



The Pettee Collective

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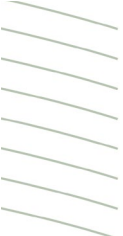
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Having a support network about you is something I am sure everyone appreciates. A desire for such a network to support the cataloguing efforts of those using the Pettee Classification System (otherwise known as the Union Classification System) was one of the driving factors for the creation of the Pettee Collective.

Discussion at the 2022 ANZTLA Conference, following my presentation about adapting the Pettee system to the unique needs of my library,¹ brought to the fore the need for more support in general and a better web presence for the Pettee system. In recent years, several theological libraries have chosen to undertake the massive task of adopting a new classification system in lieu of the Pettee one for a variety of reasons. One of the reasons has been the fact that no formal authority was updating the system, and the last edition of the schedules was published in 1967,² so it is not up to date with recent developments in research and modern ideas in general. Updating the schedules is a huge task and responsibility for any one person to undertake, which cast into question whether the system is sustainable into the future. These concerns were voiced back at the 2022 conference and gauging that there was interest among Pettee libraries for further discussion and action, I decided to follow up on Mark Hangartner's suggestion of creating a page on the ANZTLA website for publishing updates to the Pettee schedules and started reaching out to Pettee libraries.

¹ Melanie Hechenberger, "Adapting Pettee for Orthodox Libraries," *ANZTLA EJournal*, no.29: 13–24, <https://serials.atla.com/anztla/article/view/3210/4052>.

² Julia Pettee, *Classification of the Library of Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York*, Revised and enlarged ed., ed. Ruth C. Eisenhart (New York: Union Theological Seminary, 1967); Philip Harvey and Helen Greenwood, "Classifying Religion: A Conversational Survey of the Three Main Classification Systems," *ANZTLA EJournal*, no. 25 (December 2020): 5, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31046/anztla.i25.2734>.



I emailed the libraries that I knew used the Pettee system (the ANZTLA statistics published in the *ANZTLA EJournal* were a useful starting point for this)³ and a few libraries also responded to my post on the ANZTLA forum. Everyone I talked to was positive about the idea of a community of practice dedicated to the Pettee system and our first formal meeting was held online over Zoom on Thursday 18th August 2022. So far, eight Pettee libraries have been involved in our meetings.⁴ We have also benefited from the invaluable contributions of long-time Pettee advocate Philip Harvey, even though he no longer works in a Pettee library.

Our early meetings were largely devoted to planning and creating the Pettee webpage for the ANZTLA website. The webpage has been active for some time now and it consists of two main parts. The first is the landing page containing an introduction to Pettee, including a bibliography of Pettee resources, largely composed by Lavinia Gent from Australian Lutheran College Library.⁵ The second part is the Pettee additions database, where all new numbers agreed upon by the Pettee Collective are published.⁶ Harriet Sabarez from Ridley College has been invaluable throughout the Pettee website project, being the manager of the ANZTLA website she was the one who designed and created the webpages. The database was a particularly complicated piece to design and Sabarez drafted several options that she presented to the group, which gave us physical (or rather virtual) examples that helped us visualise what we wished to create. You can see the final product on the ANZTLA website, which not only lists the new numbers and identifies when they were added to the database but allows you to filter the entries and download them too. Sabarez continues to add new numbers to the database as they are approved by the Collective.

With the Pettee webpages having been created, the primary activity of the Pettee Collective is systematically updating the schedules. We focus on one class at a time and start by noting all the new numbers we use in our individual libraries in a shared online Excel document. Some numbers have been agreed upon in the past at the annual ANZTLA conference, when Pettee libraries used to get together and agree upon new numbers.⁷ No official list of these numbers was published as those involved simply pencilled them into their Pettee classification books. Libraries that were not involved in these meetings, such as my own, cannot benefit from

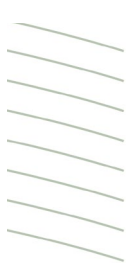
³ Kerrie Stevens, "ANZTLA 2021 Statistics," *ANZTLA EJournal*, no.28 (May 2022): 32–34, <https://doi.org/10.31046/anztla.i28.3110>.

⁴ Australian Lutheran College Library (Australian Lutheran College, SA), Christ College Library (Christ College, NSW), Dalton McCaughey Library (Pilgrim Theological College and Trinity College, VIC), Leon Morris Library (Ridley College, VIC), Metropolitan Hilarion Research Library (Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Institute, VIC), St Andrew's Hall (Church Missionary Society, VIC), St Mark's Theological Library (St Mark's National Theological Centre, ACT), and The Swanton Library (Presbyterian Theological College, VIC).

⁵ "The Pettee Classification System," Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association Ltd, 2023, <https://www.anztla.org/pettee-classification>.

⁶ "ANZTLA Pettee Additions Database," Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association Ltd, 2023, <https://www.anztla.org/pettee-additions-database>.

⁷ Harvey and Greenwood, "Classifying Religion," 5–6.



these previous meetings as there is no way to distinguish these previously agreed upon numbers from those that each library independently created due to the needs of their unique collection.

That is, no way until now.

The new numbers in the Excel document that are shared by most libraries in the Pettee Collective must be the additions agreed upon in these former meetings. We are taking things one step further, however, by systematically reviewing the schedules and even entirely reworking some sections that need major revision. We are not only adding new numbers but updating the terminology and addressing the issue of the American Protestant bias that Philip Harvey identified as the “most glaring and jarring problem with Pettee” in his article “Pettee Reactions.”⁸

At present we are meeting regularly online once a month to review the schedules. We also occasionally run longer meetings when we have particularly tricky sections to rework. We have even held two four-hour long “boot camps” hosting in person for those in Victoria at Dalton McCaughey Library with those residing in other states joining us online. These were dedicated to revising Class S, which is a class that we all agreed needed major revision. Overall, our work is thorough, and it will take us some time to work through all the classes. But in the meantime, we are all benefiting from being able to pool our knowledge and develop a revised Pettee that we are all happy to work with. Being all enthusiastic users of Pettee, the atmosphere at these meetings is always positive and everyone is very happy to discuss any issues others may be experiencing. The Pettee Collective would not exist and certainly could not produce the work it does without its members’ enthusiasm and support.

This paper has outlined the Pettee Collective’s history and activities. It is also an example of how the act of bringing together likeminded people at ANZTLA events can inspire projects that benefit our industry. Updating the schedules is a long-term project that we will continue to chip away at, but the web-presence that the ANZTLA website has given it has already attracted international attention. Earlier this year we had an inquiry about Pettee from a library in Taiwan, which was using a simplified version of Pettee and was inquiring about the full version. This case highlights the

| Pettee Number | Description | Date Added |
|---------------|---|------------|
| AGD7 | EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY - GENERAL BIBLICAL LITERATURE. Whole Bible bibliography (mainly commentaries) | 08/10/2023 |
| AGD8 | EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY - GENERAL BIBLICAL LITERATURE. Old Testament bibliography. Includes commentaries, manuscript versions, literature | 08/10/2023 |
| AGD8.5 | EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY - GENERAL BIBLICAL LITERATURE. Apocrypha bibliography | 08/10/2023 |
| AGD9 | EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY - GENERAL BIBLICAL LITERATURE. New Testament bibliography. Includes commentaries, manuscript versions, literature | 08/10/2023 |
| AGW2 | SUBJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY. PASTORAL THEOLOGY. Pastoral work of clergy | 08/10/2023 |
| AGW4 | SUBJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY. PASTORAL THEOLOGY. Counselling | 08/10/2023 |
| BV19 | GENERAL LITERATURE. Religion and literature, philosophy and/or theology of literature | 28/03/2023 |

Screenshot from ANZTLA’s Pettee Additions Database

⁸ Philip Harvey, "Pettee Reactions," Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association Newsletter, no. 10 (April 1990): 4, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31046/anztla.v0i10.818>.



need for such support networks for Pettee, not just in Australia but wherever in the world the system is in use. We are always delighted to welcome new members to our ranks, both from within the ANZTLA community and without.

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