

LSU FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION 13–05

TO SUPPORT THE RIGHTS OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS DALE ASKEY AND JEFFREY BEALL TO EXPRESS THEIR PROFESSIONAL OPINIONSⁱ

Resolution Sponsored by Stephanie Braunstein, LSU Libraries Faculty Senator; Elaine Smyth, LSU Libraries Interim Dean; and the LSU Libraries Library Faculty Policy Committee, Michael Russo, Chair

Whereas the mission of Louisiana State University is the generation, preservation, dissemination, and application of knowledge and cultivation of the arts, and

Whereas academic freedom is essential to the pursuit of that mission, and

Whereas the faculty of Louisiana State University are therefore strongly opposed to all efforts to censor discussion of research or scholarship and to intimidate individuals or institutions to prevent them from engaging in such discussion, and

Whereas the lawsuits brought by Edwin Mellen Press against librarian Dale Askey and McMaster University, his employer,ⁱⁱ threatening them with millions of dollars in liability due to Mr. Askey's negative professional assessment of the merits of Edwin Mellen Press publications can only have a chilling effect upon the academic freedom of librarians and other faculty to express their professional opinions, and

Whereas the threat of legal action being levied by publishers doing business as the Canadian Center for Science and Education (CCSE) against Jeffrey Beall, Associate Professor and Scholarly Initiatives Librarian at the University of Colorado Denver, for Beall's inclusion of CCSE in blog postings that list publishers he considers as being "predatory" due to some of their business practices can have a similar chilling effect,ⁱⁱⁱ and

Whereas one of the essential responsibilities of academic librarians is to assess the merits of academic publishers and publications and to share those assessments with scholars, researchers, instructors and other colleagues;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Louisiana State University Faculty Senate asserts its support for the rights of both all academic faculty and librarians to offer their professional opinions of the products and business practices of academic publishers as is appropriate to the benefit of the academic professions and condemns the use of punitive litigation rather than free and open debate as a means of rebutting such opinion, and

Be it further resolved that when Stephanie Braunstein, American Library Association (ALA) Councilor representing Louisiana, works with ALA Council and the Association of College and Research Libraries

(ACRL), a division of ALA, to bring national attention to these two specific cases concerning academic freedom, she will name LSU's Faculty Senate as a supporter of academic librarians' rights of expression.

ⁱ This is an updated version of Resolution 1305, originally introduced to Faculty Senate at its February 2013 meeting.

ⁱⁱ According to a March 4 article in Library Journal, Edwin Mellen Press has dropped one of the lawsuits against Askey—the one in which McMaster University was named as a co-defendant. As of that date, the second suit—against Askey alone—was still active. For more information, see: <http://www.infodocket.com/2013/03/04/edwin-mellen-press-drops-lawsuit-against-mcmaster-librarian-dale-askey/>

ⁱⁱⁱ For more information about Beall, see the following:

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/08/health/for-scientists-an-exploding-world-of-pseudo-academia.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

<http://scholarlyoa.com/individual-journals/>

http://www.academia.edu/1151857/Bealls_List_of_Predatory_Open-Access_Publishers

<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/02/15/another-publisher-accuses-librarian-libel>