

BOOK REVIEWS

Danker, Frederick W *Multipurpose tools for Bible study*. Rev. and expanded ed. Minneapolis : Fortress Press, 1993. \$33.95, 0800625986 (Review copy supplied by Open Book, 703 Station St, Box Hill, VIC 3128)

Frederick Danker, a well-recognised scholar and somewhat of an all-rounder, has published in the areas of biblical interpretation, Hellenistic language and culture, linguistics and archaeology. Among his works is a practical guide to the resources required for serious Bible study. The first edition of *Multipurpose tools for Bible study* (1960), was quickly followed by the second (1966) and third (1970) editions. What we have now is a thoroughly revised handbook which takes note of the developments in biblical scholarship over the last twenty years. Danker includes items published up to 1992.

Fifteen brightly-written chapters include bibliographic essays on concordances, the New Testament, the Hebrew Old Scriptures, the Greek Old Testament, the use of the Septuagint, Hebrew and Greek grammars and lexicons, Bible dictionaries and versions. A chapter on Judaica is followed by one on 'Contextuality' which covers tools for the study of archaeology relating to the lands of the Bible, including atlases, specific types of documents and, correlatively, with the sociological and literary-critical study of such productions. The chapter on the Dead Sea Scrolls surveys the recent flurry of scholarly, and indeed, political activity accompanying the release of the previously unpublished fragments. Finally there is a valuable section on commentaries, older and recent, which provides guidance on their use. Indeed in most chapters Danker adopts this pattern of following his bibliographic work with a discussion on the *use* of the resources.

There are a number of special features. For example, the 1970 edition was criticised for failing to deal adequately with older literature. In this present work Danker is particularly helpful in providing guidance on aging resources. This is not simply to satisfy antiquarian curiosity. Some publishers of recent reprints of earlier commentaries border on being unprincipled, in that they provide no indication of the original date of publication. Unwary students may well think that Matthew Henry produced his commentary a decade or two ago instead of in the early years of the eighteenth century.

The indexes of subjects and names are extensive, the latter helping to trace the lineage of many of the resources. However, given the multiplicity of edited works, a title index would have been a most useful addition. If you did not know that the editors of *The women's Bible commentary* were Carol Newsome and Sharon Ringe you would have to browse the chapter on commentaries in the hope of locating a reference. Likewise are students expected to know that the editor of *The Times atlas of the Bible* was James Pritchard? On second thoughts, however, if serendipity be the means of making happy discoveries, no harm can come of searching one of Danker's carefully delineated chapters.

In the interests of on-going scholarship one may have expected some reference to the major periodical indexing and abstracting services in the field. Names such as Robert North, Gunter Wagner, and Paul-Emile Langevin are not to be found. But when so much is given, it is churlish to ask for more and, for this genre we are well-served by Joseph Fitzmyer's discussion in, *An introductory bibliography for the study of scripture*, 3rd ed. Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1990 (chapter 2).

Danker intended that the work should provide students with a selection of basic resources for biblical study and, at the same time, provide some guidance in the use of the tools. It could also provide a good refresher course for ministers and even allow specialists to pursue information beyond their own areas of research. The work admirably fulfills these intentions and is highly recommended. Theological libraries should consider acquiring copies for the reference and general collections.

Lawrence D McIntosh
Joint Theological Library
Parkville, Vic 30521

Huang, Samuel T., ed. *Modern Library Technology and Reference Services*. New York: Haworth Press, 1993. 139 pp. US\$24.95 cloth ISBN 1-56024-458-5 (available from Astam Books)

Also published as *The Reference Librarian 39*, *Modern Library Technology and Reference Services* contains a collection of frank, realistic and practical essays about the impact of electronic information sources on reference work. The twelve essays discuss the advantages and disadvantages of electronic information sources in relation to the educational environment. These essays introduce important questions about the management of electronic information sources and leave them open for discussion. The essays are written by a number of information professionals. Each essay has an abstract, introduction, body and conclusion, and includes informative subheadings. A bibliography is provided at the end of each essay.

The first essay surveys the impact of online and CD-ROM materials on library activities. The second reviews recent studies of the reference tools. The next three essays present excellent combinations of educational theory, information philosophy and practical experience. One discusses the design of a program for training paraprofessional staff in the use of online media; another provides critical and humorous accounts of undergraduate responses to online media and discusses the respective roles of the library and the faculty in promoting informed use of research tools; another discusses the librarian's role in promoting the development of lifelong self-education skills in the user. The next paper describes the attempts by the Sterling C. Evans Library at Texas A&M University to tailor reference area design to usage patterns, while the seventh contribution describes the Kennedy Library's one credit point course for undergraduate students. The eighth essay reports that researchers tend to rely upon the librarian to perform their electronic searches. Essay nine discusses the choice among print, microform and online reference media. The tenth essay discusses planning and organizing new services utilizing electronic media. The eleventh essay describes an interesting case study. In 1992 two California State University libraries subscribed to a number of networks on a trial basis. The article describes the advantages and disadvantages of the different networks. It also analyzes the effect library policies had upon user satisfaction with the networks. This article includes an appendix which reports user responses on an evaluation form. The final essay observes the trend for centralization as electronic media facilitate the transfer of information to other libraries.

Modern Library Technology and Reference Services represents a practical approach to the demands of electronic media in the library. While the case studies are American, the experiences of other libraries may help the information professional to identify features required in an online service, plan its installation, and educate staff and clientele in its use.

Cecelia Drewer
Lakemba, NSW

AUSTRALASIAN RELIGION INDEX

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