

Protestant Theological Libraries: Past, Present and Future

by
Christine R. Mitchell

A Master's paper submitted to the faculty
of the School of Information and Library Science
of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in
Library Science.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

April 2005

Approved by

Evelyn Daniel, Advisor

Christine R. Mitchell. Protestant Theological Libraries: Past, Present and Future. A Master's paper for the M.S. in L.S. degree. April, 2005. 37 pages. Advisor: Evelyn Daniel.

Protestant theological education in the United States has progressed through three stages of development: college, parsonage and seminary. The theological library has progressed as well collecting, maintaining and disseminating a collection of resources that are the shared stories of believers in the Divine. Organizations such as the Association of Theological Schools and the American Theological Library Association have helped to further the work of theological libraries in the ministry of the seminary. What challenges will theological libraries face in the 21st century? Inextricably linked, theological education and the theological library must work together as partners to faithfully serve the Church.

Headings:

Religious libraries and collections

Religious education – History

American Theological Library Association

Association of Theological Schools

Religion has always been a part of the collective human conversation. There are several names we use to try to define the Divine, the Other, the Creator, etc. The Church in its various forms and traditions has tried to help believers and non-believers alike to seek out and fully experience life. Because of the personal nature of religion it is difficult to create a map where one can find their exact location. Though some people have that connecting thread of a particular faith tradition, their commitment and understanding may wax and wane throughout their lives. There are Christian denominations that follow strict guidelines as to the requirements of a faithful life, yet within the broader perspective of these traditions one can find variations of belief. With such diversity where do meaningful conversations begin? I would offer the theological library as a starting point. It is within these collections that a history of conversations is recorded. Conversations at different times, with different points of view, with different responses, but all with the same goal. This goal, to borrow from Anselm is faith seeking understanding.

History tells us that our European ancestors left their homeland in search of religious freedom in America. With this freedom came responsibility. Gone were the long-established resources they once considered part of their daily spiritual life. There were no church buildings. There were no trained ministers waiting to greet them upon arrival. In early America people had only each other to look to for spiritual guidance and support. Many of these communities hired ministers from Europe to come with them to the United States to be their church's leader. Some communities sent one of their own

back to Europe to be trained in the ministry and return as their pastor (Beach 1960, 132). It was not until the establishment of colleges such as Harvard and Yale, and seminaries such as the New Brunswick Theological Seminary that organized higher education was possible in the United States.

Using colleges and universities in Europe as models, the first educational institutions in America followed the traditions laid down centuries earlier. “The original seven liberal arts formulated during the middle Ages comprised the trivium of grammar, logic and rhetoric, combined with the quadrivium of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music” (Curtler 2001, 6). Grammar included the study of Greek, Hebrew and Latin. Almost all of the instruction was done through lecture by the professors in combination with disputations and declamations by the students. As the colleges and universities grew so did their needs and their resources. One of their most valuable, yet misunderstood, resources were their libraries.

Historically libraries developed in and around monasteries. It can be argued that the first librarians were in fact theological librarians. Monks and scribes carefully recorded and reproduced texts of all content. Included were histories, literature, grammar, and the Bible. These texts were essential to the mission of higher education and it follows that their preservation in a library was of great significance. Today there are libraries of all types ranging from academic to special to public. Though each serves a different constituency all offer a variety of services and resources.

The theological library has a book, if you will, in all three types of libraries. Clearly an academic library with a special focus on its collection development, it serves not only the school’s current students and professors, but also its alumni/ae as well as

local pastorate. With such a long-standing history and a wide range of roles, why is the theological library so misunderstood and under-represented? Why does the job title ‘theological librarian’ draw so many puzzled looks? What needs to be done to promote the ministry of the theological library on and off campus? What resources are available to the theological library to help in this ministry? No matter who engages this library, professor or student, pastor or layman, it is inextricably linked to the work of the seminary and ultimately the Church.

To consider these questions it is important to begin with the development of the theological library in its context alongside the development of theological education. This paper will reflect upon seminaries of the Protestant tradition of the Christian Church in the United States from its earliest inception, consider its current resources in the form of the Association of Theological Schools and the American Theological Library Association, and conclude with musings on the future of the theological library in America. William Walker Rockwell in his article “Theological Libraries in the United States” describes theological education as progressing through three stages. These stages are the college, tutorial or parsonage and seminary or clerical stage (1943-44, 545). Each stage offers its own perspective as to the role of the teacher, the student and the library. This perspective will serve as the framework to study the past, present and future of theological libraries.

The college stage encompasses a wide range of years from the early 1600’s to the mid-1700’s. The first established institution of higher education was that of Harvard College in 1636. Modeled after Cambridge in England, the curriculum included the studies of the trivium and quadrivium. The first class included nine men and one

teacher. Students were typically of the upper class in society having already attained an undergraduate education in Europe. A teacher was assigned to an entering class and this tutor, often just out of college for a year or two himself, would provide all of the instruction for this class. There were also professors who lectured on special topics that the students could attend (Kilgour 1972, 75). There was little change in this prescribed curriculum for decades to come.

The college stage of theological education sustained a lecture environment that had little use for the library. Little to no money was set aside for the acquisition of books or the employment of a librarian. Colleges and universities often depended on the donations of friends and alumni of the school to build the library. John Harvard gave his collection of over 400 volumes to the school bearing his name; whose collection that now exceeds 15 million resources (“Largest Academic Library in the World”). At a meeting of ministers in 1701, the Yale College library was begun. Each “brethren brought one valuable book from his own library to build the nucleus” of the college’s library (Rockwell 1943-44, 547). In 1716 Elihu Yale made a substantial donation of 417 books to the college, which now has over 20 subject-specific branch libraries. The largest of these libraries holds over 4 million volumes (“Libraries and Collections”).

The librarians of the college stage were either part-time or more frequently tutors “who was stuck with being librarian” (Kilgour 1972, 76). In a lecture and recitation curriculum there was little encouragement of students to pursue studies outside of the set program. “At Yale...the college library was not open to Freshmen and Sophomores; they couldn’t get in under any circumstances... The Juniors and Seniors by paying five dollars a year could have library privileges” (77). The library was open for one hour per week

and it was the responsibility of the tutor to ensure all the books were in their place on the shelf when he left for the day. The library was merely a repository for the books, folios and pamphlets brought over from Europe. “The Netherlands, Germany and Scotland were sources of books for the ministers of denominations which originated in those countries...” (Rockwell 1943-44, 547). The collections themselves were not exclusively theological. The Harvard library contained works of literature, history and the sciences. It was at great financial cost that professors and supporters of the school brought these books to the United States. Everyone agreed the students should have the best education, but debated as to what that meant. Frederick Kilgour, in his article “The Evolution of Academic Libraries” states that “for the first two hundred years of the educational process it was a classroom with one teacher and a recitation prepared from a specific book, with no references whatsoever to libraries” (1972, 75-76). The library’s significance had yet to be recognized.

The second stage of the development of theological education was the tutorial or parsonage stage. The tutors of Harvard, Yale and other schools were in a specific geographical location expressly for the purpose of advanced studies including ministerial preparation. This particular stage, prominent around mid-1700, reflected a more interpersonal and practical approach to study while maintaining the responsibilities of daily life at home. “A successful pastor would take one or two young men into his home, perhaps as boarders, supervise and discuss their reading, debate theological problems with them, and see to it that each received diversified practice in such church duties as could be performed by an unordained man” (Rockwell 1943-44, 545). The country’s politics at this time had a significant influence on bringing about this style of theological

education. The economic situation that resulted from the American Revolution and the French and Indian War made affording higher education nearly impossible for the average person. It also impacted the financial and transportation resources available to purchase new books for one's personal library.

The theological library in this stage generally consisted of what the pastor had in his own library. The library of the Reverend Asa Burton, who mentored over sixty men, "...is said to have stood on one long shelf" (Rockwell 1943-44, 547). The style of instruction required few books so there was no need for an organized library.

A significant change in theological education stood on the horizon as well as a significant change in the role of the theological library. These changes were motivated by external influences that ultimately led to an internal response. Schools like Harvard and Yale were established as institutions of higher education, not just ministerial preparation. Each student followed the same course of study, although less than one-half of Harvard's graduates became ordained ministers (Rockwell 1943-44, 545). Many of the schools themselves were not connected to one particular denomination, but the influence of Christianity definitely played a role in the curriculum. By the early 1800's the curriculum of some schools included courses that were considered by some to be more secular and therefore took attention away from the historical studies of centuries past. These new courses included modern languages, applied mathematics and the study of politics. Events like the American Revolution spurred discussions beyond those of the ministry of the Church. By the 1880's, professors were beginning to study and write their own perspectives on issues, past and present. There was even a developing hierarchy of faculties in the colleges. Tutors no longer followed one class, but began to

study and teach particular subjects. It was their hope than in time with publication and recognition they too could become professors (Kilgour 1972, 77). A hierarchy was also developing in education. The first public school, Boston English, was opened in 1820 in Massachusetts. Now young people had a path to progress along in their studies from childhood to adulthood. At its earliest inception public education was offered free to the poor, but required the wealthy to pay tuition to attend.

Exciting changes were going on outside the classroom that had great impact on higher education and libraries. Literary societies developed around the colleges by students and other scholars who wanted to debate and discuss current events, literature and politics. These societies also developed their own libraries and informal instruction opportunities. Many of these society libraries were open one hour per day, three days a week. They were also open to anyone. These societies were precursors to organizations like the American Library Association that was established in 1876 and the American Theological Library Association in 1947.

The cooperative work of the college libraries were beginning to take shape by the mid to late 1800's. In 1843 Charles Coffin Jewett published a structure subject-heading index of the library's holdings at Brown. This tool was created not only for librarians at other schools, but also for patrons. His descriptions were intended to prevent duplication of titles as well as to give information beyond just their titles. In 1848 "...William Frederick Poole, who was the librarian of one of the literary society libraries, realized that students were spending an awful lot of time going through the same journals over and over to find essentially the same data to support the debates they were having" (Kilgour 1972, 77). Poole decided to create an index to articles in journals. This was a precursor

to the databases of today. Melvil Dewey in 1873 developed his classification scheme, which allowed patrons to search the collection by subject. This ultimately changed not only the cataloging of books, but the shelving of books. The staffing of the library began to change as well. Reference librarians were hired to assist patrons. Catalogers were hired with the sole purpose of cataloging. Library hours were extended and by the end of the 1870's some libraries were offering instruction on how to use the library.

All of these influences of war and economics, public education and literary societies were taking place while the progression of theological education entered its third stage, the clerical or seminary stage. Institutions like Harvard, in 1816, and Yale, in 1822, established divinity schools to accommodate the growing diversity of courses.

Though these divinity schools were available in the colleges, there was a desire in the Church to create a place of higher education that was exclusively for ministerial training. It would be a place set apart, but not detached, from the lay community for intentional reflection, study and preparation for the ministry. Often a small denomination would appoint one pastor to serve as the teacher. It was his responsibility not only to teach, but also to serve in numerous other roles in developing the seminary. The first school established exclusively for the training of ministers is unknown. The New Brunswick Theological Seminary, established in 1784, is just one of the schools laying claim to this title. Certainly the trials of this seminary and of the colleges provided some of the lessons learned for other seminaries in the future.

As the theological seminary of the much-divided Dutch Reformed Church in America, New Brunswick faced problems even before its inception. One group in this controversy, the "Coetus," wanted to establish a Reformed Church college modeled after

the schools of England. They solicited a charter for Queen's College in 1766 and began seeking the right to ordain men for ministry. Its opposition, the "Conferentie," still loyal to the Dutch church, believed that ordination should take place only in the Netherlands so they pursued a theological professorate at King's College (Columbia). To cause further problems, the church in the Netherlands tried to establish a theological professorate at the College of New Jersey (Princeton) hoping a neutral ground would appease both sides. This attempt failed miserably.

The two factions of the Dutch Reformed Church finally reunited in 1771 and theological education became a top priority. Some still held strongly to their belief that ministerial training should take place alongside an expanding college curriculum, then followed by ordination in America. Others believed ministerial training should take place in the home of an elected teacher with ordination in the Netherlands. Each group conceded some points of difference, thus giving rise to the New Brunswick Theological Seminary. It was decided that the school should be separate from any other college modeled after the European educational tradition, but should be geographically close to New York City where students could take advantage of the opportunities in the community. Two professors were hired representing the two kinds of ministry championed by Coetus and the Conferentie. The Coetus "revivalist definition of the minister [was] as the effective mover of persons who could persuade sinners to forsake their old ways and repent" (Kansfield 1984, 120). The Conferentie "classic reformed definition of the scholar-pastor [was someone] who had learned orthodoxy, could defend it against its enemies, and who intended to hand over that orthodoxy to the next generation, intact and undefiled" (Kansfield 1984, 120). Despite its early onset of

problems, in time the New Brunswick Theological Seminary grew in size and strength. By the mid-1800's, both denominational and non-denominational, seminaries began to stake a claim on the landscape of religious higher education.

Theological libraries in this stage were becoming a more visible part of the seminary campus. Often libraries were individual rooms in the same building as the classrooms (Rockwell 1943-44, 545). The collections themselves began to grow. By the end of the 1800's many seminaries began to build a separate building that would serve exclusively as the library. The cost of individual books still posed a financial burden, but the seminaries soon found a solution. They began to acquire entire collections from families of deceased scholars and pastors either by direct purchase or by the collections being willed to the seminary. "The most valuable theological collection imported was that of Leander van Ess, purchased in 1838 by Union [Theological Seminary in New York City], it contained over 13,500 volumes and pamphlets." (547) A former professor of the theology of the Roman Catholic Church, van Ess collected books in various subjects including patristics, biblical subjects, Reformation literature and canon law. Most of his collection came from the monasteries suppressed during the Napoleonic period. This collection became the nucleus of the library that today holds over 700,000 items (" 'So Precious A Foundation': The Library of Leander Van Ess at the Burke Library of the Union Theological Seminary").

Comment [MSOffice1]: Union's website

Circulation of books began to be more common; a ledger with one page for each patron was used to record any book or books that were taken out of the library. With the introduction of catalogs and indexes the scope of the work for the reference librarian began to grow. He would be responsible not only to the students coming in to prepare for

classes, but also to the professors who were researching and writing within their subject specialties.

Cataloging in theological libraries usually followed the Dewey Decimal system until the creation of a system specifically for theological libraries developed by Julia Petee (Rockwell 1943-44, 548). The chief cataloger at Union Theological Seminary of New York, Ms. Petee created several topics that provided a framework for searching and retrieving. The subjects included:

bibliography, encyclopedic works and reference books, philology, bible, Christian literature, Church history, comparative religion, philosophy of religion, philosophical ethics, Christian ethics, Catholic moral theology, systematic Christian theology, sociology, education, the Church, its constitution, orders and ministry, Church law, Church worship, hymnology, practical Church work, care and culture of the individual religious and moral life including devotional literature and practical ethics, and fine arts (Rockwell 1943-44, 548-55).

Few schools still use this system today, but most have adopted either the Library of Congress or the Dewey Decimal classification scheme.

As we've seen in the progression of religious higher education through the three stages of college, parsonage and seminary, it is clear that the theological library and its relationship to theological education do not exist in a vacuum. Outside influences of politics, economics and cultural developments have played and still play a substantial role in the direction and progression of higher education. With the number of schools, students, and graduates growing each year the need arose to unify the criteria to ensure a standard of high quality education was available to all those who attended.

The American Library Association (ALA), the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) were, and still are, three of the driving forces for evaluation and advancement of theological

education and theological libraries. In 1876, "...Melvil Dewey, Justin Winsor, C.A. Cutter, Samuel S. Green, James L. Whitney, Fred B. Perkins and Thomas W. Bicknell issued a call to librarians to form a professional organization. Meeting in Philadelphia during that city's gala Centennial Exhibition, 90 men and 13 women came from as far west as Chicago and from England" ("Facts"). The organization was chartered in Massachusetts in 1879 with the following mission:

"to provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all" ("Our Association").

As of July 31, 2003 the ALA had over 63,350 members in the United States, Canada and over 115 countries. After 2 previous moves the ALA headquarters is now settled in the former Cyrus H. McCormick mansion in Chicago, IL. Eleven divisions comprise the Association that focus on specific libraries and library services. There are 56 independent library associations that are chapters of the Association and more than 75 organizations sharing mutual interests in libraries with whom ALA maintains relationship ("Facts").

The reach of ALA is great and this reach has helped to create a network of communication between libraries as well as organizations around the world with interests in the work of the library. The depth of the ALA can be seen in the activities the ALA pursues including: accreditation, awards, conferences, diversity, intellectual freedom, legislation, literacy, personnel, public awareness, publishing, preservation, public education, research and technology ("Facts"). These different issues are addressed in committees and round tables. One such roundtable led to the establishment of what is now known as the American Theological Library Association.

The Religious Books Round Table of the ALA was established in 1916, almost 40 years after the Association's charter. The following year the name was changed to 'Round Table of the Libraries of Religion and Theology.' This group included not only seminary libraries, but also public libraries seeking information on how to create and maintain a substantial religion section. As the Round Table grew larger there began to be informal meetings of theological librarians after the roundtable had concluded. Though there was an established organization called the Conference of Theological Seminaries and Colleges in the United States and Canada, begun in 1918, the organization paid little attention to the role of the theological library in theological education.

At the June 1946 meeting of American Association of Theological Schools a decision was made to investigate the need for an organization for the study and promotion of theological libraries. L.R. Elliot, Librarian at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, sent word to all ATS librarians and a few others who also worked with religious materials, regarding the interest in establishing such an organization. By December 1946, thirty-eight people responded to the letter with great enthusiasm (Beach 1971, 143).

"Established in 1946, the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) is a professional association of more than 1,000 individual, institutional, and affiliate members providing programs, products, and services in support of theological and religious studies libraries and librarians" ("About ATLA"). Some of the programs include annual conferences and opportunities for professional development including workshops and classes. The products of ATLA readily serve theological libraries, as well as public and college libraries. One such product is the ATLA Religion Database that

combines ATLA's three primary indexes: Religion Index One: Periodicals, Religion Index Two: Multi-Author Works, and the Index to Book Reviews in Religion. A

valuable service provided by ATLA is the Preservation Microfilm Service that during the past 40 years as "preserved more than 2,000 serials titles on microfilm and more than 30,000 monograph titles on microfiche or microfilm" ("About ATLA").

In the first draft of the proposed constitution of ATLA in 1947 the purpose read as follows:

"The purpose of the Association shall be to bring its members into closer working relations with each other and with the American Association of Theological Schools; to study the distinctive problems of theological seminary libraries, to increase the professional competence of the membership, and to improve the quality of library service to theological education" (Proposed Constitution 1947, 75).

Today there is little change in the focus and direction of the ATLA. The mission statement of the American Theological Library Association today "is to foster the study of theology and religion by enhancing the development of theological and religious libraries and librarianship. In pursuit of this mission, the Association undertakes:

1. To foster the professional growth of its members, and to enhance their ability to serve their constituencies as administrators and librarians;
2. To advance the profession of theological librarianship, and to assist theological librarians in defining and interpreting the proper role and function of libraries in theological education;
3. To promote quality library and information services in support of teaching, learning, and research in theology, religion, and related disciplines and to create such tools and aids (including publications) as may be helpful in accomplishing this: (and)
4. To stimulate purposeful collaboration among librarians of theological libraries and religious studies collections; and to develop programmatic solutions to information-related problems common to those librarians and collections" ("Mission Statement and Organizational Ends").

The Association of Theological Schools was established in 1918 as the Conference of Theological Seminaries in the United States and Canada that met biennially. It later became the American Association of Theological Schools (AATS) in 1936 and the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) in 1956. The organization was created “to promote the improvement and enhancement of theological schools to the benefit of communities of faith and the broader public” (“Mission”). Four foundational areas of work for the ATS are: accreditation, leadership education, development of theological education, and communications and data. The work of accreditation involves a cooperative effort of the ATS staff, the schools, regional accrediting associations, state departments of education as well as other professional organizations. The ATS staff and visiting committees conduct approximately 30 comprehensive visits and 30 focused visits in a given year to member schools. Leadership education includes a comprehensive program for senior administrative officers in theological education, as well as educational programs for women in leadership and racial/ethnic administrative leaders and faculty. ATS has also two regranting programs serving advanced scholarship in theological education. Under the area of development, ATS conducts research and provides opportunities for discussion of issues that affect the progress of theological education. By using several publications such as the ATS Bulletin, the journal Theological Education and The Fact Book on Theological Education, ATS is able to communicate on a regular basis with its members and others interested in the work of theological education (“Core Areas of Work”).

Presently ATS is working on seven target areas to further define and advance the direction of theological education. Not in order of importance, these areas include:

1. The Public Character of Theological Schools
2. Women in Leadership in Theological Education
3. Development of Coordinated Systems of Leadership Education for Administrators and Faculty
4. Character Assessment of Learning for Religious Vocation
5. Race and Ethnicity in Theological Education
6. Technology and Educational Practices
7. Theological Schools and the Church (“Targeted Areas of Work”)

The American Library Association was created to provide a forum for librarians and persons interested in the service and support to discuss and share their opinions and experiences concerning the library. The American Theological Library Association provided the same with a more subject-specific group of members. The Association of Theological Schools provided an organized approach to the evaluation and improvement of theological education and its many components. Each of these organizations has impacted the role and support of theological libraries alongside theological education and continues to offer guidance to further this ministry of the Church.

One way ATS and ATLA have made significant strides is by the use of surveys of theological libraries and schools of religious studies that they serve. ATS commissioned many studies to evaluate the present-day state of theological education. They also consulted surveys produced by other organizations and individuals to develop a larger picture. Over time the means of evaluation and the various aspects of evaluation required a more comprehensive approach to determine if the many functions of the seminary were fulfilling its collective mission.

Three of these surveys include the Kelly survey conducted in 1924, the May survey conducted in 1934 and the Neibuhr survey conducted in 1957. By questioning a selection of schools and consulting the current literature, each survey looked at theological education as a whole and made comments about its various aspects. In their

Comment [MSOffice2]: I want a different word.

reports it was evident that the role of the library in the work of the seminary was underappreciated and unsupported if not completely misunderstood.

In 1924, Robert L. Kelly, executive secretary of the Church Boards of Education in New York, surveyed 161 theological schools in the United States and Canada. Of the 400 pages in his report, only one was given to the theological library (Hamm 1979, 94). Kelly stated that the lecture method of education was being over used, almost abused to the point that students had little to no encouragement to pursue outside studies. Though the library was an accepted part of the campus environment it was hardly a celebrated member of the educational team. Kelly said "...the libraries in seminaries visited were sometimes found locked and unheated, with little to indicate workshop conditions" (Mehl 1964, 232). If the library was going to become more than just a single page in the next survey something needed to be done.

The next study of American theological education produced a four-volume study in 1934 entitled The Education of American Ministers. Published by the Institute of Social and Religious Research, the four volumes were as follows:

Volume 1: Ministerial Education in America, Summary and Interpretation by William A. Brown

Volume 2: The Profession of the Ministry: It's Status and Problems by Mark A. May, William A. Brown, Frank K. Shuttleworth, J.A. Jacobs and Charlotte V. Feeney

Volume 3: The Institutions the Train Ministers by Mark A. May, William A. Brown, Frank K. Shuttleworth, and Charlotte V. Feeney.

Volume 4: Appendices by Mark A. May and Frank K. Shuttleworth

Comment [MSOffice3]: Find date titles of other volumes

The May survey concurred with the Kelly study that the library situation needed vast improvement. The seminary administration had an "inadequate understanding of professional librarianship" as to the significance of the Librarian and the services the

library could offer to augment the seminary's curriculum (Mehl 1964, 233). The Librarian was no more than an instructor with extra assigned duties in the library. Some of the other problems May encountered included poor facilities and staff with little education and/or formal training. Still seen as a clerical position, the seminary administration felt it was acceptable to hire untrained staff to create the theological collection. In his report May commented on the training of the catalogers stating "thirty-one of sixty-five theological libraries, or less than half of those designated as responsible for the cataloging of books and periodicals, have educational qualifications necessary for the doing of acceptable cataloging" (May 1934, 162). Though it may have saved them money in the short run, it was very costly in the long run as many libraries have needed to reclassify entire collections to bring them up to appropriate standards.

The bulk of May's report was a condensed version of Raymond P. Morris's thesis entitled, A Study of the Library Facilities of a Group of Representative Protestant Theological Seminaries in the United States and Canada. Published in 1932 as part of his requirements for Master of Library Service degree from Columbia University in New York, Mr. Morris presented a detailed look into theological libraries that had never been done before this time.

Morris surveyed "seventy-eight Protestant seminary libraries in the United States and Canada. Morris was concerned not only with such matters as size of collections, budget support, adequacy of space but with the larger intangibles which are primary, such as the method of library administration, adequacy of staffing, and recognition of the role of the library in the education program" (Beach 1960, 138). Morris attributed the slow

progress of the theological library to the current pedagogy, the training and character of the faculty and the religious nature of the curriculum.

Of the 78 seminary libraries he surveyed the size of the collection ranged from 300 to over 177,000 volumes with an average of 31, 956. The average annual book budget was approximately \$1,440.00 with a range of \$70 to \$4,800. The periodical collection often lacked foreign language titles that were important to religious study. On the library staff Morris observed that less than half of the libraries had full-time librarians devoted only to library duties. Of these, four of five had college training and less than two of five had theological training. “Twenty out of 45 had either professional library training or previous library experience” (Beach 1960, 139). The average salary for the librarian was \$1730 per year, which was considerably less than that for faculty and administration. His statistics on library assistants are as follows: 44 of 78 reporting had a college degree, less than 1/3 had professional library training or previous library experience and only 6 of the 78 reporting had a degree in theological or religious studies. The average salary was \$1,360.46 per year. From all this data Morris readily concluded that the library was inadequately staffed and grossly unsupported (Beach 1960, 140). A number of improvements were needed to make if the library was going to become an equal partner in the educational and research work of the seminary.

With the Morris study as support, the study by May influenced the restructuring of the Conference of Theological Seminaries, the establishment of a Commission on Accreditation, and the first set of standards for theological libraries. Stunningly and sadly in the final compilation of the survey’s data, “14,000 pages, with 62 chapters in three volumes and one volume of statistics, questionnaires, etc.” was only one chapter

consisting of 43 pages devoted to libraries; the which was a condensation of Morris' master's thesis. A section entitled 'Library Services' contained three paragraphs, one of which was less than three lines long, and a section entitled 'The Seminary Library,' which contained five paragraphs" were the only other contributions regarding the library (Hamm 1979, 94). May boldly announced that "...until the library is looked upon as an active teaching unit, as a laboratory wherein students are taught to be constructive in their thinking, to create rather than to receive something handed down from the previous generation, it will remain as it is a decidedly secondary unit in the institution it serves" (May 1934, 189).

If the perception of the library was to take place, a change in the curriculum had to occur. May characterized the librarian as "one who is well prepared to aid and stimulate research, has knowledge of modern teaching methods, possesses initiative and receives the consideration and place of regular member of the faculty..." (Mehl 1964, 234). From the librarian being an assigned part-time duty of an instructor to the librarian being a sought-out and respected resource for the entire theological and educational community, the perception of the librarian's role also needed to change.

Before the next survey of theological education, organized by H. Richard Neibuhr, Daniel Day Williams and James M. Gustafson in 1954, it is important to interject some important events in the history of libraries. In 1936 ATS, still known then as the American Association of Theological Schools, established its first commission on accrediting. Mary L. Gambrell's book entitled Ministerial Training in Eighteenth Century New England was published in 1937. This gave an extensive view of the development of theological education from its early beginnings at Harvard and Yale to the present day.

Harvey Branscomb directed a survey sponsored by the Association of American Colleges in 1937-38 that looked at the use, work and collections of America's colleges. Many of his findings, published in Teaching with Books, were significant to the conversations of many organizations concerned with higher education. The founding of ATLA occurred in 1947 and in a short amount of time ATLA became a strong influence on the Association of Theological Schools regarding library standards for accreditation of theological institutions.

At the first official conference of the American Theological Library Association, Kenneth S. Gapp, Librarian at Princeton Theological Seminary, offered his thoughts on the current state of theological libraries. He defined the theological library "as a collection of religious and non-religious books and of nonbook materials, well selected, properly classified and catalogued, embracing within its scope a good collection of reference books and indexes; competently staffed, and designed to serve the research, the educational, the religious, and the experiential needs of the seminary community" (1947, 4). In his speech he elaborated each point. The seminary library has to provide a collection not only for the students, but also for the faculty who are doing research of their own. The curriculum of the seminary and the pedagogical methods used impact the kind of resources acquired by the library. The course of study itself is shaped by the work of the Church. Gapp offers the idea that the seminary library is a religious library in two distinct ways. First because of the general religious content of the library and second because of the general religious view used to bring the collection together. Finally, the library must respond to the experiential needs of the students, by providing

the resources for noncurricular reading and a welcoming, helpful environment where students can develop on a personal level along with their intellectual pursuits (1947).

Gapp continued with comments on the various aspects of library work including staffing, reference, cataloging and circulation. He pointed out that although organizations like ALA and ATS were helping to define these areas, ATLA needed to examine its own unique environment to see how their efficiency and effectiveness could be improved.

At the same ATLA conference of 1947 is a discussion led by Lewis J. Sherrill, the dean of Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, took place on the 4 notations generated by ATS in the first stage of its current survey regarding the weaknesses of the theological education system. These notations were to serve as a 'yardstick' for evaluating seminary libraries. This seven-year study covered the programs of seminaries from 1946 to 1948, theological libraries from 1948-50 and the faculties and students of the seminaries from 1950-52. These four notations were expanded by the ATLA into five areas of library evaluation including first, the holdings of the library, particularly the number of volumes; second, the proportion of 'live' versus 'dead' material on the shelves; third, the balance of materials between the four major disciplines of study: biblical, historical, doctrinal and practical; fourth, the relationship of the library size to the seminary's enrollment; and fifth, the relevance of the library to the program being offered (Sherrill 1947, 21). These five points were used in the second stage of the ATS survey focusing on libraries.

John F. Lyons, Librarian at McCormick Theological Seminary, presented a paper at the 1947 ATLA meeting proposing three questions to consider on the economy, efficiency and educational value of theological libraries. Economy included examining the use of financial resources, the quality of current holdings, and use of resource

materials like the Union List of Serials. Also included was the study of salaries and the cooperation with other libraries of geographical proximity. Efficiency addressed communication with patrons, presentation of all library resources, support of the faculty's research and continued service of alumni after graduation. The educational aspect of the library could be evaluated through the perception of the library staff's role in the curriculum, the education needed to be an effective member of the library staff and finally the center of the library's interest. Lyons asked if this interest was things or people (Lyons 1947). The results of the entire study helped to restructure the ATS accreditation standards that were released in 1951.

Another comprehensive survey of theological education, this one between 1946 and 1952, raised the possibility of having a survey specifically for theological libraries. It was decided for monetary reasons to keep the evaluative process as it had always been without a separate survey of libraries. This decision ultimately led to the dismay of many (Roberts 1949, 2). At the survey's conclusion, it was determined to be impractical in a comprehensive survey of the whole of theological education to give full justice to the role of the library. Niebuhr and his colleagues spoke of a growing concern of institutions to improve their libraries, but concern does not always lead to prompt action. The survey demonstrated a great need for better space, more financial support and an educated and trained library staff. The results of this survey shaped the revision of ATS accreditation standards released in 1958. These standards put greater focus on the financial support of the library (Mehl 1964, 238).

Also in 1958, the Lilly Endowment, Inc. established a grant of \$9,000 to "improve the educational qualifications and status of librarians associated with

Comment [MSOffice4]: Make sure this is right

institutions that are members of the [ATS] and the [ATLA]...” (Gapp 1960, 199). The Lilly Endowment agreed to support the library development project further in 1959 with an additional \$27,000 that was to be given in annual installments of \$9,000 for three years. One result of this grant was an increase in conversations about the necessary qualifications of theological librarians. Though theological libraries had made great strides from the earlier reports of Kelly, Morris and May the role of the theological library in theological education had not yet been fully realized.

The 1940's and 50's were a time of great discussion and debate. The 1960's and 70's were more a time preoccupied with responding to these discussions and debates. Though there were many responses, two of significance can be addressed here. As a result of the efforts of the ATS and ATLA, a major push for a Library Development Project began to unfold. In 1961, a “grant from the Sealantic Fund, Inc. provided matching funds for schools that would increase their expenditures for books and periodicals up to a maximum of \$3,000 per year” (Hamm 1979, 98). Any library that met that level of funds would have an additional \$9,000 added to its budget for additional purchases beyond the established book budget. The initial sum to be divided among libraries over three years was \$875,000. Some libraries that actively participated were eligible for an additional two years on a two-for-one basis up to \$6,000 a year (Mehl 1964, 243). Three of the objectives of the program were:

1. To strengthen book collections through increased expenditures as the academic community began to respond to the changing role of the library.
2. To improve library administration and services.
3. To attract stronger personnel with better education and training.

An estimated \$5,000,000 was added to the collections of 100 theological libraries over the course of the project (Hamm 1979, 98). With this money, libraries were able to

purchase not only titles published in the United States, but also often costly titles published overseas. Compared to other special libraries, theological libraries had little financial support. In an article released in 1961, the average seminary book budget was reported to be \$5,570 of a total \$20,000 a year for library expenses. The three largest seminary libraries had a budget of almost \$14,000 a year for books. “By contrast the medical and law libraries of one American University expended more than \$60,000 each, and four leading law school libraries spent \$80,000, \$78,000, \$52,000 and \$36,000 respectively for books” (Mehl 1964, 241). Though law and medical books are generally more expensive than those purchased by seminary libraries this fact does not account for the gross disparity of budgets. One emerging effect of the Library Development project was the need for more staff. In many cases seminaries were forced to increase the library’s expense budget in order to hire qualified and creative staff to respond to the growth of the library by “focusing attention on the library and its needs there would result not only a substantially strengthened book stock, but also improvement in library operation and services” (Morris 1967, 128).

A second response to the work of the 1940’s and 50’s was another joint effort at ATS and ATLA. Project 2000 was a “study of the present and anticipated needs of theological libraries in North America” (Peterson 1984, 63). Beginning in 1981 the project had a fourfold charge:

1. To analyze the roles of theological libraries for the remaining decades of this century.
2. To identify the nature of the resources needed to fulfill these roles.
3. To propose strategies and programs which will assist schools in shaping library resources.
4. To propose guidelines for library development and evaluation.

The library had received a huge breath of fresh air. Could this newfound energy and resources be used to keep theological libraries moving forward into the end of the 20th century? Three stages of theological education progressed from religious studies within a secular educational setting in the college stage, to strictly religious studies within a very small geographical community in the parsonage stage, and finally to religious studies within an educational community set apart yet still within the larger geographical and educational community in the seminary stage. Though the library was a part of each stage, it struggled to achieve a place of equal recognition in ministry of the seminary. Through the efforts of the American Library Association, the American Association of Theological Schools and the American Theological Library Association, the theological library continued to expand its role in Protestant theological education.

Where exactly did this energy take the theological libraries at the close of the 20th century and where is it leading in 21st century? Online. The advent of the computer created the possibility for information retrieval leaving an enormous challenge on the doorstep of the library. Obstacles of the 19th century continue to face the library of the 21st century. Libraries continue to struggle to afford the exorbitant costs for print resources and now electronic resources. Seminaries labor to attract and retain highly educated and trained librarians to be a part of the library staff. Librarians strive for the recognition as an essential part of the educational mission of the seminary. These struggles will probably always be a part of the life of the theological library just as there will always be a call to serve those who are responding to their own vocation of ministry.

Concerns over budget, staffing, collection development, cataloging, and recognition of necessity to curriculum, still hold a place on the library's priority list, but it

is as if there are now two priority lists. One list is for the print library and the other for the virtual library. There is a fast-paced push to create a whole new virtual library that is transparent and comprehensive to all its users. What took almost 2 centuries to build is being asked to recreate itself in less than 50 years, and continue recreating itself on a daily basis.

At every turn in this maze of library development, historically revealed in the numerous surveys, there has been some kind of response by the library. When there was a struggle to buy individual books, libraries turned to buying entire collections. In order to avoid duplication and share information about their collections, libraries created indexes and catalogs. When there was a concern for preservation and sharing of resources, microfilm was created. Circulation concerns were once addressed with ledgers until the implementation of punch cards. Equity and adequacy of theological education lead to standards of accreditation. Organizations like the American Library Association, the Association of Theological Schools and the American Theological Library Association offered a network of resources. The 1950's brought the first projects of the ATLA with its list of master's theses in religion by N. H. Sonne, a list of basic periodicals in 1958, the Periodicals Exchange program and the Index to Religious Periodical Literature. Communication about collections and practices became more pervasive with the regularity of library conferences.

The 1960's were a time of change for the United States resulting in the beginning of a shift in the pedagogy of higher education with a push to a more dialogue approach to learning. Current events and variety of study topics such as sociology and psychology were added to the course offerings. Political events such as the Civil Rights movement,

the feminist movement and the unionization of workers caused many to look to the Church for direction. The Church looked to its pastors and the pastors looked to their seminary training. Continuing education programs and directed studies were offered to accommodate the needs of alumni who were serving in a church. Connolly C. Gamble, Jr., director of the continuing education program at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, VA, spoke to the need of pastors to continue a program of study “to acquire knowledge that will be useful, and to nourish resources for contemplative, creative thought” (1960, 271). The library was a necessary part of this program. Once a repository of resources that did not circulate, now the library was responsible for collecting, cataloging and disseminating these resources. Responsible for reference to not only professors and students on campus, the library provided services to alumni off campus as well as the local pastorate. The library had ever-growing responsibilities in an environment of stagnant support.

Enter the 1970’s and the implementation of the computer. The Ohio College Library program had in its hands a tool that would add even more twists and turns to this library development maze. The computer made many aspects of library work much easier, but the influx of information was almost impossible to wrangle. The close of the 20th century continued on this wave of excitement over the possibilities of information exchange and its impact on higher education. With this information explosion, will the library of the 21st century be proactive in the future of the pedagogy used in Protestant theological education? If the library is a reflection of its environment, does that inherently mean it cannot participate in its own creation? Will the Librarian become a highly sought after partner in the educational process? There will always be some kind

of collaboration between the curriculum and the library as both are dynamic entities in education, but is there a coming equality between the role of the theological library and the role of the curriculum?

If this information age continues to uplift the work of the theological library, could it be ushering in a fourth stage of the 'virtual' Protestant theological education? The Association of Theological Schools is conducting two different programs between 2000 and 2006 that will assess the current situation of Protestant theological education. One initiative is called Information Technology and Educational Practices. It will "explore what information technology will mean for learning, for publication for teaching, and for sustaining theological discourse" ("About the Development of Theological Education"). It should reveal some of the issues involved if there is a coming progression to an exclusively virtual seminary. The other study, the Character and Assessment of Learning for Religious Vocation, will consider those practices essential to the mission of the seminary. If religion is a shared story, can this story be learned exclusive of community? What impact does this have on the work of the seminary library?

Libraries must serve both the highly educated and those whose exposure to higher education has been limited if at all. The demographics of entering seminary classes show most students are second career individuals, with little to no church leadership experience and have not used an academic library in many years. The computer, this tool of the information explosion and more specifically, the Internet, creates both a positive and a negative for the library. It is certainly an excellent way to communicate holdings, much better than the hand-written catalogs of the 1900's. It is an excellent way to open the

world to people who may not otherwise see it. On the other hand, libraries must be able to patiently assist patrons who sincerely believe they have a full understanding of the capabilities of the Internet, expect to sit down and find exactly what they want in a matter of clicks. They also have to be prepared to assist those students of varying ages, backgrounds and educational experiences to create for them a set of tools they can take with them in their life-long learning process.

How does bibliographic instruction work in this kind of environment? Students can use the computer from their rooms or homes, and never come into the library. They can find a book in the online catalog, but could they find it on the shelf? What are they missing by not engaging the tangible resources of the library? In a consumer society, how can we as librarians “sell” them on the idea that there is so much more to the library than just rows of books?

In Craig Dykstra’s address to the 1996 Annual Conference of the American Theological Library Association, he speaks of “Love’s Knowledge” and how this impacts the future of the Church, Protestant theological education and the theological library. Dykstra borrows the phrase “Love’s Knowledge” from Martha Nussbaum, professor at the University of Chicago, to describe the heart of theological education. For Nussbaum ‘love’s knowledge’ is the “idea that knowledge might be something other than intellectual grasping, might be an emotional response, or... even a complex form of life” (1996, 168). This knowledge cannot be forced on another person or upon oneself. It is only attained through an open receptiveness to making a connection emotionally, by making a commitment to this connection, then responding in such a way that is consistent with that which is known.

For theological education, this means the Divine cannot be known through exclusively intellectual means. To “know” God is to make an emotional connection and live a life in response to what is known about God. The seminary environment provides a community of faith seeking understanding to consider the ways students and those they will serve can come to “know” God with both the mind and the heart. The curriculum is crafted in such a way as to offer a variety of life tools graduates can use to maintain their own relationship with the “Known” and create for the churches they serve their own communities of faith seeking understanding. The theological library throughout its history has been a place of solace and respite as well as energy and new life. It is inextricably linked to the development of theological education and is therefore an integral part of the ministry of the Church. With a responsibility to collect, preserve and disseminate the collective stories of believers, the theological library will continue to exist and progress as long as there is desire to connect with the Divine.

Works Cited

- “About ATLA.” About Us. American Theological Library Association. 7 Apr. 2005
<<http://www.atla.com/about.html>>
- “About the Development of Theological Education.” Development of Theological Education. Association of Theological Schools. 8 Apr. 2005
<<http://www.ats.edu/programs/develop/abtdte.htm>>
- Beach, Robert F. “Once Over Lightly: Reminiscences of ATLA from its Founding to the Present.” In *American Theological Library Association Twenty-Fifth Annual Conference Summary of Proceedings* held at Pasadena College in Pasadena, CA, June 14-18, 1971, by the American Theological Library Association, 141-151. Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 1971.
- _____. “Protestant Theological Seminaries and Their Libraries.” *Library Trends: Current Issues in Theological Libraries*, issue edited by Niels H. Sonne, 9 (October 1960) 131-148.
- “Core Areas of Work.” About the Association of Theological Schools. Association of Theological Schools. 8 Apr. 2005 <<http://www.ats.edu/contact/about.htm>>
- Curtler, Hugh Mercer. *Recalling Education*. Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2001.
- Dykstra, Craig. “Love’s Knowledge: Theological Education In the Future of the Church and Culture.” In *American Theological Library Association Fiftieth Annual Conference Summary of Proceedings* held at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, CO, June 21-24, 1996, by the American Theological Library Association, 164-174. Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 1996.
- “Facts.” Our Association. American Library Association. 8 Apr. 2005
<<http://www.ala.org/ala/ourassociation/governingdocs/aheadto2010/facts.htm>>
- Gamble, Connolly C., Jr. “The Seminary Library and the Continuing Education of the Minister.” *Library Trends: Current Issues in Theological Libraries*, issue edited by Niels H. Sonne, 9 (October 1960): 270-280.
- Gapp, Kenneth S. “The American Theological Library Association.” *Library Trends: Current Issues in Theological Libraries*, issue edited by Niels H. Sonne, 9 (October 1960) 194-200.

- _____. "A Survey of Theological Library Operations." In *Conference of Theological Librarians Summary of Proceedings* held at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary in Louisville, KY, June 23-24, 1947, by the Conference of Theological Librarians, 4-11. Chicago: Conference of Theological Librarians, 1947.
- Hamm, G. Paul. "A Look at the Past." In *American Theological Library Association Thirty-Third Annual Conference Summary of Proceedings* held at Bethel Theological Seminary in New Brighton, MN, June 11-15, 1979, by the American Theological Library Association, 93-100. Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 1979.
- Kansfield, Norman J. "New Brunswick Theological Seminary: Contributions to Ministerial Training, 1784-1984." In *American Theological Library Association Thirty-Eighth Annual Conference Summary of Proceedings* held Western Theological Seminary in Holland, MI, June 17-22, 1984, by the American Theological Library Association, 117-133. Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 1984.
- Kilgour, Frederick. "The Evolution of Academic Libraries." In *American Theological Library Association Twenty-Sixth Annual Conference Summary of Proceedings* held at Waterloo Lutheran University in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, June 19-23, 1972, by the American Theological Library Association, 75-86. Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 1972.
- "Largest Academic Library in the World." The Harvard Guide: History, Lore and More. Harvard University. 8 Apr. 2005
<http://www.news.harvard.edu/guide/to_do/to_do6.html>
- "Libraries and Collections." Yale University Library. Yale University. 8 Apr. 2005
<<http://www.library.yale.edu/libraries/>>
- Lyons, John F. "The AATS Study of Libraries, 1948-1950." In *Conference of Theological Librarians Summary of Proceedings* held at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary in Louisville, KY, June 23-24, 1947, by the Conference of Theological Librarians, 22-27. Chicago: Conference of Theological Librarians, 1947.
- May, Mark A., et al. *The Education of American Ministers*. New York: Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1934.
- Mehl, Warren R. "The Protestant Theological Library in America: Past, Present, and Future." *Theology and Life* 7 (Autumn 1964): 230-243.
- "Mission." About the Association of Theological Schools. Association of Theological Schools. 8 Apr. 2005 <<http://www.ats.edu/contact/about.htm>>
- "Mission Statement and Organizational Ends." About Us. American Theological Library Association. 7 Apr. 2005 <<http://www.atla.com/about.html>>

Morris, Raymond P. "ATLA Library Development Program: A Summary 1961-1966." In *American Theological Library Association Twenty-First Annual Conference Summary of Proceedings* held McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, IL, June 12-14, 1967, by the American Theological Library Association, 127-138. Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 1967.

"Our Association." American Library Association. 8 Apr. 2005
<<http://www.ala.org/ala/ourassociation/Default262.htm>>

Peterson, Stephen L. "Report of the ATS-ATLA Library Project 2000." In *American Theological Library Association Thirty-Eighth Annual Conference Summary of Proceedings* held at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, MI, June 17-22, 1984, by the American Theological Library Association, 63-65. Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 1984.

"Proposed Constitution: First Draft, 1947." In *Conference of Theological Librarians Summary of Proceedings* held at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary in Louisville, KY, June 23-24, 1947, by the Conference of Theological Librarians, 75. Chicago: Conference of Theological Librarians, 1947.

Roberts, Walter N. "Steps Toward A Library Survey." In *American Theological Library Association Third Annual Conference Summary of Proceedings* held at Chicago Theological Seminary in Chicago, IL, June 20-21, 1949, by the American Theological Library Association, 1-3. Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 1949.

Rockwell, William Walker. "Theological Libraries in the United States." *Religion in Life*. 13 (1943-44) 545-555.

Sherrill, Lewis J. "Accreditation – What is Adequacy?" In *Conference of Theological Librarians Summary of Proceedings* held at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary in Louisville, KY, June 23-24, 1947, by the Conference of Theological Librarians, 21. Chicago: Conference of Theological Librarians, 1947.

"'So Precious A Foundation': The Library of Leander Van Ess at the Burke Library of the Union Theological Seminary." *The Grolier Club Recent Exhibitions*. The Grolier Club. 8 Apr. 2005 <<http://www.grolierclub.org/ExVanEss.htm>>

"Targeted Areas of Work." *About the Association of Theological Schools*. Association of Theological Schools. 8 Apr. 2005 <<http://www.ats.edu/contact/about.htm>>