

From Inside the DLSEF

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Many of you have by now received a free copy of *Library Statistics: A Preliminary Report on Academic Libraries, 1966-67*. The thirty-eight-page report groups selected libraries by public and private control, further subdivided by universities, other four-year institutions with graduate programs, four-year institutions without graduate programs, and two-year institutions. Within each of these eight groups, institutions were listed by four geographic regions.

The staff of the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) of the Office of Education selected 395 libraries which could be considered representative of all types of academic libraries and manually edited the reports, prepared the tables for publication, and pressured the printer for priorities. These heroic efforts were in response to ACRL members' insistence that they need data on the past academic year by January in order to prepare and justify budget requests for the following fiscal year. On December 22 the NCES Statisticians were hard at work in spite of Christmas coming on!

The final report of this survey will be issued later in the year. In addition to data for all of the individual libraries that have reported, it will contain summary statistical tables. In these, the OE hopes to represent all academic libraries by including estimated data for those libraries not responding to the HEGIS (Higher Education General Information Survey) questionnaire.

In the meantime, the NCES has offered to supplement the library data on individual institutions not included in the preliminary report if you request statistics on ten or fewer libraries and the request is accompanied by an explanation of the need for these particular institutions' data, so that the staff can develop a more responsive sample in the event that this type of publication is issued next year. This offer was communicated to ALA and was publicized at the recent Midwinter meetings.

If your library has not already received a copy of the Preliminary Report . . . , it should be arriving shortly. Requests for statistics of

libraries not included in it should be addressed to:

Director
Division of Statistical Operations
National Center for Educational Statistics
U.S. Office of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

Last year's report, *Library Statistics of Colleges and Universities, 1965-66: Institutional Data*, issued in March 1967, resulted from a grant to the Library Administration Division of the American Library Association (ALA-LAD) by OE's Bureau of Research. Since the grant did not include funds for publications, ALA-LAD agreed to underwrite this phase of the project on the basis that the printing costs would be recovered from sales of the report, at \$3.50 a copy.

All this background may be familiar to most of you. However, the almost daily requests that we receive for last year's report and refer to the ALA indicate that some of you did not read the September 1966 *ACRL News* very carefully. ■■

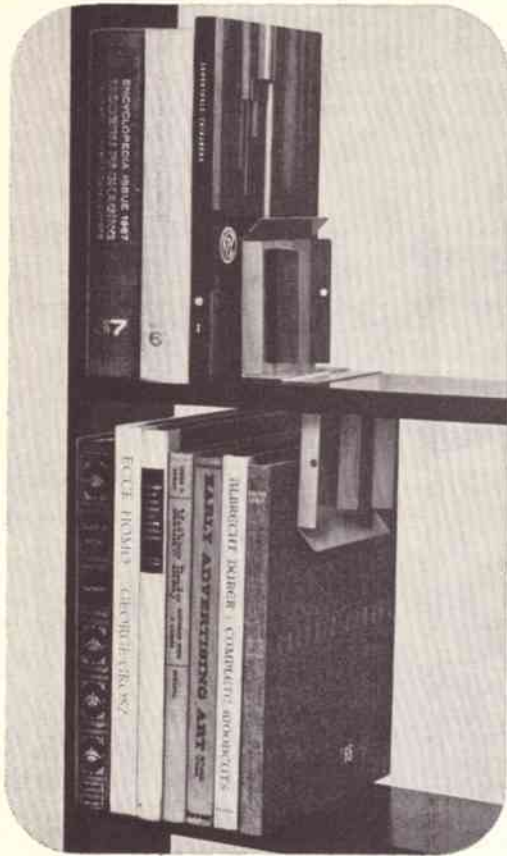
LIBRARY STATISTICS

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The second part of the report would be the traditional comprehensive report which would be published in June of 1968. Distribution of the preliminary report at the ALA Midwinter Meeting was restricted; however, a mailing to every academic institution listed in the *Education Directory* was completed by January 23.

It is obvious, of course, that the preliminary report does not serve the needs of all academic institutions. The institutions were chosen in accordance with sampling principles, but alternate returns had to be inserted for reports which were not available at the time of compilation. Results will be tested for representativeness, and the possibility of using this sampling technique for preliminary national estimates will be considered for the future. Academic librarians are urged to write to the Director, Division of Statistical Operations, National Center for Educational Statistics, United States Office of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202, giving their reaction to this publication. It is important that the

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comments be specific, that is, why it is useful or not useful, what is missing, what is incorrect, etc.

It is fair to say that the NCES staff members have been most anxious to resolve the problems that have plagued them in regard to the collection, analysis, and dissemination of library statistics. Based on their experiences these last two years in trying to collect library statistics in three separate forms in the HEGIS package, it has been decided that for next year a single library form will be used. The deadline for this form will make it possible for NCES to publish the comprehensive report for academic library statistics by the end of January 1969. This estimate, however, is based on the assumption that funds for USOE in the area of data processing and publication will not be cut and on an assignment of a high priority by the Office of Education to library statistics. Academic librarians ought to express their concern for the need for comprehensive library statistics being published annually by January. With all the different education groups asking for statistics, it behooves the American Library Association to clearly indicate to the U.S. Office of Education that library statistics are a major administrative and planning tool as well as an important device for measuring the effectiveness of federal legislation on library programs.

During the ALA Midwinter Meeting the Board of Directors of the Library Administration Division and the ALA Executive Board concurred in a resolution to the USOE expressing their appreciation for the publication of the preliminary report and for the information that the comprehensive report on academic libraries for 1966-67 will be published in June of 1968 and that by the fall of 1968 the long-awaited academic library statistics for 1964-65 and 1965-66 will be published. The boards also expressed their satisfaction with the decision to collect information on academic libraries in a single library statistical form.

The continuing problem of academic library statistics had been a matter of grave concern to all. It now appears that we have "turned the corner" and that a long-range solution to the program is at hand.—*Alphonse F. Trezza, Associate Executive Director, ALA (formerly Executive Secretary, LAD).* ■ ■

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