

- 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.

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## 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

the freedom to make independent choices affecting their own lives; married women are now a significant percentage of the workforce, and many trades and professions which have been traditionally male-dominated are no longer so.

It was only a matter of time before this liberation movement came to the door of the Christian churches. The public face of this is usually seen as the movement for the ordination of women, but the issues are much broader than this. The discussion of the ordination of women is but a small focus of the total spectrum of issues relating to the ministry of women in the Christian church. As opportunities for wider ministry become available, women are increasingly seeking theological education, in order to equip themselves adequately for the tasks now open to them. Theological colleges have been experiencing significant increases in female enrolment figures in recent years. A survey in the early 1980s of nine leading Protestant seminaries in the US reported a dramatic increase in female enrolment in the previous decade. By 1980, women constituted 30-50% of the student bodies in the mainline Protestant schools. A recent study of Australian theological colleges indicates that women comprise at least 50% of total enrolment. It is significant to note also that some institutions (though they are still very much in a minority) employ a reasonable percentage of female faculty. For example, in one Roman Catholic college, the ratio of women to men on faculty is 9:29, and of their total enrolment of 282 students, 163 are women.

#### **WHAT DO THEOLOGICAL COURSES OFFER WOMEN?**

To a large extent, traditional courses are being studied. After all, it is biblical theology and pastoral training which are being sought. At the same time, allowance is made for discussion of issues specifically related to women and their ministry. Many biblical studies units now have segments on the role of women in the Old and New Testaments. Theology units especially are examining the theology of women's ministry, with particular reference to priesthood and ordination. These are accompanied by discussion of women's status and role in society, not only today, but also historically - e.g., women in the early Christian church, and women in the church today.

On balance, however, such discussion is forming but a small section of study within the broader context of a course. For example, at Whitley College in Melbourne, discussion of women and their ministry both lay and ordained falls within a course entitled *Ministry and sacraments*. It reflects the general principles and practice of the Baptist Church in Australia, with particular reference to the church in Victoria, in which there is a degree of openness to women's ordination. Similarly, discussion of women's ministry within the broader context of ministry is also allowed for within the unit entitled *Theology IIB* of the Australian College of Theology degree course.

Some changes are occurring. In Australian theological colleges we have begun to see the emergence of course units designed specifically to address issues of feminist theology. Most appear to present sociological and theological examination of the issues. a course designed by the Rev. Dr. J.R. Gaden, presently Warden of St. Barnabas' College Adelaide, is entitled *Woman, Man and God* and considers issues which affect both theology and the life of the Christian community. It examines the methodology, presuppositions and achievements of recent feminist theologians, and discussion areas include feminist hermeneutics, male and female images of God, feminist theology, alternative styles of leadership in theological education.

Other units concentrate specifically on women and ministry. Some examples include:

- *Women and ministry in the New Testament* - (Whitley College, Melbourne). This studies the main NT texts which bear on the role and status of women in the NT; it seeks to develop from this exegetical and hermeneutical implications and to formulate conclusions about the role and status of women in ministry today.
- *Women and ministry* - (Union Theological Institute, Sydney). This course aims to increase awareness of the actual position of women in society and the church, and to gain a deeper understanding of women's gifts for ministry. This and other courses look at the historical background to current emphases and at Roman Catholic theology of woman, in the past as well as the present. The unit also examines and discusses the difficulties women experience in language and worship.

Still other course units approach feminist theology from a psychological perspective or from an historical perspective (e.g. *Psychology and the feminine*, and *Women in Christian ministry* at Union Theological Institute, Sydney). In the belief that nothing can be studied in a vacuum, our Australian colleges are especially concerned to relate women's studies to the Australian context in society and church - both sociologically and culturally our theology must be found to be relevant to our situation. And whatever the emphasis of the particular units of study, there is an overall objective to increase the awareness of men as well as women, about the opportunities for ministry which are now becoming available to women, ministry which until recently was considered to be a male-only role. Finally there also appears to be a tendency in some colleges to include in the choice of essay topics at least one question which allows a student to explore the relationship of women to the context of the subject matter being studied.

It is interesting to note here that some institutions have had to address the issue of non-sexist language, both in classroom teaching and essay writing. In some cases this was instigated by student request, in others by faculty. My own college handbook states: "It is the policy ... that inclusive language be used in both teaching and written work." To this end the library has been requested to supply the Government style manual and other monographs, to serve as guidelines, particularly for essay writing.<sup>1</sup>

#### WOMEN'S STUDIES AND THE THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY

One doesn't need to search for long to find the literature to support such courses as are being offered in our theological colleges. Already the shelves in our theological libraries contain innumerable examples, and the publishers and bookstores are constantly presenting us with further opportunities to extend our collections in this subject area. A perusal of the course bibliographies listed in college handbooks reveals the diversity of materials available, extending into every area of theological studies, and at the same time demonstrates that particular monographs have become

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<sup>1</sup>*Style manual for authors, editors and printers* 4th ed., (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1988); C. Miller & K. Swift, *The handbook of nonsexist writing* 2nd ed., (Harper & Row, 1988).

sufficiently significant to be made the prescribed texts for several course units. A detailed annotated bibliographical listing of such materials is given as an appendix to this article.

As more and more women enrol in theological education and as colleges include women's issues in existing units of study and introduce new units of study concentrating on specific feminist issues, librarians of theological schools have had to consider the effects of these trends upon the services offered. The three main areas have been collection development, cataloguing and reference services.

### Collection development

Do we supply only prescribed texts and recommended reading material as listed by the teaching staff? Should the range be somewhat broader in scope to allow students to read widely on a topic (as we would expect with other issues). Should the collection reflect a denominational perspective on feminist issues and on attitudes towards women's ministries? It is natural that a denominational bias will be reflected within our collections, but from a survey undertaken it seems that most Australian theological libraries are attempting within the constraints of often very limited budgets, to collect a reasonable breadth of material, beyond the particular course requirements.

Who is responsible for the selection of materials for the collection? In many of our theological libraries where non-professional and part-time staff are employed, faculty members are still largely responsible for the selection of material. Librarians tend to be given little or no scope for independent selection. This of course applies to the whole collection, not just the particular field of interest with which this essay is concerned.

### Cataloguing

The emergence of such a wide range of Christian feminist literature presents some problems for the technical services librarian, particularly the problems of classification and selection of subject headings.

(i) *Classification:* Most theological libraries in Australia use either Dewey Decimal Classification or the Union Theological seminary system devised by Julia Pettee. The Dewey 200 schedules are reportedly adequate

with little need for adaptation - one librarian is known to supplement with the use of Mary Celia Bauer's *Dewey Decimal Classification: 200 schedules expanded for use* (rev.ed.) (Haverford, Pa: Catholic Library Association, 1988).

The users of Pettee have increasingly found the existing schedules to be extremely limited, with almost no provision available for the breadth of material now being published. New schedules have recently been produced by the UTS committee for the S section in which feminist theology and women's studies materials belong.

A small committee of Pettee users in Melbourne has attempted over the past year to address some of the difficulties of fitting a whole new subject area into a system devised in 1916 and last revised fully in 1967, expanding existing schedules to create new numbers which will accommodate the new materials now being added to our collections.

(ii) *Subject headings:* Publishers who provide Cataloguing in Publication data simplify the life of the librarian - though editing is often necessary. When this data is not included, we turn to our conventional tools. For some of us, this means Library of Congress Subject Headings. Yet most of us in theological libraries exist on shoestring budgets and must resort to less costly lists of subject headings, e.g. Rovira and Reyes eds., *Sears list of subject headings* 13th ed., (Wilson, 1986). Since *Religion Index: One* is for many of our libraries a standard research tool, the *Religion Indexes: Thesaurus*<sup>2</sup> is a most useful substitute source of suitable subject headings, not only of course in the field of feminism, but for all our catalogue search terms.

#### Reference services

As with any other part of the collection, the librarian must be familiar with the feminist material available in the collection and have a fair knowledge of the subject headings in use in the catalogue. The restrictions of the classification system ensure that feminist material tends to be found in only a few locations through the collection. This of course makes browsing easier for the library user, once the general location has been determined. Journal articles are an important source of ideas and material for the

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<sup>2</sup> Steven V. Cole ed., *Religion Indexes: Thesaurus* 4th ed., (Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 1987).

student researching an essay topic. The theological librarian needs to be constantly aware not only of which indexing tools will assist the searching, but also the relevant contents of new issues of journals, particularly those which are not already indexed in tools such as *Religion Index: One*. A good indexing system is an invaluable asset. A library with computerised facilities could design an in-house indexing database as an SDI (Selective Dissemination of Information) service to users. As new journals are accessioned, the major articles could be indexed and online searching facilities made accessible.

For the student researching an essay topic, the bibliographies included in monographs are usually a valuable source of information. Some of the more significant works in the area of feminist theology have quite comprehensive bibliographic references. The theological librarian does well to be familiar with these, and also to be aware of annotated bibliographies published in journals. Two such listings have appeared in recent months in Australian publications: Kath McPhillips, 'Women-Books: annotated bibliography of basic texts in feminism and religion' (*Women-Church: an Australian Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* no.2 1988); 'Select bibliography on women's ministry' (*Christian Book Newsletter* vol.6 no.1 March 1988).

#### WOMEN IN THEOLOGICAL LIBRARIANSHIP

Traditionally theological libraries have been managed by a member of faculty. Since faculties of theological schools have been a male domain - only now are we seeing this situation change - theological librarians have tended to be male. Of course we all acknowledge that this has been so for very good reasons: the college library has been small enough to require minimum management and financial constraints did not allow for employment of a librarian.

Now, late in the twentieth century, with a greater recognition by both faculties and governing bodies of the importance of improving library facilities in theological colleges, and therefore of the importance of professional management of the library, we are beginning to see a shift towards the employment of at least part-time library staff and an increasing tendency to employ professionally trained librarians - though many schools are not yet able to afford to do so.

As it is women who seek part-time positions the high proportion of women, both professional and paraprofessional, employed in our theological libraries is the consequence. In Australia and New Zealand we now have about 20 professional librarians employed in approximately 80 theological libraries. Of these most hold part-time positions and only four are men.

The theological as well as professional knowledge of these librarians is a prime concern. The ANZTLA *Standards for Theological Libraries* adopted at the September 1988 annual general meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association prescribe the ideal that "the Librarian and library staff have among them appropriate qualifications in librarianship, management and religious or theological studies. The Librarian ... shall be professionally trained in librarianship and be eligible for associate membership of the Library Association of Australia or the New Zealand Library Association." Of our 20 professionals in Australia and New Zealand, only three have both theological degrees and professional librarianship qualifications. Rare birds indeed!

## CONCLUSION

While the debate over women's ministry - the ordination of women in particular - goes on, and while feminist theologians continue to develop their distinctive theology, enrolment of women in theological education ever increases. The subsequent demand for appropriate literature for the study of all the issues incorporated by feminist theology puts the onus on the theological librarian to supply the necessary services: to adjust collection development policies where necessary to allow for expansion of the collection; to expand classification schedules where appropriate, and to determine the most suitable search terms by which our users are able to access materials sought. Already this is proving to be a challenge!

## APPENDIX: The Literature of Feminist Theology

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One prominent work which has become a prescribed text for several course units is Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza's *In memory of her: a feminist theological reconstruction of Christian origins* (SCM, 1983). This book deals at length with the hermeneutical and methodological issues that both impede and justify a feminist theological interpretation of early



Christianity. Fiorenza's goal is "to attempt to reconstruct early Christian history as women's history"<sup>4</sup> She explores the replacing of a traditional androcentric hermeneutics with an explicitly feminist one. Described as "the first full-scale feminist reconstruction of early Christian history",<sup>5</sup> this monograph clearly embraces many of the issues addressed in the courses offered in our theological colleges, and serves admirably as a springboard for examination of the many issues to be addressed.

Other works included in prescribed reading lists are:

- E. Moltmann-Wendel, *A land flowing with milk and honey* (SCM, 1985);
- Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-talk* (SCM, 1983) - a critique of traditional theology from a feminist perspective. Ruether begins to envisage a non-sexist understanding of Christianity;
- Letty M. Russell ed., *Feminist interpretation of the Bible* (Fortress, 1985) - essays by theologians, historians and biblical scholars clarifying the distinctive character of feminist interpretation.

While these and other texts present a comprehensive overview of the broad issues of feminist theology, the plethora of literature now demanding our attention covers a whole range of specific issues embraced by feminist theology: secular, religious, and Christian issues; historical, biblical and sociological issues. Many of the writers would perhaps deny any polemical motives behind their writings, yet within the context of a society and a church where acceptance of women's ministry and concepts presented in women's theology is by no means universal, many works will be received only as polemic. The Librarian must nevertheless be aware of the range and extent of the literature.

While space does not permit an extensive bibliographic listing, I will provide one or two examples in each of the main categories of material that shape the literature of feminist studies in theology.

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<sup>4</sup> Fiorenza, p.xiv.

<sup>5</sup> Fiorenza, flyleaf.

### General overviews of feminism and feminist theology

- D. Bouchier, *The feminist challenge* (Macmillan, 1983);
- V.R. Mollenkott, *Women, men and the Bible* (Abingdon, c.1977) - advocates abandonment of the tendency of some men and women to value females only as wives, mothers and servants;
- S.B. Clark, *Man and woman in Christ: an examination of the roles of men and women in the light of Scripture* (Servant Books, c.1980);
- P. Jewett, *Man as male and female* (Eerdmans, c.1975);
- G.W. Knight, *Role relationship of men and women* (Moody, 1985).

These works examine the roles of men and women in society and propose a reappraisal of society's expectations of women and the roles they undertake.

### Particular feminist theological views and feminist hermeneutics

- Letty M. Russell ed., *Feminist interpretation of the Bible* (Fortress, 1985);
- Susanne Heine, *Women and early christianity: are the feminist scholars right?* (SCM, 1987) - Heine discusses the basic presuppositions of the feminist writers. She believes that now is the time when the distortions and misinterpretations produced by feminist Christian scholarship must be critically addressed and corrected. "In the end the goal to be achieved is one in which the relationship between men and women, in Christianity as elsewhere, must be a positive one of mutual understanding, rather than an ongoing stage of hostility."
- E.S. Fiorenza, *In memory of her* [see above];
- S. Dowell & L. Hurcombe, *Dispossessed daughters of Eve* (SCM, 1981).

### Women in society

#### (a) Women in history

- \* Antonia Fraser, *The weaker vessel* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, c.1984);
- \* M. Prior ed., *Women in English society 1500-1800* (Methuen, 1985);

- (b) **Women and power/authority**
  - \* L.A. Tilly & J.W. Scott, *Women, work and family* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, c.1978) - looks at women at home, and women in relation to the economy;
- (c) **Women in Australian society**
  - \* N. Grieve & A. Burns eds., *Australian woman: feminist perspectives* (OUP, 1981);
  - \* N. Grieve & A. Burns eds., *New feminist perspectives* (OUP, 1986);
  - \* A. Summers, *Damned whores and God's police* (Penguin, 1975);
  - \* S. Willis ed., *Women, faith and fêtes: essays in the history of women and the church in Australia* (Dove, 1977).

#### **Women in the Bible and the Early Church**

- \* M. Evans, *Women in the Bible* (IVP, 1983);
- \* J.B. Hurley, *Man and woman in biblical perspective* (IVP, 1981);
- \* B. Witherington, *Women in the ministry of Jesus* (CUP, 1984);
- \* E. Clark, *Women in the early church* (Michael Glazier, 1983).

#### **Women in Church History**

- \* Jean Laporte, *The role of women in early christianity* (Edwin Mellen Press, 1982);
- \* K.C. Sessions & P.N. Bebb eds., *Pietas et societas; new trends in Reformation social history* (Sixteenth Century Journal Publications, 1985).

#### **Women in Ministry**

- (a) **Gender relationships in the context of the church**
  - \* M. Langley, *Equal woman* (Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1983);
  - \* R. Essex, *Woman in a man's world* (Sheldon, 1977);
  - \* C.F. Parvey ed., *The community of women in the early church* (WCC, 1983).
- (b) **Women's ministry in the early church today**
  - \* J. Danielou, *The ministry of women in the early church* (Faith Press, 1961);

- \* K. Giles, *Women and their ministry* (Dove, 1977).

(c) **The ordination of women**

- \* M. Furlong ed., *Feminine in the church* (SPCK, 1984) - presents theological perspectives on women and ministry, the nature of priesthood and hence the validity of women's ordination;
- \* P. Jewett, *The ordination of women*, (Eerdmans, 1980);
- \* J. & D. Muddiman, *Women, the Bible and the priesthood* (Movement for the Ordination of Women, 1984).

**Women's Spirituality**

- \* J.W. Conn ed., *Women's spirituality; resources for christian development* (Paulist, c.1986).

**Women in the Third World**

- \* J.B. Pobee & P. von Warenberg-Potter eds., *New eyes for reading* (WCC, 1986) - a collection of biblical and theological essays and reflections of women from Africa, Asia and Latin America, presenting new insights, new freedom, new commitment;
- \* J.C. & E. Low Webster eds., *The church and women in the third world* (Westminster, 1985) - contributors present the results of research as a basis for evaluating christian images of women, the role of women in the church, and the impact that the church has had on the status of women in general.

**Australian Writers**

An essay of this type cannot do full justice to the quantity of literature available on this vast topic of feminism and feminist theology. My references must necessarily be selective. However, as an Australian, writing from an Australian perspective, my survey would not be complete without reference to the many Australian writers who have contributed in various ways to women's studies in the past two decades:

- \* M. Dixon, *The real Matilda: women and identity in Australia 1788 to the present* (Penguin, 1984);
- \* Leon Morris, John Gaden, Barbara Thiering, *A woman's place* (Sydney: Anglican Information Office, 1976);
- \* K. Giles, *Created woman* (Acorn, 1985);
- \* Francis J. Moloney, *Women first among the faithful: a New*

- Testament study* (Dove, c. 1984);
- \* Brendan Byrne, *Paul and the christian woman* (St. Paul Publications, 1988);
  - \* M.A. Franklin & R.S. Jones eds., *Opening the cage* (Allen & Unwin, 1987);
  - \* J. Gaden, *For the love of women: a discussion paper* (Melbourne: Education Group of the Movement for the Ordination of Women, [1985]);
  - \* C.H. Sherlock, P. Sherlock, J. Pryor, R. Banks, B. Ward Powers, K. Giles, G. Cowling et al. - various articles in *Interchange* 1975-1978.

### Journals

Of course, quite apart from monographs, a great deal of the literature of feminist theology has appeared in numerous journals. There are now journals specifically concerned with women's studies - e.g. *Women-Church: an Australian Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, and *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* [Scholar Press, available in UK through T&T Clark]. However, many articles also appear in the biblical and general theological journals. A search for such materials via *Religion Index One: Periodicals* is not such a simple matter: the thesaurus gives us a long list of possible search terms.

### Conclusion

It can be seen from this scant survey that the literature available covers a wide range of themes within the subject of feminist theology. It looks at the whole spectrum of the status of women within society down through the ages, and in biblical and christian contexts; thereby we are enabled to see more clearly our own situation in the late twentieth century with respect to history and to our own culture. Within this broad field, particular works focus on quite specific aspects: hermeneutics, women's roles, ministry, etc. The value of this literature within theological education lies in its function of promoting discussion and raising issues, whether the works are prescribed as foundational texts or secondary reading. No theological library can afford to ignore this literature.

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