

Jm. - Jeanette! sent this an (Sept. 19) mla.

HARD SELL IN THE L.R.C.?

Staff of the Learning Resources Centre today denied charges that they have been employing intimidation and hard sell tactics in order to get students into the facility.

"Completely unfounded," stated Jack Mounce, Acting Chairman of the L.R.C., as he tripped a freshman who was hurrying past the north entrance. "Use of the L.R.C. is entirely voluntary," he emphasized, meanwhile helping the dazed freshman to his feet and gently propelling him in the door. "We leave it entirely up to the individual. If he or she wants to be an underachiever or even a dropout, there's not a lot we can do, is there?" he giggled as he held the door open and firmly guided us inside. "See for yourself," he added, resuming his post in the corridor.

Once inside, this investigator was immediately struck by the uncharacteristic lack of frowns on the faces of staff members at the checkout desk. The deskclerks were employing smiles, a cooperative attitude and other subterfuges in a blatant attempt to set visitors at ease. Some students, apparently unaware that nobody is allowed to talk in a library, were requesting and receiving help on how to locate or use basic reference tools relevant to their assignments.

The Bricklayer decided to pursue the question of high pressure sales tactics in the L.R.C. by interviewing additional staff members. We approached a woman by the card catalogue. "Excuse me," we began...

"Hello, I'm Mrs. Armstrong," the woman beamed. "May I help you?" She pressed a map of the L.R.C. and some sort of handbook into our hands.

"No, I don't think so," we said. "You see, we've heard complaints that the L.R.C. is providing too many services, disturbing the easy life around here and..."

"Isn't that absurd," laughed Armstrong. "As the guidebook points out, I'm the ^{Readers' Services and} reference librarian," she continued. "Anytime you need help getting information, be sure to ask us, won't you. Remember, the early acquisition and application of efficient research practices--use of the card catalogue, periodical indexes and other reference tools--almost

invariably results in better utilization of the student's time, and higher marks."

"Is that a money-back guarantee," we retorted.

"But our services are free," Armstrong stammered. "There's absolutely no charge except for any expenses we incur when you ask us to borrow books from other libraries, or when you fail to return borrowed materials on time. Otherwise all the books, periodicals, films, pamphlets and video-tapes are available for your use completely without charge or obligation! By the way, be sure to have your instructors arrange for your class to receive our video orientation, won't you?"

"Can you deny that you stay open longer hours than the Bay or Safeway?" we asked, starting to sidle away.

"8 a.m. to 10 p.m. each weekday, 1 to 5 on Saturday, 1 to 5 and 7 to 10 on Sundays," she admitted as we escaped into the Instructional Services Department.

"I'm John Watters," said a young man with a moustache and a French accent. "You are 'ere to sign up for the student workshop on production of AV materials?"

"No, no," we said. "We've heard that L.R.C. staff are harassing students with all kinds of special services and..."

"Incredible. Just sign 'ere," said Watters, holding a form under our nose. "The workshop begins exactly at 12:30 on Thursday. Please don' be late. In the meantime, if we can help..."

"Thank you, no," we said, realizing that our deadline was approaching. We managed to make it out the south exit without being acco^usted further. Immediately behind us came the freshman we'd seen earlier.

"Can we quote you on the shameful way they're abusing student rights and intimidating people in there?" we asked.

"Excuse me, son," he said, brushing past us. "I've just been getting some help with the research on my History essay and have to go wrap it up now." He strode off, no longer looking dazed.

The Bricklayer intends to continue monitoring the methods employed by L.R.C. staff and will keep our readers posted on these questionable practices.