

Letters

Dear Editor:

I find myself in complete agreement with Louis Kenney's letter in the July/August issue of *C&RL News*. I also believe that the ACRL Board of Directors made a mistake when its members approved the policy statement at their Midwinter meeting in January of this year, to the effect that the M.L.S. is the appropriate terminal degree for academic librarians.

One may well question the wisdom of a train of thought that in effect equates the academic librarian's M.L.S. degree with the in-depth degree accomplishments of faculty members also serving at an institution of higher education. It seems to me that to suggest such equality is both unrealistic and unwise. The very nature of the library as a repository of all knowledge demands that the librarian shows a high degree of subject competency as well as library specialization. The present unrelenting trend of specialization of all sorts, coupled with the end of the library manpower shortage, has insured the demise of the "generalist" librarian and simultaneously signalled the inadequacy of the M.L.S. by itself for establishing precise effective lines of communication between the library and other areas of the academic world. To recommend and prescribe a library degree program that ignores the pressing realities of specialization invites empty isolation for academic

librarians rather than active dynamic participation as coworkers in a relevant activity of a cognate area(s) belonging to the academic community.

It is equally unrealistic and unwise for academic librarians to insist on "full academic status." That such an objective is a desirable goal is not all in question. But is the librarian willing to pay the price for "full academic status"? The librarian's academic counterpart has long recognized the fact that academic status is synonymous with an earned degree, usually the doctorate, and the publication of a book or article by an outside agency. Otherwise protests in favor of academic status have a hollow ring and at best could only mean paper acceptance and recognition.

Accordingly, the "subject specialties" of the academic librarian, based as they frequently are on personal interest and an undergraduate major, suffer from comparisons with the subject specialties of regular faculty members.

All told then, there is no retreat from the challenges and demands of academic life as it is presently conceived. The alternative of a clerical image, as exemplified by the directional type question, is not at all satisfactory.

Sincerely,

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College and University Library Survey

The National Center for Education Statistics has announced the publication schedule for the 1975 edition of the College and University Library Survey. Continuing the format of the 1973 report entitled *Library Statistics of College and Universities*, the 1975 survey report will be released in three parts. The early release report will be available in early 1976, the complete institutional report in June 1976 and the analytical report by the end of 1976.

Initiated in the present format by the U.S. Office of Education in 1959, the survey is now conducted as a part of the Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) system and the Library General Information Survey (LIBGIS). The biennially conducted survey contains statistical data on more than 2,700 college and university libraries in the U.S. The early release report contains twelve key institu-

tional data items on approximately 90 percent of the respondents. The key items compiled include library operating expenditures for salaries and wages, fringe benefits, bookstock, and periodicals; numbers of full-time equivalent staff with separate listings for librarians and for technicians, clerical, and others; library resources including number of volumes of bookstock held and number of titles of periodical subscriptions.

The complete institutional report contains basic information on collections, staff, and expenditures for all academic libraries. The analytical report provides national estimates for all academic institutions with library service and background data on the survey. The three-part report will be sold by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office. No price has been set. ■ ■