

## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN SPECIAL LIBRARIES

*This paper was delivered at the Seminar 'Collection development basics: a policy approach.' Melbourne, November 1989. Papers were also given on collection development policies in academic, TAFE and public libraries.*

### COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN SPECIAL LIBRARIES by Coralie Jenkin.

This paper has two sections: first, the collection development work I did at a special library, and, second, what is different about writing a collection development policy for a special library.

In 1986-1987 I looked at collection development at the Joint Theological Library for my Masters thesis 'The collection for the saints: collection development at the Joint Theological Library'. The library has about 116,000 volumes and is located on the Melbourne University Campus.

This library is both special and academic, so much of what I have to say is relevant to academic library policies. I found the following reasons for writing a collection development policy appropriate to the situation - a collection development policy provides (in brief):

1. Information for management
2. Information for selectors
3. Information for users
4. Information for co-operation
5. Improvement of the collection

I decided to use the Research Libraries' Group (RLG) Conspectus to write the policy - it is designed for academic libraries but it can be modified. I used the Pettee classification and clumped the subjects together. I didn't use the online version, I set this up on a word processor. My reasons for using the Conspectus were (in brief):

1. it was well documented and had adequate instructions.
2. the collection levels had been adopted by College and University Libraries (CAUL) and I thought they would be widely used in the

future.

3. the online US version was accessible in Australia.
4. supplemental guidelines existed in theology.
5. it had an adequate grid.

**Second:** what is different about writing a collection development policy for a special library? It is difficult to generalize because of the diversity of special libraries.

1. Special libraries usually have smaller collections - so it is a smaller job over all.
2. You probably already have some of the collection management areas of the policy or can complete them fairly easily. For example policies on binding, multiple copies, weeding, archives, etc.
3. How can you evaluate such specialized areas? I used a variety of evaluation methods - checklists, comparisons with other collections, standards, periodical holdings, multiple copies, etc. You can find lists of evaluation methods in the American Library Association's 'Guidelines for collection development'. Unfortunately there are few bibliographies in specialist subject areas so this may not be a good form of evaluation. On the other hand the Research Libraries Group publish verification overlap studies which are bibliographic checklists for evaluating collections and you can compare your results with those of other libraries. But I had problems - apart from the fact that it cost about \$50 (including airmail) the 'Verification/overlap study in religion prepared by Notre Dame' gave no indication of the type of library it was intended to be used in, it had a high proportion of older and foreign language materials, many peripheral titles, over twelve hundred titles (many of them had inadequate citations) and when I had completed it I found that there were no libraries to compare the results with - I used a card catalogue and felt I'd wasted about a week of my time.
4. Another form of collection evaluation is that done by a subject specialist. You will probably know a subject specialist - perhaps a librarian from a similar library - who can take part in evaluating the collection. In special libraries there are users who know a lot about the books in their subject, who know other collections on the subject and who may know the collection well, who can help in evaluation.
5. Often special libraries use a special classification scheme - this means

- writing or adapting grid as I did for Pettee classification.
6. Can the RLG collection levels cope with gradations in special collections? RLG publish guidelines in special subject areas and give examples of what materials you would expect to find at each level. The academics who filled in the grid for me found the explanation given in the guidelines adequate.
  7. There is often little automation in special libraries but automation isn't necessary in collection management, although a word processor and an automated database are a tremendous help.
  8. Special libraries can find that there are advantages in cooperative collection building. This is where special libraries can build their collections without building their budget. And they can look at similar libraries or collections in larger libraries.

Well, the list isn't exhaustive, but it shows some of the ways writing a collection development policy is different in a special library, differences which reflect the advantages and disadvantages of special libraries.

\*\*\*\*\*

## WOMEN IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: AN AUSTRALIAN PERSPECTIVE

by Lynn Pryor

For much of the past two decades, a great deal of attention has been centred on the status and role of women in our modern world. It could be said that the female emancipation movement of the nineteenth century was the seed from which the late twentieth century women's liberation movement has grown; it took Germaine Greer's book, *The female eunuch*, published in 1970, to provoke a new wave of interest in the status of women in our society.

The persistence and forceful arguments of those who took up the cause have achieved much to alter the mind-set of a society which for the most part insisted that "a woman's place is in the home". Women have gained