Chapter 5
PERSONNEL RESOURCES

Introduction

Theological libraries will require unusual personnel resources in the next two decades in order to fulfill their essential mission. The educational roles of librarians will continue to expand and the planning roles of library officers are becoming more and more complex. As computer systems take a larger place in all aspects of documentation and information handling, librarians will provide the essential management of these resources. There are three areas of special need, (1) the number of librarians required by our schools, (2) the initial preparation of these persons, and (3) the continuing professional development of these persons.64

The Need for Theological Librarians

To operate effectively, libraries need professionally trained staff as well as skilled clerical staff. Minimally four areas needs professional leadership in a theological library, (1) book selection, (2) cataloguing and bibliographic description, (3) reference and collection interpretation, and (4) administration and planning. In more complex libraries services such as circulation, acquisitions, archives, special collections, and audio-visual materials also may require professional leadership. In the near future computer services are likely to require substantial professional direction as well. It is necessary to evaluate the service requirements in each of these areas.

64 In this report librarian denotes a person who by training and experience is qualified to render advanced and specialized bibliographic services and to give administrative leadership to a library or some component thereof. In most libraries, librarians hold from one third to half of the staff positions with the remaining positions filled by clerical persons presenting a variety of skills. Librarians are considered professionals and normally have graduate education in librarianship, i.e., the M.L.S. degree, and/or in the bibliographic aspects of another discipline. In many schools they hold faculty appointment.
Public Services

In the first instance, what customarily are defined as public services, i.e., reference, bibliographic instruction, circulation, stack maintenance, inter-library lending, database searching, are functions of the user clientele of the library. That is, they relate less to the size of the book collection than to the number of students enrolled in the school. Reference and bibliographic instruction certainly are services which should be provided by professional personnel in all theological libraries. In many libraries one staff person carries responsibility for both of these services and only in libraries serving small student bodies (say fewer than 100) would such a staff person be able to carry additional responsibilities as well. In much larger schools, two or three public service librarians might be required. This would be true especially in schools where the curriculum demanded that these librarians spend a considerable amount of time in classroom instruction or in direct student consultation. As with teaching assignments, student contact hours and availability for private consultation are the important variables. Therefore, the determination of adequate staff for these functions should follow the pattern which a school applies elsewhere in its allocation of personnel resources.

Collection Development

Collection development is an intellectual task which makes a significant demand on a librarian's time. Libraries are not mere...

Reference service is an active enterprise of collection interpretation. It should be structured in ways that make its benefits readily available to the students and faculty members of a school. Many libraries now provide reference service on a demand basis and use a referral system so that the librarian best qualified to deal with a specific case is consulted.

Bibliographic instruction often is wrongly perceived and even misnamed. The purpose of bibliographic instruction is not primarily to make students more proficient in their use of the library, although this has its own importance. Rather, its purpose is to teach appropriate and resourceful means by which students may undertake and sustain the research and study needs of professional practice in their chosen field of ministry. The goal of bibliographic instruction is to complement the other influences within a school's curriculum which motivate students towards scholarly self-reliance and initiative in the pursuit of theology and ministry.
aggregations of books. What distinguishes a library from a collection of books is not primarily the organization and classification system which libraries use, but the deliberate fashion in which the aggregation of books has been assembled. Collection development is the work by which a librarian applies a collection development policy to the field of current publications and often to the antiquarian trade as well. The nature and extent of this bibliographic pool is determined by the theological curriculum, not the

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67 The collection development policy translates the educational and research programs of a school into a bibliographically useful tool. It focuses on the intellectual content of the library and reflects the intersections between the educational programs of the school and the current movements of theological inquiry. A collection development policy is an educational planning resource which every institution must have. It governs how materials are acquired for a collection and how the collection is shaped by the retention of older material. It must include the institution's requirements for the scope and level of library resources. It is a key ingredient in determining inter-library cooperation. A collection development policy is a dynamic tool of educational administration. It must be accompanied by ways and means of evaluating its effectiveness and modifying its provisions.

A collection development policy also must be supported by systems and procedures which assure that the policy is being implemented. These systems and procedures should inform the bibliographer about the availability of books both in the current trade and in the antiquarian market so that the materials identified as important for acquisition by the collection development policy may in fact be obtained. The implementation procedures reflect the world of bibliography properly. These processes establish, as it were, the bibliographic pool from which specific material for the library is selected and acquired. They are the means by which the collection development policy is put into practice and these systems need to be as sophisticated bibliographically as the collection policy is sophisticated theologically.

An adequate collection program places the collection itself before money. A collection program should allow administrators to determine, at least with reasonable approximation, the types and number of books, periodicals and other library materials the school expects to acquire in a given fiscal period. Price trend lines and book trade statistics should allow these estimates to be translated into budgetary terms. If budget adjustments are then required, they should be reflected in revisions in the collection development policy. Only this process can provide a measure of quality in the acquisitions program of a library.
Personnel Resources

size of the library and its rate of growth, or even the size of the school. That is, a collection development officer working in a library which plans to acquire say 2,000 monographic titles must work through essentially the same bibliographies, catalogues, and book lists as must the bibliographer working in a library which intends to acquire twice the number of titles. The pool of potentially desirable titles is approximately the same in both cases and

68 Collection size inevitably is a function of the purposes for which it has been developed. Time, of course, also is a significant factor in collection size. Within the ATS the older schools tend to have larger libraries, but this is not uniformly true. Some recent institutions have pursued vigorous collection development programs. These purposes are governed by the degrees offered by the school and the extent to which the library is perceived as the primary resource for faculty development. In most schools, excluding those which offer the research doctorate, the seminary library is the primary if not virtually exclusive bibliographic resource for first degree and intermediate degree students. Faculty members in these institutions probably rely on specialized resources of other libraries. That is, most seminary library collections serve reasonably limited teaching and research objectives.

These limited objectives, however, must be set within the overall library roles discussed in Chapter 2 above. The local institutional definition of the purposes of its library collection must be stated within these roles. Thus, the size of a collection will depend on the range of topics and the depth of coverage within any given field or collecting focus a school wishes to document. Only in this sense is quality related to collection size. A larger collection either includes more topics or documentation from more areas, or it has material in greater detail.

Quality in a library essentially serving first degree students has to do primarily with the availability of the texts which fundamentally sustain the theological disciplines. These are the texts without which one could not interpret the Bible or understand the development of Christian thought in its essential historical and constructive aspects. Libraries most often depend on an array of bibliographies, book lists, library catalogues, and secondary sources of bibliographical significance to establish this concept of quality. Of course, scholars recognize many of these texts by first hand familiarity, but the tedious work of evaluating a library collection almost always involves comparing holdings with the widely accepted bibliographical standards in the several disciplines.

Quality in a library collection also has to do with balance. This is not to say that all fields should be represented equally, but only that they should be presented fairly both in terms of historical Christianity and in terms of a school’s ethos. Thus, in affecting balance within a collection, it is often the fields that are furthest from a school’s tradition which are the most difficult to represent fairly. Yet, this fairness and balance are essential in a library of quality.
it is the reviewing of this pool rather than the actual selection which is time consuming and intellectually demanding. The only factor which might increase or reduce the time this work requires is if some large publishing block, e.g., a language group or a geographical region, is specifically included or excluded.

While collection development work may not be a full time task in most of our theological libraries, it is a task which easily may occupy between one third and one half of a librarian's time.

Administration and Planning

General administration is not usually viewed, except in the very largest libraries, as a fulltime duty. The time it does require depends on total staff size, the general administrative style of a school, and the availability of administrative support services such as financial reporting and management information systems.

Bibliographic Description

The staff required for bibliographic description is related directly to the number of monographic titles and serials which the library adds. Other significant variables include the availability of computer assistance and the amount of original cataloguing required by the collection. Most libraries have developed time/cost estimates for cataloguing different types of materials. As a library achieves practical efficiency in descriptive work, these estimates become very accurate indicators of the time and staff required to handle the acquisitions program.89

89 There cannot be, of course, a precise correlation between technical staff and acquisitions, but some correlations may be established within certain thresholds.

One endeavor in which our theological libraries could perform a most useful service to each other would be to report annually operating statistics which have a special value for planning and administration. For many years the ATLA has asked its institutional members to report important statistics and most institutions do so. The quality and usefulness of these statistics has improved in recent years. Nevertheless, there are some measurements which would be welcomed additions to them.

Cataloguing statistics would greatly assist schools in determining adequacy of
Personnel Resources

Few libraries have a librarian working full time in each of the four areas discussed, public services, collection development, bibliographic description, and administration. On the average, the seminars have 2.3 persons holding professional/academic appointment in their libraries. Forty-nine schools, however, report only one librarian and seven schools reported no professional staff person in their library.\textsuperscript{70} Thus, when one considers the demands of these professional functions, recognizing that the significant variables affecting the work load in some of these fields is neither the size nor rate of growth of the library, we conclude that our schools, except perhaps for the very smallest, probably do not have an adequate number of librarians. The need for professional library staff should be assessed in light of the foregoing analysis of staff responsibilities. Quality in a library depends in substantial measure on staff. It appears that many schools will need to add professional library personnel in order to achieve and/or maintain this quality.

The Preparation of Theological Librarians

The initial academic and professional preparation of theological librarians is an enterprise of some ambiguity. As with many educational administrators, few theological librarians apparently procedures and staff. These figures could include, for example, titles catalogued with usable copy supplied by the Library of Congress or some other source, the number of titles requiring original cataloguing, and now in the machine environment the number of titles for which catalogue copy needs to be upgraded. These figures then could be linked to staff time, both professional and clerical, required for the work. Over a few years we could derive very significant patterns of cataloguing activity and efficiency.

We know with some accuracy how many professional and clerical staff members our libraries employ, but it would be useful to know what responsibilities these people carry and what amount of their time is given to each duty.

None of this information can be used in naive ways and no two libraries operate identically. Yet, averages and trend lines do provide helpful clues about library operations and effectiveness. The ATLA should expand its role in gathering meaningful management data and operating statistics. Such a record for ATS members would be most helpful in assessing library adequacy.

\textsuperscript{70} Question 59.
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION • Supplement 1984

start their post baccalaureate education with the unequivocal goal of serving in this particular capacity. The people presently in theological librarianship reflect an educational background which generally includes a library science degree, now almost uniformly a master's degree, and some study in a seminary.71 Not a few have additional graduate education. Table 2 shows, however, that there is not a single or even preferred program of career preparation for theological librarians. Theological education alone certainly is not considered adequate preparation as only seven percent of the librarians are trained exclusively in this track, whereas 175 (50%) of the librarians are trained in the M.L.S. track exclusively. One hundred twenty-five (36%) persons were trained in both tracks.72

This picture of current staffing in theological libraries is supported by the the fact that respondents to our questionnaire are singularly convinced that a library science degree rather than a theological degree is of first importance for theological librarians.73 This response is the more ambiguous because the doctorate in library science was ranked lowest in importance. The middle ground is held by those who recognize the value of a divinity school degree either alone or with a library science degree. We must suspect, however, that a different response to this question would have been obtained from the officers who actually appoint library personnel. Given the actual degree preparation of persons now serving as theological librarians, it is clear that the schools prefer librarians with much more graduate education, and this in theology, than the librarians think important.

The schools should be encouraged strongly in this regard.

71 There are few library schools which offer a specialization in theological librarianship. Where theological bibliography and librarianship are taught, it is not in the same graduate departments as the other theological and religion disciplines.

72 This table is based on the data for question 60. In reviewing the frequency tabulations, one has the impression that librarians serving in schools with only one or two professionals and senior librarians in larger institution are trained in both divinity and librarianship. That is, more of the people trained exclusively in the M.L.S. track are working in larger institutions which may need more staff members with specialized bibliographic expertise.

73 Question 61.
### TABLE 2

**Graduate Preparation of Theological Librarians**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Librarians Serving in Responding Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M.Div. Track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Div.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Div. + M.A.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Div. + Ph.D.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Div. + Other</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M.L.S. Track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.L.S.</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.L.S. + M.A.</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.L.S. + Ph.D.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.L.S. + Other</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>175 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M.Div. and M.L.S. Track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Div. /</td>
<td>M.Div./ M.Div./</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.L.S.</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.L.S. + M.A.</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.L.S. + Ph.D.</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.L.S. + Other</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>125 (36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>N = 348</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Theological librarianship is, by definition, an interdisciplinary field and it would be well to move concretely toward the expectation that a person entering this field should hold first level graduate degrees, i.e., master’s degrees, in both librarianship and theology. Theological library officers must be prepared to provide imaginative and far-sighted leadership in the exercise of library service and planning for the future. The rigors of fulfilling these educational roles will demand more training than is usually associated with the M.Div. and M.L.S. degrees, and it may be that the research doctorate soon should become normative for most theological library directors and many other library staff members as well.74

74 Apart from the response to question 61, librarians reported, albeit indirectly, their inclination in this regard in another section of the questionnaire. When asked to rank needs and potential services which would be of most importance for their libraries, the highest importance was given to integrating library services more effectively with the teaching and research programs of the schools (question 70). This estimate also correlates with the need for more effective library use reported by Carroll, 112.) Practically speaking, it would be expected
We conclude, therefore, that the seminaries need to insist on the same quality and level of training for their librarians as they expect of other officers serving similar functions and purposes. At a minimum it should now be expected that theological librarians hold first level graduate/professional degrees in both library science and divinity. Advanced degrees in theological disciplines should be encouraged and we should not be surprised to find such advanced training normative in most institutions in the next few years.

**Continuing Education for Theological Librarians**

The other personnel need in theological libraries is for high quality continuing education. This education should include bibliography, management and theology. Traditionally the ATLA has provided some continuing education in librarianship. This has been strengthened recently and there is evidence that the members are quite satisfied with the quality of this undertaking.\(^{75}\)

The need of librarians to stay abreast of developments in theology is different from that of faculty, but it is no less important. This fact often is overlooked because of the generalist perspective required by much library work. In fact, theological librarians must be generalists in several fields of theology, but they must be specialists in their primary discipline, theological bibliography. The schools must regulate work loads and provide leaves of absence, fellowships, and other resources necessary for librarians to maintain their intellectual and professional vigor. These mechanisms are not different from those which the schools use to encourage the growth of other faculty members.

Furthermore, the management of libraries is becoming more complex. This is due chiefly to the intricacies of computer based bibliographic systems and the services which derive from these systems, as well as the demands of collection management brought on by constrained financial resources compounded by the needs of

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\(^{75}\) Questions 66 and 68.
Personnel Resources

collection preservation. On the other hand, the informational, diagnostic, and planning tools for effective administration are becoming more available. Their mastery and effective implementation requires appropriate experience and training.

Management training is a need which libraries share with other segments of seminary administration. Indeed, what is needed precisely is for the management and planning strategies for the libraries to be fully incorporated with those which operate generally within our schools. Thus, continuing education for management in libraries needs to be done as part of such education for other seminary administrators.

Summary of Personnel Resources

Theological libraries will need to cultivate their personnel resources in three particular ways over the next two decades.

1. Seminaries will need to reassess the number of librarians appointed in light of the realistic service requirements of the schools. Most probably, more librarians will be needed in most institutions.

2. The seminaries must strengthen their expectations if not requirements for the initial preparation of theological librarians. In terms of current degree content and nomenclature, this means the seminaries should require both the M.L.S. and M.Div. degrees for candidates seeking initial appointment. Advanced degrees, particularly research degrees in theological fields will become normative for appointment in many schools and should be expected for promotion and for senior posts.

3. Continuing education for theological librarians must be expanded. Mechanisms for this education seem well in place for professional and academic education. Training for management, however, needs to be enhanced and needs above all to be done within a context which includes other academic administrators.

4. The strategies appropriate for securing the personnel resources discussed above are both familiar and obvious
as are the means by which continuing scholarly and professional education are pursued. The pressures of accreditation as well as pressures from faculty and students should encourage the schools to appoint a sufficient number of trained persons to provide quality library service. These same pressures also should encourage the schools to raise their requirements for appointing library personnel. Certainly the graduate education resources available to North American students are more than ample for training librarians at the doctoral level. We should expect also that continuing education opportunities will be more accessible to librarians and that especially the ATLA will become more aggressive in providing substantial continuing education programs.
Chapter 6

PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Introduction

Libraries are complex buildings which must provide reader space of differing types; book stack space that assures collection security, preservation, and expansion; and staff office and work space. Increasingly, library buildings also must house computer hardware. Each of these aspects of a library building is important to overall library effectiveness. The design, construction, and maintenance of library facilities are, of course, local institutional obligations. The need for book stack space is severe in many theological libraries and the solution to this need also primarily is a local problem. But some aspects of this issue merit coordinated and cooperative consideration. The following discussion centers on problems associated with the housing of the book collections.

Library Buildings

The theological libraries are facing a serious space problem and, given the number of schools which have faced this problem recently and yet must do so again in the near future, it appears to be a chronic problem. Nearly one half of the theological libraries will need to construct new library stack space within the next five years. Another 22 libraries will need to do so within 10 years. Unless the shelving needs are met by alternative means, capital expenditure for library construction in the near future will be substantial and could become the major concern of most theological libraries.

As reflected in Table 3, the seminaries will exercise considerable ingenuity in dealing with their shortage of book stack space. Except for new buildings and cooperative book storage, most other space conservation and expansion possibilities will be used widely.

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76 The literature describing library buildings and equipment is large and is well known. There are few considerations which a theological library building does not share in common with other academic libraries, hence it seems unnecessary to review a subject otherwise well documented.

77 Questions 49 and 50.
TABLE 3
How Schools Will Provide for Library Growth

Mean Score Ranking by Desirability (1 = most desirable)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Desirability</th>
<th>Likelihood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weeding</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of pre-planned expansion</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>space already built</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of compact shelving</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>2.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct new addition</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>3.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renovation to use existing</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>space more effectively</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of microfilm as replacement</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>2.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local book storage</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct new building</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative book storage</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The space solutions which appear most desirable and likely are essentially local solution. This may be unavoidable given the nature of institutions and their commitment to a certain self-sufficiency. Yet there are some cooperative considerations which should not be neglected.

Apart from constructing new buildings, the use of microfilm is the most highly ranked preference for dealing with stack space shortage. This may be due in part to the attention which is being focused on preservation. This preference, however, must be bal-

78 Weeding has always been a somewhat shadowy but nevertheless important element of library practice. Most libraries weed their collections on some basis and have done so for many years. Normally, weeding is done to shape and refine a collection—to keep a collection which does not support advanced research current attuned to the programs of a school. Also, many libraries regularly prune their collection of out-dated multiple copies which once were used for reserve purposes. Editions which vary only by imprint often are weeded in the same process.

On the other hand, and apart from these benign procedures, weeding done to restrain collection growth or to intentionally prolong the useful life of a library building, is likely to be more vigorous and less discriminate in that it operates under the exigencies of time and space. This procedure itself would operate with greater care and sophistication if it were supported both by a collection analysis profile and a preservation program.
Physical Resources

anced with the fact that microfilm does not rank unusually high as a present means of preservation. Substantial reliance on microfilm will reduce building space needs although, unless the microfilm work is done in some cooperative non-profit activity or is already available commercially, it may prove unusually expensive for a school to microfilm its own materials for its own needs. Also, the generation of microfilm is a slow and labor intensive activity which, while it may be a preferred means of collection preservation, may not appear as attractive as a means of solving building space problems.

While not ranked highly, cooperative book storage also may be an important and effective means of extending the useful life of some libraries. Indeed, half of the schools responding to the questionnaire already are using some limited form of book storage for this purpose. Climate controlled storage facilities reduce the rate of physical deterioration of books and thereby contribute to the preservation of library materials. Storage supported by an effective retrieval system is well suited for dealing with large serial files which are little used and in good physical condition. Storage may be a viable solution for holding infrequently used serial and monographic titles prior to microfilming. Of course, there are some materials which should be kept in their bibliographic integrity for as long as possible and storage is a most appropriate means for dealing with these materials.

A Strategy for Conserving Book Stack Space

The desirability and feasibility of book storage both locally and cooperatively should not be dismissed too hastily. Several issues converge here. The need for material preservation and the proposal to use microfilm to alleviate pressing shortages of building

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79 Question 54. Of nine current preservation practices, microfilm was the fifth most commonly used. Furthermore, the ATLA Board of Microtext was not ranked as highly as one might have expected in its importance for local libraries (question 67).

space might be coordinated advantageously. Microfilming for preservation purposes, discussed above (p. 48 ff.) responds to the pressures of research and scholarship as well as to the pressures of physical deterioration. Preservation microfilming must be a somewhat deliberate process, i.e., to be done effectively it needs to proceed along according to some bibliographic principle. Microfilming to alleviate stack space shortages brings other ingredients into the mix. Libraries wishing to use microfilm to alleviate space shortages need to displace a large volume of material rapidly and/or predictably. They need to make room for shelving new material quickly and they need to do so in predetermined stack areas. Unless almost all of the physical material to be displaced has been microfilmed already, it must be filmed or stored before the new space may be used.

Thus, book storage as a prelude to preservation microfilming may offer distinct advantages to many seminaries. By placing large amounts of material in storage, libraries could avoid building new stack space. While such storage may be done locally, there are particular benefits to doing so cooperatively either on a regional or national basis. If part of a coordinated preservation program, the material in storage then could be microfilmed according to the procedures and priorities which are most appropriate for such a preservation program. Advantages of cost sharing also would accrue to a cooperative program.

A cooperative program of storage and preservation microfilming would be unusually efficient for large periodical backfiles. Several factors sustain this observation.

1. The large scale microfilming of periodicals will deal dramatically and promptly with building space problems. Periodical backfiles occupy substantial stack space, usually with a high ratio of shelf space per title.
2. The ratio between bibliographic description and material microfilmed is very favorable in the case of periodical back files.
3. In many instances, the very nature of microfilming periodical backfiles dictates that this work be done cooperatively in order to complete files.
Physical Resources

4. Periodical literature enjoys a rather precise citation convention making centralized holdings and selective distribution effective.\textsuperscript{81}

5. The fact that many institutions hold the same periodical files suggests that such a program potentially will benefit many institutions.

The results would benefit the institution placing material in storage and all other libraries and scholars needing the material in the future. A cooperative book storage program for theological library materials, especially periodicals, coordinated with a vigorous preservation program would be a major unprecedented endeavor of the theological education community. A preservation program may proceed independently, but a storage program would have the added benefit of rendering unnecessary considerable new library construction in the years immediately ahead.

Summary of Physical Facilities

The next two decades will bring the need for substantial theological library construction, mostly in renovation and building enlargement for book stack space. The schools also will use means to limit collection growth, and will use space saving techniques such as compact shelving and microtext to alleviate these pressures. Collection storage will be used less frequently. For the most part, solutions to these problems will be local solutions requiring the expenditure of local resources, yet only by cooperation may book storage and large scale microfilming be done effectively. Programs in both arenas now should be actively explored.

Chapter 7

COORDINATING STRUCTURES

Introduction

It may not be customary to think of structures for coordinating library activities as resources, but these structures play a significant role in providing many of the services expected and received on a day to day basis in our theological libraries. Because libraries have moved resolutely to a posture of considerable interdependence, these coordinating and cooperative structures have become essential in many areas of library service.

Coordinated approaches and solutions will be required for almost all of the special needs libraries will face in the next two decades. This report has called attention to collection development needs, preservation needs, personnel needs, and building needs and in each case the most desirable, and in some cases only, solutions will come as the result of coordinated and cooperative action. In good measure this is true not for reasons of economy or altruism, but because of the powerful synergy which is more and more accessible to our libraries. We must now give attention to the creation and perpetuation of those structures which will enable the theological libraries to pursue their individual and collective goals with the greatest effectiveness and mutual benefit.

Strengthening Regional Coordinating Structures

Over the last several years theological libraries have established numerous regional cooperative mechanisms. These mechanisms are viewed quite favorably; they are considered effective, and their dissolution would be viewed with alarm in many instances.\(^2\) Furthermore, a strong preference exists for regional as opposed to national cooperative structures.\(^3\) No doubt regional programs are more responsive to local needs. Local schools have more influence in shaping regional programs and the services and

\(^2\) Questions 45 and 46.

\(^3\) Question 70.
Coordinating Structures

materials shared in a regional program would seem more accessible.

It must be realized, however, that developments in electronic communication and information sharing may weaken some of the apparent advantages of regional cooperative library programs. Already the widespread use of large national data bases has created a consciousness much wider than regional affiliations and we expect that this will increase. It will be important to reassess the several regional structures among theological libraries to determine what they must and should continue to do regionally and what may and should be done nationally.

It is a matter of concern that a majority of these programs have been negotiated by the librarians without agreements by other academic officers or trustees. While such agreements may be effective currently, they may be vulnerable to enervating pressures in the future. The strength of cooperative programs is their reliability and durability. As libraries become more dependent on these programs and invest more of their own resources in them it will be important for these programs to have solid institutional, structural, and financial support.

An important strategy for strengthening regional cooperative library programs would be to establish an analysis and evaluation consultation service for these programs. Nowhere in the normal institutional review and evaluation processes, including accreditation review, are the various clusters, consortia, and regional library programs reviewed as programs. This is not to say there are uniform expectations or services that the several regional library programs should provide, but a consultation program would assess these regional programs in light of their own goals. Such a consultation might establish the feasibility of additional or future services which the program should consider. Another value of a consultation program would be the identification of similarities and dissimilarities in the several programs. The resulting analysis would have strong comparative benefit for other regional endeavors.

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84 Question 43. This is an imprecise datum in that the responses are from institutions and several responses reflect the same cooperative program.
The Need for National Structures

A major impediment to theological library development is the lack of an effective structure to encourage, implement and sustain large inter-institutional programs which extend beyond present regional efforts. This is true in spite of the relatively little interest in national coordination of library service reflected in our survey.\(^6^5\) The fact remains that some specific and highly desirable services may be best, if not only, achieved by national coordination and the librarians answering the survey ranked some of these needs very highly, e.g., cooperative resource sharing.\(^6^6\) That such a structure is needed, however, owes to a number of factors.

The interdependent characteristic of libraries has been discussed in detail above.\(^6^7\) Unlike almost all other resources of a school, library resources are shared with scholars of other institutions. Furthermore, this sharing is reciprocal. A school both shares its library resources with other institutions and borrows library resources from other schools. Most academic officers have tacit understanding of this reciprocity. What is less well understood is the massive interdependence among libraries that has been and doubtless will continue to be built. Library self-sufficiency is no longer an achievable goal—many would say it never was.

This interdependence has been enhanced by other developments. Libraries and foundations have been working together closely for nearly two decades to create large and reliable computer systems for the exchange of bibliographical data. These systems also facilitate the sharing of resources, and eventually they will accommodate the sharing of machine readable documents. Not only does the existence of these systems mean that our schools must coordinate their library services with large centralized institutions, but also that local decisions are likely to have a greater effect on other libraries using the system or network. The networks themselves create the framework and reality of library

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\(^{65}\) Question 70. This relatively low ranking may be due to the fact that ATLA effectiveness in coordinating national programs also was rated quite low.

\(^{66}\) This local need was ranked sixth overall in question 70, and was ranked first among needs which might be addressed by cooperation.

\(^{67}\) P. 29 ff.
Coordinating Structures

coordination. Our theological libraries are now participants in these systems and beneficiaries of them. There is every indication that these systems have greatly aided our schools and it is most unlikely that our schools will pull back from these advantages. But it also will be necessary to establish mechanisms within and around these large bibliographic systems to assure the interests of theological libraries are being well served.

A structure is needed to think through the large and complex issues that cut across several sectors of theological education and librarianship. These are problems and solutions which are beyond the resources of any one institution. A structure is needed to encourage early research so that the information often essential to the planning of large and long-range needs is available. The fact that Project 2000 was established speaks in one way to the need for sustained attention to these matters as they affect theological libraries. A structure is needed to focus on these issues as they affect almost all institutions and to focus primarily if not exclusively on library needs, issues, and resources of the cooperative environment. The ablest leadership from all appropriate fields must be gathered to work on these issues.

88 This structure may well embrace the theological schools of both Canada and the United States. Distinctly national structures, however also may be needed.

89 The problems of coordinating structures for the university related divinity school libraries is unusually perplexing. These libraries, by their very nature, live with conflicting loyalties and commitments. Their first loyalties are to the university library systems of which they are a part. This is not merely true at the administrative, policy, or fiscal level. It is true also in collections, services, and staff. Uniformly, the university divinity library collections are developed independently with the university library collections. This fact impacts on all present or potential cooperative endeavors which the university related divinity libraries might consider. In such endeavors with other theological libraries the university related divinity library must carefully balance its commitments to other schools with its obligations to the university system of which it is a part.

Communication between university related research libraries is difficult at best. This is true in several aspects. Bibliographic communication functions within networks, but not yet across networks. The OCLC libraries have the facility to communicate electronically and programmatically with each other and the RLIN members will have the same facility. The TST (UTLAS) members work
Therefore, we recommend that the ATS, in consultation with the ATLA, establish a library resource development commission which will

1. assess the influence of the recommendations coming from Project 2000 and provide for the periodic up-dating of its analyses,

2. monitor the emerging needs of theological libraries within the broad context of theological education,

3. identify and sponsor research which will facilitate understanding of these needs,

...closely together. Yet, each of these networks essentially is closed to the others. This is highly unsatisfactory given the relatively small number of theological research libraries.

Furthermore, there is no structural mechanism to assist communication among these libraries. They share some structures with other theological libraries and have themselves developed some informal structures. Nevertheless, there is no mechanism to facilitate the timely exchange of essential information let alone program planning among these libraries. The large research oriented theological libraries are indispensable to the health and vigor of theological inquiry even though many seminaries seem to be pursuing a form of theological education that is more professional and less research oriented than previously may have been the case. It is important, therefore, for these libraries to find ways of addressing their common needs and, where possible, coordinating their activities to achieve maximum local and collective benefit.

Yet, even this proposal faces the difficulty of defining research libraries in the context of theological education. It is, of course, quite possible to identify university related divinity school libraries, but is this a useful classification for any bibliographic or service objective? It is more difficult to define a research theological library (see Peterson, "Collection Development...", 159-160). It is not enough simply to identify schools which offer the research doctorate. Rather, the issue is whether or not a library program fundamentally is driven by a research perspective. Clearly there are more than nine such theological libraries in North America. Not all of these libraries are university related in a close or technical sense of the word. Yet, is it conceivable that a theological research library could not be related in very specific ways to a major research university library? Probably not. It is the nature of research to become more specialized, but research can never truly predict where the significant intersections will occur and where one line of inquiry will lead on to another. Thus, as difficult and even awkward as it may be, ways must be found to identify the university related/research oriented theological libraries in North America and bring them into a constructive and durable association.
Coordinating Structures

4. propose and define programs and instrumentalities to address these needs, and
5. seek funding for the appropriate instrumentalities to implement these programs.

Three other characteristics would mark this commission.

1. It would attempt to bring library program planning and general theological education program planning together.
2. It would use the resources and services of library agencies, especially the ATLA, as these might be appropriate.
3. It would establish appropriate relationships with other bodies, e.g., the Council on Library Resources, Inc. or the Council on the Study of Religion, whose concerns intersect those of theological librarianship.

This would not be a program commission but a planning and needs assessment commission. It would provide a mechanism for the seminaries and the libraries to do the one thing they need to do which they now find so difficult to do. It would provide a mechanism to provide some systematic direction to future library development.