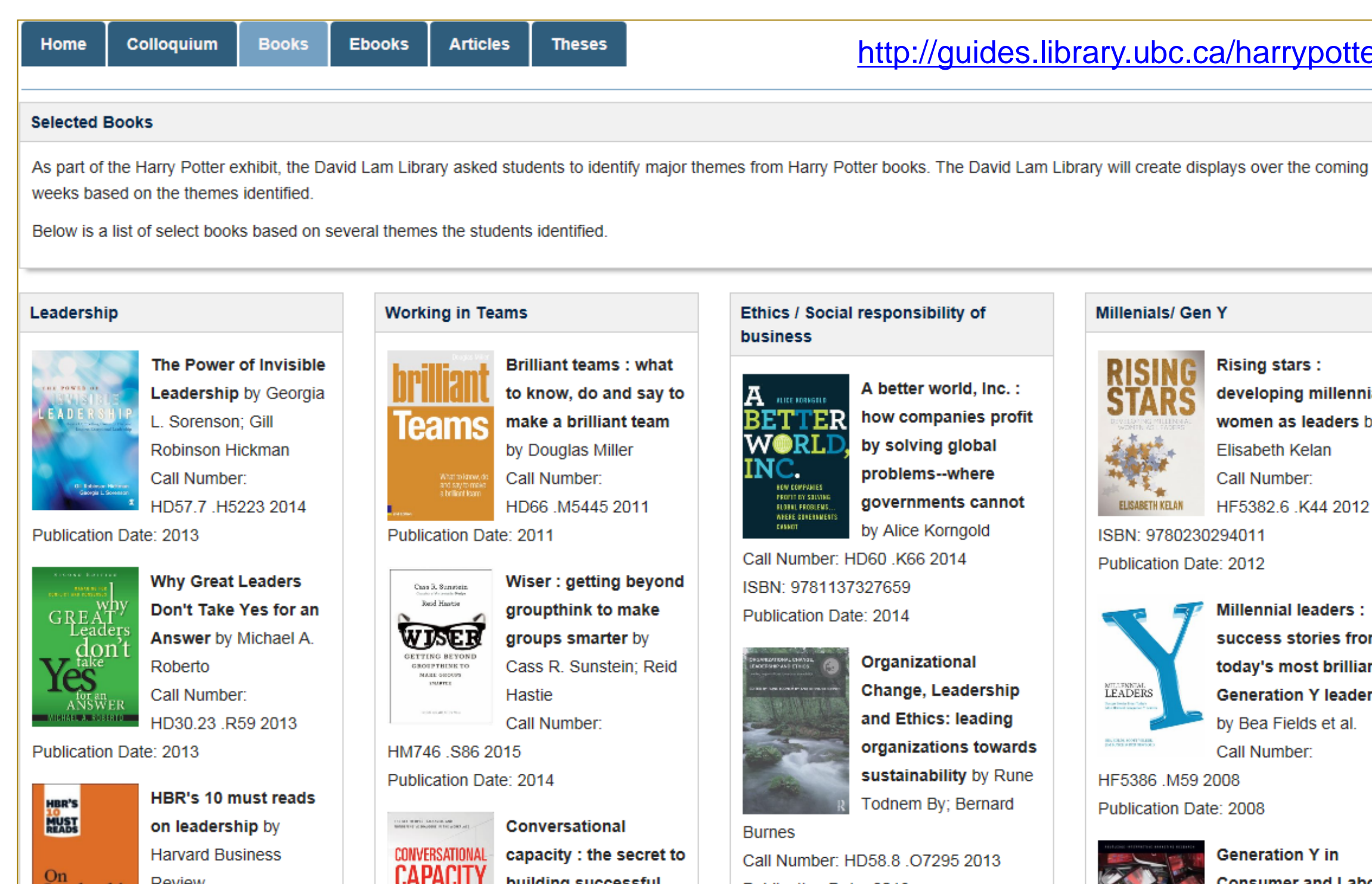
David Lam Library hosted an interdisciplinary colloquium which took place at the Sauder School of Business. It explored the impact and influence of the *Harry Potter* series on local businesses and people. There were 5 speakers including:

- Three UBC academics
- Two business owners

Research Guide

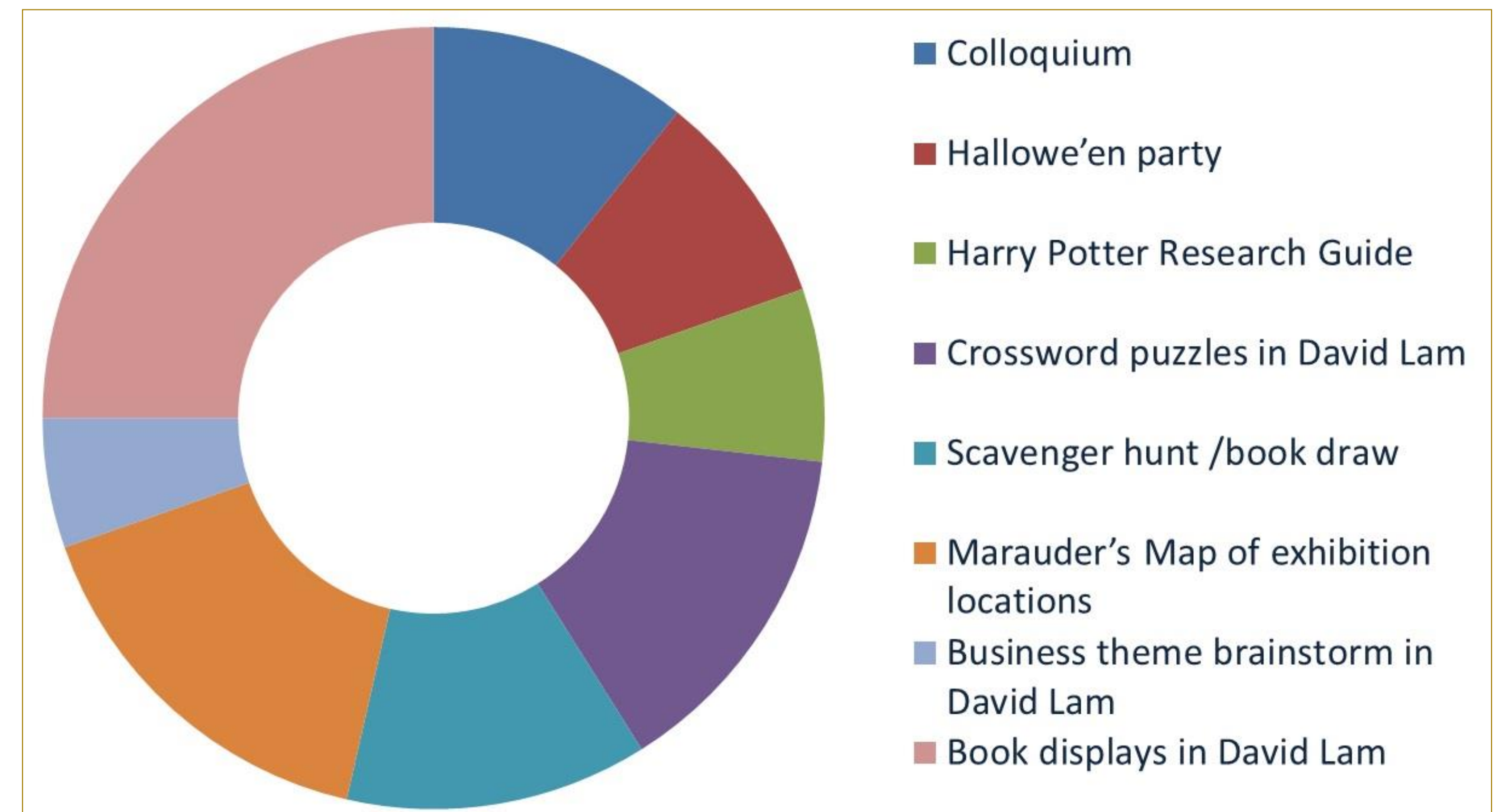
Irena Trebic created an online research guide exploring the connections between student-identified themes in the books and the collection at David Lam Management Research Library.

Harry Potter at David Lam Library: Books



Programming

Participation in programming at David Lam Library



Librarians and staff in the David Lam Library recognized the potential of this series as an engagement tool with students and community members.

As part of the David Lam Library display, students were asked to identify major business-related themes from *Harry Potter* books and write them on a poster. Visually appealing thematic book displays were then created to enhance the discoverability of our collection. These displays illustrated the student-identified themes including leadership, teamwork, diversity and inclusion, ethics, and millennials.



Staff-developed crosswords and word-search puzzles, as well as a scavenger hunt which encouraged students to engage with the exhibition's interpretive text, answer questions, and then submit the completed quiz for a book prize drawing were also available.

Survey

- 17 questions
- Administered over two weeks
- Print and online via FluidSurveys
- Four months after the exhibition

Goals were to:

- Discover whether the exhibition and programming had changed respondents' perceptions of David Lam Library, RBSC, or UBC Library.
- Assess whether David Lam Library respondents felt the exhibition and programming were relevant to their studies at UBC.
- Determine if the exhibition and programming had increased respondents' visits to or awareness of the different UBC Library branches.

Results and Discussion

- 33 responses (19 paper; 14 online)
- 58% recall having visited the exhibition
- 56% of visits ➡ David Lam Library
- 48% felt the exhibition was relevant to their studies at UBC

David Lam Library was perceived as being more fun, interactive, and casual as a result of the exhibition. There was no significant change in perception for RBSC or UBC Library as a whole.

The purpose of the exhibition was not well understood by all respondents. Many did not understand why there was a Harry Potter exhibit in a business library. Although the displays contained memorabilia from local businesses, students didn't always engage with the interpretive text. Efforts in the future should be made to make themes easily accessible at a glance for students who don't have time to read the labels.

Acknowledgement

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