

Library staff protests dress code enforcement

Tranquility among the Maag Library non-student staff employees has been temporarily interrupted.

The interruption stems from a letter the employees received from Richard J. Owen, University librarian, stating that a dress code for the staff would be strictly enforced.

The letter, dated Sept. 28, states that "bluejeans, bib overalls, shorts, bare midriffs, tank tops, halters, halter tops, tube tops, etc. are not proper attire to be worn while working in the library."

A similar memo went out to

all library employees in March, 1976 and at that time some employees filed a grievance with the ACLU. It was then that Owen stated that his memo had been misinterpreted, that it was merely an announcement of his own personal preferences and that he could not expect to enforce these preferences on others if they did not wish to comply, according to the Mar. 9 issue of the *Jambar*.

However, in his most recent letter Owen states that he feels it necessary to reenforce this code "because of the almost continual disregard of the memo

sent to the staff on March 31, 1976."

Some of the library employees view this as a direct contradiction to Owen's earlier statement and as a result five of them have filed a grievance with the library.

To date that grievance has been returned unanswered to its authors, together with a statement that it cannot be given a proper reply at this time because Owen is temporarily unavailable due to illness.

However, according to YSU's *Handbook of Policies and Rules* (Cont. on page 12)

Dress code

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for *Classified Civil Service Employees* a written grievance must be properly answered within five days except by mutual agreement.

According to Jane Petras, one of the unsatisfied employees, a mutual agreement is not likely and the employees now plan to take their grievance one step farther to the Personnel Department.

According to Petras, the only statement the *Handbook* makes

about a dress code is that persons are required to be "neat, clean and well groomed at all times" and that one should "dress appropriately for his position."

Petras feels Owen's more detailed code is unfair because most of the staff employees work out of public view. Moreover, they do a lot of pasting and book moving, jobs which could ruin better clothing, she noted.

Petras added that "student workers are not required to adhere to the same dress code, yet they are the ones that work the desk and do the other jobs

which require being in public.

Owen also states in his most recent letter that if infractions to the dress code occur, "the guilty party will be informed and a Reprimand will be sent to the Personnel Office for inclusion in their files."

Petras, among others, has already received several such reprimands and she has been warned that if she receives another one she will be suspended for a period of three days.

Representatives of the library administration could not be reached for a comment concerning the grievance.