



Volume 49 | Issue 2

Article 16

2006

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Recommended Citation

Terhune, Stanford (2006) "The Impact of the Christian Faith on Library Service," *The Christian Librarian*: Vol. 49 : Iss. 2 , Article 16.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/tcl/vol49/iss2/16>

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The Impact of the Christian Faith on Library Service

The library profession is in flux and uncertainty due to its lack of a well-founded philosophy of service. The Christian faith provides the necessary philosophical framework. Three implications follow from the application of a Christian worldview to library practice. First, Christian librarians should provide access to collections that will allow students to integrate faith and learning. Second, they should demonstrate love and concern for library users by offering diligent, humble service. Third, they should teach students the ethical use of information resources.

Christianity has an impact on "library service" in three areas. First, the word library presumes a collection of library materials: books, periodicals, microfilms, motion pictures, cassettes, records, and other forms of media. Second, the word service signifies the way the librarian goes about helping people find answers to their information needs. Third, correct use of library resources connotes proper library ethics. Before this paper discusses these three areas, it will be useful to survey the current state of library philosophy.

The Philosophy of Library Service

For centuries, librarians saw their role as that of collecting, placing in order, and guarding

collections of books. In the nineteenth century, this view broadened to allow readers free access to book collections. Recently, there has been a loss of focus about what the aims of library service should be. Paul Wasserman, a leading library science writer, suggests that

Because we are so pragmatic a craft, ... our educational objectives tend to be shallow and perfunctory. Not only do we not know many of the essential things needed if we are to shape our destiny, but seemingly do not care to know, and so we blissfully perpetuate ourselves in unquestioning innocence or stupidity ... Because we do not ask the hard questions, we complacently compartmentalize ourselves into the traditional containers and offer students the reassurance of our history. Only this no longer works in a culture and in a profession where our institutions and our ideology are the subject of excruciating reexamination and reassessment.²

Librarians have become so involved in their everyday duties that they seldom have time to stand back and think about the principles of their profession. In this century, the exponential increase in the amount published and the large number of students to be served has often focused the librarian's attention on the

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

This article originally appeared in *The Christian Librarian*, volume 25, issue numbers 3 and 4, May/August, 1982 - the ACL 25th anniversary special edition.

development of technical methods to house and provide intellectual access to the sheer mass of materials. Wasserman notes that

*When technical advances are made, too often they are viewed as ends in themselves rather than as devices for dramatically enlarging the scope of client service. At issue is the intrinsic institutional purpose: knowledge for what, libraries for whom? ... While libraries, whatever their type, remain value-neutral, they remain the arbitrary and bureaucratic servants of power which is nameless and uncommitted to the service of mankind.*³

Those whom the librarian is to serve often get lost from the librarian's sight because the librarian is distracted by the crush of new materials or by new technical advances. For Wasserman, "the question ultimately is how to harness the technical requisites of information processing in tandem with value perspectives essential to the determination of choice, or to put it another way, where, how, and for whom, for what ends, is the information system to be?"⁴

The "library" concept of the profession has changed from that of a passive storehouse of knowledge, a mere collection of books, into an information system. Some innovative thinkers have refocused the librarian's attention from the collection to the student. According to Robert S. Taylor,

*It is the process of matching resources with users, both current and potential, which defines, limits, and sets systems. It is the user who defines systems, not the physical object. The very fact that we thought of these things in the other order indicates the perfidious and unconscious assumptions of the whole profession. Everyone – the librarian, the information scientist, the documentalist – is concerned with the handling of materials, rather than with the needs of people: their needs must match the packages. This is an insidious form of forcing ideas into straitjackets.*⁵

Taylor suggests what the future role of librarians must be, and in so doing states a current concept of librarianship: "Librarians concerned with this interface [between the

library and the user] are middlemen between resources and users – negotiators, merchandisers, communicators, and generators of both questions and answers."⁶ Increasingly the role of librarians is seen to be that of information transfer specialists, acting solely as mediators in a value-free manner between information and those who seek it.

In this period of uncertainty, librarians are seeking new ways of fulfilling their roles. Rather than holding a static, mechanistic view of librarianship, librarians have moved into an organic/process mode of thinking about their field. For Taylor, "decisions should be made that will leave as many options open in the future as are feasible, economical and practical. This is not mere procrastination (although an element of this may exist) but a realistic estimate of the present state (or nonstate) of library thinking. It is also a reflection of both changing technologies and changing patterns of liberal education."⁷

As the preceding discussion has shown, the philosophy of library service is either nonexistent or in flux. I believe this is in part because of the changes taking place in library technology and practice, and because of a rebalancing of library service toward a client-centered philosophy. But it is also in flux and uncertainty because it is laid on the basis of human thought, and not on the basis of God's creation order and Christian truth, which is the only true basis for any lasting philosophy. I hope that in the following discussion some elements of a Christian philosophy of library service can be made clear.

The pattern of library service in a Christian college is intimately linked with a focused pattern of thought about Christian liberal education. Such an outline has been given in Arthur Holmes' *The Idea of a Christian College*. Holmes makes a point that is significant for a Christian view of the library's resources:

While Scripture is our final rule of faith and practice, not all the truth about everything is fully

*revealed therein. Rather, the eternal Logos has left his imprint on nature and man and history, and the truth discovered therein is God's truth too ... If all truth is God's truth, we must be free to explore it. If it all ultimately fits into a coherent whole, then our task is to interpret it as such by developing Christian perspectives in the natural and social sciences and the humanities, so as to structure a Christian world-view that exhibits plainly the principle that truth is one and all truth is God's.*⁸

This same truth – though admittedly not all of it – is contained within the Christian college library's collections. It is the purpose of the Christian librarian to help order and structure that truth, and assist faculty and students as they struggle to discover and organize that truth into a Christian worldview.

A primary goal of the Christian college is to educate its students, to equip them so that they can effectively function in the world in Christ's service. A Christian college should proceed in the same spirit as Paul when he said, "Him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature in Christ" (Col. 1:28 RSV). Christian students should take to heart his instruction, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom ... And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3:16-17 RSV).

As they pursue a Christian liberal arts education, Christian students should engage in the process of having their minds renewed and becoming wise. Some of this personal growth takes place in their relations with teachers and fellow students, some in studying the Bible, and some in the study of books and other kinds of library materials. As their critical capacities grow, they should be integrating faith and learning, developing a Christian worldview and specific concepts they will use in their vocation. While at a Christian college, students have creative interaction with their teachers and fellow students. But once they

leave, they will be much more dependent on the integrative skills they learned at college as they interact with books and other media if they want to continue to integrate faith and learning throughout life. If they have become entirely dependent on prepackaged Christian integration fed to them in college courses and from the library reserve bookshelf, they will lack library and other investigative skills to continue this task once they have left school. Therefore, it is the duty of the Christian librarian to teach students both basic and advanced library skills and critical interaction with books so that they can do this work independently.

The Christian College Library

Modern library thought sometimes views libraries as information systems, with the emphasis on methods of handling "information." The librarian is seen as a purveyor of information who is not concerned with the values contained in a particular book or piece of information, or its ability to impact a person's life. However, Taylor says, "As a part of the redefinition of the college library we wish to think of resources in a human context: humanness in all its guises as reflected in the content of a book or film, ... in the imaginative negotiation of a question in which a student suddenly realizes what it is to ask a question and seek an answer."⁹ While I can applaud the process by which a student comes to a deeper understanding of the content of a book or film, the ultimate reality these library resources can reveal goes deeper than an understanding of "humanness."

One of the basic assertions of the Christian faith is that there is order and meaning in the universe, the order and meaning God has given it in creation, as is shown in Genesis 1. It is on the basis of this inherent desire in mankind to discover the creational order that libraries are gathered together and that human knowledge as contained in library resources is classified in order. Archibald MacLeish has eloquently testified (though not from a Christian context) of the innate meaning of

the academic library:

By standing where it does at the center of the university – which is to say at the center of our intellectual lives – with its books in a certain order on its shelves and its cards in a certain structure in their cases, the true library asserts that there is indeed a “mystery of things.” Or, more precisely, it asserts that the reason why the “things” compose a mystery is what they seem to mean: that they fall, when gathered together, into a kind of relationship, a kind of wholeness, as though all these different and dissimilar reports, these bits and pieces of experience, manuscripts in bottles, messages from long before, from deep within, from miles beyond, belonged together and might, if understood together, spell out the meaning which the mystery implies.¹⁰

MacLeish concludes:

No, it is not the library, I think, that has become ridiculous by standing there against the dark with its books in order on its shelves. On the contrary the library, almost alone of the great monuments of civilization, stands taller now than it ever did before ... But the library remains: a silent and enduring affirmation that the great Reports still speak, and not alone but somehow all together – that, whatever else is chance and accident, the human mind, that mystery, still seems to mean.¹¹

Going beyond MacLeish, I believe that the human mind, however twisted by the fall into sin, can comprehend and be a channel for God’s truth, for God’s “meaning.” A Christian college library does contain this meaning. Among its resources as a whole and individually are many books and other resources which can give the student glimpses of God’s created order.

It is as the Christian student struggles with the intellectual content contained in library resources that he is able to develop an integration of his faith and learning. Through the Christian college library’s resources he can become aware of the heritage of Christian thought, the Christian history within which this thought was developed, the current state of Christian thought and action in various fields of human activity, and the thought

patterns of his culture. On this foundation he can seek new answers which will speak to his culture from a Christian viewpoint. The advanced Christian scholar attempting to integrate faith and learning also has need of a similar group of resources, although perhaps in greater depth.

The needs of the Christian scholar will determine the resources the Christian librarian must strive to collect. Without resources adequate to meet these needs, otherwise excellent library service will be frustrated. The specific resources chosen will depend on the educational emphases of the particular Christian college. The series of collection criteria that follow apply to Gordon College, but could generally fit other Christian colleges.

1. The Reference Collection

A strong reference collection is essential for indicating the full range of possibilities available for any research topic. A full range of periodical indexes, both general and in the teaching fields of the college, is essential. While limited financial resources will require good stewardship of what God has given, no skimping should take place in this area. Through reference materials, all the resources needed on a topic can be located. Even if the library does not have the resources located by the student through his use of the reference collection, it may be possible to find them among other libraries, especially in an area of rich library resources like Boston. Duplication of indexing coverage should be avoided because it is wasteful of both money and critical shelving space. Encyclopedias, dictionaries, and other reference materials should be purchased and kept current in a full range of disciplines. Since access to all Christian thought should be available, every source indexing Christian subjects or materials should be bought.

2. The Christian Classics

While a Christian college may not need to collect specialized theological and religious studies at quite the depth of a theological seminary, it should contain a collection of the

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great Christian classics from all historical periods: from Clement of Rome, through Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Spurgeon, on up through the modern period. Reference books listing these should be consulted. Especially needed are guides which not only list, but also explain the importance of various Christian classics and how they relate to the entire tradition. If not available, such guides should be compiled. A title-by-title comparison of such Christian classics should be made with the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Library to see whether the title might be accessible there, but some of these may need to be duplicated. It is important that the student be introduced to these works and realize that he is communing with the saints as he reads them. Through this process his mind is challenged to think in Christian terms.

The library should also select from the current Christian literature what is considered by the Christian reviewing literature (Christianity Today, Christian Scholar's Review, etc.) to be the most worthwhile. In the future, these will help give a picture of Christian thought at a particular time.

3. Church History

A selection of the best works in church history should cover the entire period of church history and culture, and works should also be chosen to present shorter periods in detail. Specialized histories dealing with missions, education, and other topics should also be chosen. In all cases, the holdings of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary should be noted, but here also significant works should be duplicated, even though the college does not have a formal church history program. Special history projects can and should be designed to deal with any number of topics in church history, and total dependence on the Seminary collection is unfair to the already burdened church history collection there.

It is important that the library collect all books which relate to church history within the Boston region, and also in the New England

region to some degree, since this is the tradition from which Gordon College grew. All evangelical literature from the regions, and all books which in any way relate to Gordon or institutions from which it grew are essential. A College Archives should be actively built and organized; it should contain all works relating in any way to Gordon College, Clarendon Street Church, A. J. Gordon, and Gordon's administrators, faculty, and friends.

These collections of local and institutional church history are essential for tracing the history and importance of the college, not only for Gordon, but also for the entire Christian community. Gordon College in many cases preserves these resources as unique copies, which otherwise would be completely lost to Christendom.

4. The General Collection

A balanced collection should be made in all fields in which the college gives instruction, in each field containing carefully selected textbooks, the major works in the field, and specialized works when they support specialized courses. It is unfair to the college community and a selfish policy for a professor to collect books only for his own research project in a field which is probably never going to be researched by an undergraduate.

To some extent, standardized college book lists can be relied on for selection, and the classics in various fields which may be antithetical to a Christian viewpoint (e.g., those which present racist, Marxist, or atheistic viewpoint) should be included to enable the Christian student to critique them. However, the best Christian critiques of these works should also be selected to enable the student to discover how the Christian viewpoint is opposed to these views. Books which expose injustice and suggest Christian social, political, and economic alternatives should be chosen.

As much as possible, works which integrate faith and learning should be chosen, or works which suggest how this integration can be done. Special bibliographies of these should be prepared.

To serve the entire college community, cookbooks, gardening books, books on automobile mechanics, high-quality fiction, and other forms of literature should be selected on a limited basis for extracurricular reading.

5. Specialized Collections

Special collections like the Vining, Brooks, and Temperance Collections should be cataloged, maintained, and publicized for maximum use. In various disciplines, laboratory or specialized collections should be maintained: a Juvenile Collection and Curriculum Library for education, art slides, music records, cassette recordings of Christian teaching and addresses, multimedia, and print and map collections.

Service

A Christian college's library that is not used is a great waste. Educating students and helping them use the library is a critical service if they are to realize the full value of the library's resources and use them to educate themselves, to seek God's truth, and to comprehend how they can work for God's purposes in society. Modern librarians often lose sight of service to the student. As library science professor Lowell A. Martin says, "You can have a powerful resource that is not used to capacity unless it relates itself to people. Librarians have been more resource-minded than people minded. A book is more likely to be acquired because it fills a topical gap in the collection than because it fills a discernible need of readers."¹²

As collections grow, and as libraries struggle with technical, management, and budgetary problems, the student can often become a secondary consideration: "Response to clients is another casualty of scale; indifference and neglect are accentuated by scale, and the bureaucratic values of academic, public, and governmental libraries transcend the human values they were meant to serve."¹³

This lack of concern for the student shows up at the most personal level of library service – the reference desk – where the student often learns much of what she knows about how to

use the library. A recent study by Billy R. Wilkinson showed that

Librarians, in too many instances, make no attempt to understand what the students are trying to ask. The student asks a hesitant question which is not what he really wants to know. The librarian, however, answers the question and makes no attempt to get at what was actually wanted. At some reference desks, one has a feeling of watching a traffic cop pointing to possible locations of information. There is little exchange, little dialogue, little interplay. The most important first step in giving good reference service is poorly performed. At other reference desks, the librarians must have been chained at birth to their chairs – they are still in the fetal position with heads down and almost hidden from the view of any potential questions. Only a few reference librarians even approach students who are clearly perplexed, uncertain, and in need of assistance.¹⁴

While there are more responsive reference librarians in some colleges, it is distressing that this is a common pattern. In reference work, the Christian librarian must be aggressive in serving students, asking them if they need help at the first sign of bewilderment. As Wilkinson states, "First, last, and always librarians must get intimately involved with students. We can no longer sit comfortably at our reference desks waiting for something to happen."¹⁵

The Bible gives a distinct alternative to this lack of concern at the reference desk. Our relationships with students should reflect the same kind of love that Christ has for us. Jesus said to the disciples, "love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12 RSV), and reinforced it with "This I command you, to love one another" (John 15:17 RSV). Further, Jesus said, "but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ... even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve ..." (Matt. 20:26, 28 RSV). Paul tied these two ideas together when he said, "through love be servants of one another" (Gal. 5:13 RSV).

Therefore, the librarian in the Christian college should not think of himself as superior to the student, even though he may know

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more. Nor should his own work priorities take precedence, especially in reference work, over the concerns of the student. Rather, he should show love toward the student by listening carefully to what the student wants, asking questions to help the student define her topic and decide what kinds of library resources she really needs. In this encounter, the reference librarian should take the role of a servant, helping the student to feel at ease in the process of library research, working with her as a partner in the search for knowledge rather than merely pointing in the direction of the resource. It is beneficial to lead the student around to the sources or reference materials, and show her how to use them to find answers to her questions. The reference librarian should continue to work with the student to further refine her topic and help her critically evaluate the sources so that she can decide whether her project is feasible.

Many of these same processes could just as well take place in the library of a secular college. But there should be a difference in the Christian college library in that the Christian librarian will give the distinct impression of loving, caring for, and accepting the person, no matter how uninitiated or personally difficult the student might seem. The Christian librarian should strive to create an atmosphere in which the student will feel free to return for help again and again without feeling that any negative stigma is being attached to him for doing so, or that he is imposing on the librarian.

The Christian librarian must seek to go further by suggesting how the student might critique the author's theories or arguments from a Christian point of view, or confirm the contribution that the author has made to knowledge. If the student's project deals with material antithetical to Christianity (such as secular humanism), the librarian should aid the student in searching for resources that explain such a position from a Christian point of view. The Christian librarian should attempt to teach the student how to undertake, define,

and research problems in multidisciplinary areas from a Christian worldview, leading the student through the steps of integrating faith and learning.

A Christian librarian should not focus on answering a question quickly so that she will again be free for more "professional" administrative or technical tasks. The Christian librarian should seek to help the student to mature in his ability to integrate his faith and learning (in cooperation with the teaching faculty), to inspire him to continue to use libraries for finding answers to his questions after he graduates, and to help him realize the tremendous Christian tradition which he can explore in a Christian college library.

Within the Christian college, love and service for one another imply that the Christian librarian should seek to encourage Christian community in her faculty relationships. Too often librarians can be on the defensive, worried about their status, feeling as if other faculty members might view them with condescension. In a Christian community, the librarian should seek to serve the faculty without worrying about her status. The college library is the center where all the disciplines meet – it is here where interdisciplinary and faith-learning integration will largely be carried out, at least by the student. The Christian librarian should not be so proud as to pretend she can know more than a few disciplines at any depth, and should be willing to go to her fellow Christians on the faculty for detailed advice as part of her task of helping students integrate their faith and learning. Like wise, she should make herself accessible to help the faculty. Any traces of defensiveness while protecting one's status should be laid aside by all faculty members in a community of Christian scholars. The librarian must be willing to serve as a helper for finding information for the faculty.

The principles of love and service have other implications for the Christian librarian's service. He should be willing to extend himself to help the student obtain access to

resources elsewhere when they aren't found in his college's library, rather than sending the student elsewhere to flounder on his own. This could necessitate working out cooperative agreements with other area libraries for interlibrary loans to undergraduates. Similar agreements might be reached with other Christian colleges. The Christian librarian should also seek to serve members of the surrounding communities who come to the library for information and reading material.

Finally, the Christian librarian can seek to serve the whole Christian college community. He should lay aside all "secular" professional competitiveness, ceasing to make size and quality comparisons with other Christian college libraries, which only serve to build up his pride in his college's library at the expense of the dedicated work of Christian librarians elsewhere. He should enter into genuine dialogue with other Christian librarians about how they can mutually serve each other. He should attempt to be involved actively in groups like the Association of Christian Librarians. As a contribution to faith-learning integration, Christian librarians and faculty at various schools could compile an annotated bibliography of books and articles on faith-learning integration in various disciplines.

Christian Library Ethics

The Christian librarian has the responsibility to teach college students the ethical use of the library and of the information they find there. As in every area of the Christian college's life, the student must be sensitive to the fact that he is part of a community, and that he must respect the rights of others. He must try to put into practice Christ's rule: "as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them" (Luke 6:31 RSV). A student who has little concern for maintaining a quiet study atmosphere, and who insists on carrying on conversations with his girlfriend or friends in study areas, thus disturbing other students, is not being considerate of others, but rather selfish.

Then there is the problem of hoarding, "borrowing," or otherwise keeping others

from using library materials to get the advantage over them for purposes of scholastic competition or selfishness. Students who would be conscience-stricken if they shoplifted think nothing of borrowing books from the library without charging them out – essentially stealing them – so that no one else can use the books or recall them. There are occasional instances when a student so wants a book for her own personal collection that she steals the book with no intention of returning it. Another way students manage to store books away for their exclusive use for a short time is to hide them in the stacks by placing a section of books in another section of stacks. Some students flaunt the reserve desk circulation policy and keep for days a book that the whole class needs, in spite of stiff reserve fines. They return the book days later pleading ignorance of its due date, or arrange for a friend to return it under the assumption that the library had lost track of it.

None of these practices can be condoned, and if the student feels that he can get away with them because the Christian librarian is supposed to be kind and forgiving, then ultimately the student suffers by becoming blind to an area of sin in his life. The Christian librarian must lovingly but strongly confront this type of student, so that the student can recognize his sin and repent of it.

The Christian librarian must also teach the student the ethical use of knowledge. The student must be taught that plagiarism is not ethical but rather a form of intellectual stealing. Students need to be taught the necessity of properly crediting the sources of their ideas. Christian students and faculty members are ethically responsible for obeying the copyright laws, and not trying to connive to get around them. Violation of copyright deprives the author of his rightful income from the sale of his writings.

Students must be shown that responsible use of knowledge means that a writer's ideas are to be correctly represented. If they are not, this could be seen as a form of false witness. The

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NOTES:

¹ From *Christian Librarianship: Essays on the Integration of Faith and Profession* © 2002 Gregory A Smith by permission of McFarland & Company, Inc., Box 611, Jefferson NC 28640. www.mcfarlandpub.com. This essay originally appeared in *The Christian Librarian* [U.S.A.] 26 (November, 1982): 4-6+

² Paul Wasserman, "Professional Adaptation: Library Education Mandate," in *Social Responsibilities and Libraries: A Library Journal/School Library Journal Selection*, ed. Patricia Glass Schuman (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1976), 379.

³ *Ibid.*, 384.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 383.

⁵ Robert S. Taylor, *The Making of a Library: The Academic Library in Transition* (New York: Becker & Hayes, J. Wiley, 1977), 6.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁸ Arthur E. Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 79.

⁹ Taylor, *Making of a Library*, 83.

¹⁰ Archibald MacLeish, "The Premise of Meaning," *Wilson Library Bulletin* 47 (January 1973): 425.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 427.

¹² Lowell A. Martin, "Changes Ahead," in *Social Responsibilities and Libraries: A Library Journal/School Library Journal Selection*, ed. Patricia Glass Schuman New York: R. R. Bowker, 1976), 322.

¹³ Wasserman, "Professional Adaptation," 382.

¹⁴ Billy R. Wilkinson, "A Screaming Success as Study Hall," in *Social Responsibilities and Libraries: A Library Journal/School Library Journal Selection*, ed. Patricia Glass Schuman New York: R. R. Bowker, 1976), 283.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

student must learn that the knowledge she finds in the library contains particles of truth. Although we do not see all of God's truth, when library resources seem to reflect created truth, they must be fairly presented, even though the truth they present may speak against the student's prejudices. If the student misrepresents the knowledge she discovers in the library so that she can prove her preconception and protect herself from change, she must be shown that she may be hiding some truth which God wants to make clear, thus hampering God's sanctifying work in herself and others.

The Christian librarian also has a responsibility to prevent the misuse of knowledge by discovering how the student intends to use the information. A non-Christian librarian would not be concerned in this area. For secular library service is not concerned generally about the values contained in information, but is only concerned in the efficient delivery of information. If a student seeks information on abortion and abortion clinics in order to have an abortion or to aid another student in obtaining an abortion, the Christian librarian needs to counsel the student to adopt a Christian course and to obtain Christian counseling in this matter. As another example, it would also be unethical for a Christian librarian to close his eyes to the possibility that a student might want birth control information so that he can safely carry out sinful sexual relations with his girlfriend. The information itself is not necessarily sinful. In fact, it might be quite ethical for the librarian to obtain this information for a Christian couple. The Christian librarian should be quite open in questioning the student about why he wants questionable information; if there is no wrongdoing, the student should have nothing to hide, provided the librarian ask for this information discreetly and lovingly.

The Christian librarian has the responsibility not to restrict access to information on the basis of race, worldly status, or gender. Although this is more likely to happen in the public library setting, the Christian college

librarian must make sure that those who are poor and powerless, to whom injustice might be done if they were not given certain information, are provided with the information they need to protect themselves. In this case, the Christian librarian cannot remain passive, but should aggressively seek to help the person find the needed information.

Conclusion

When God created the universe, He created it with an inherent order and meaning, some of which is reflected in the knowledge contained in library resources. The Christian librarian should seek a balance between building a library and serving students and faculty in a spirit of love. The Christian college library collection should reflect a Christian worldview, the Christian intellectual heritage of the whole church, the area's and the institution's Christian history, the best resources in the disciplines the college teaches, and various specialized collections which will serve both the local and larger Christian community. The library should contain works representing worldviews antithetical to the Christian worldview, but should also include works that critique these views from a Christian perspective.

The Christian librarian should seek to serve students and faculty in a spirit of love. She should seek to educate students to use the library's resources to integrate their faith and learning so that they will be equipped and motivated to continue the process after their graduation in libraries wherever they may be. The Christian librarian should cooperate with her fellow faculty members, seeking to open up communication so that they can work together in the education of the college's students. The Christian librarian should seek to work cooperatively with other Christian college libraries, to lay aside any interschool competition, for the good of the entire Christian community. Finally, the Christian librarian should teach college students the ethics of library use and the ethical use of the information they find there. †