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A Comparative Analysis of the Religious Non-Fiction Collections of a Public Library and a Christian Church Library

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Introduction
Natchitoches Parish (county), Louisiana, is located in the northwest region of the state. The town of Natchitoches, the parish seat, was established as a French colony in 1714 in an area already inhabited by the Natchitoches Indians and is considered the oldest permanent European settlement in the Louisiana Purchase Territory (Louisiana Office of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, 2012). According to U.S. Census Bureau statistics (2012), there were an estimated 39,442 people residing in the parish in 2011. The town is also home to the main campus of Northwestern State University, a public university with nearly 9,500 total students, with 4,149 of those taking classes on the Natchitoches campus (Northwestern State University, 2012).

The Natchitoches Parish Library is located in downtown Natchitoches, in the heart of the town's historic district. The library does not operate any branches other than the main library, but its community bookmobile has thirty stops scheduled in various locations throughout the parish in a two-week rotation (Natchitoches Parish Library, 2012a). A schoolmobile also visits the public schools that are located in six different outlying areas of the parish on alternate weeks (Natchitoches Parish Library, 2012c). Between Jan. 1, 2007 and Oct. 5, 2012, 823 people borrowed items from the community bookmobile, 1,691 people used the schoolmobile, and 12,679 people borrowed items from the main library. The total number of users for the entire system in that time period was 15,193 (Natchitoches Parish Library, 2012b).

Directly across the street from the Natchitoches Parish Public Library is the First Baptist Church (FBC) of Natchitoches. The First Baptist Church is a Southern Baptist Church and has approximately 800 registered members with an average attendance of 300. Its main library houses the adult fiction and non-fiction collections, audiobooks, DVDs and kits usually used for teaching purposes. It also has several satellites in the same building housing the children's, juvenile, youth (young adult), and university collections. The FBC library also serves as a repository for the Natchitoches Baptist Association, as well as District Eight Baptist Convention, which encompasses 125 churches that are members of five Louisiana Baptist associations in west central Louisiana. The materials owned by the Association and the Convention are part of the library's circulating collection but are marked differently to distinguish them from the church's own holdings. The library has approximately 1400 registered users (H. Ferguson, personal communication, Nov. 14, 2012).

Statement of Problem
The purpose of this study is to compare the religious non-fiction collection of a public library (Natchitoches Parish Library) with the religious non-fiction collection of a Christian church library (First Baptist Church, Natchitoches) focusing on those books classified in the 200s of the Dewey Decimal Classification system. The two libraries that are the focus of this study are located directly across the street from each other. By uncovering strengths and weaknesses of each collection and pinpointing areas of overlap, the staff of the two libraries may be able to use the findings to identify ways in which they may be able to work cooperatively to provide improved resources and services to the people of Natchitoches Parish.

Research Questions
R1. How many books in each collection are classified under the 200s using the Dewey Decimal Classification System?

R2. What percentage of the adult non-fiction books in each collection are classified in the 200s using the Dewey Decimal Classification System?

R3. What percentage of each library's total collection is classified in the 200s using the Dewey Decimal Classification System?

R4. How many core religious texts as identified in H.W. Wilson's *Public Library Core Collection: Nonfiction*) does each library contain?

R5. How many non-Christian books (290s) are in each library's collection?

R6. What is the rate of circulation of the books in each library's non-fiction religious collection (200s) for the two-year period of Jan. 1, 2011 through Dec. 31, 2012?

Definitions

Dewey Decimal Classification System - The Dewey system, created in the 1870s by librarian Melvil Dewey, is a "classification system [that] allows a cataloger to assign numerical call numbers to media which positions each title in a logical arrangement according to its subject" (Southern Baptist Convention, 2004, p. 3).

Church library – A church library can be described as "a special library designed to serve the needs of its parent institution" (White, 1971, p. 397). It often contains highly specialized resources related to the religious denomination of the church with which it is associated, including its "history, theology, educational program, music, art, and worship" (White, 1971, p. 397). A church library may also be referred to as a congregational library or a parish library. Synagogue libraries are also included in this category. These libraries, which are available for use by the members of the congregation, differ from parochial libraries, which historically have been reserved for use by the clergy to increase their knowledge of doctrine and improve their preaching skills (Jacob, 2011, p. 211).

Collection Development - Collection development "is the process of making certain the library meets the information needs of its service population in a timely and economic manner, using information resources produced both inside and outside the organization" (Evans & Saponaro, 2005, p. 50).

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

For all research questions except R4, this study is limited to books classified in the 200s of the Dewey Decimal Classification system that are part of the

main (adult) collection of each library. Books that are identified as juvenile or young adult texts are not included in this study. Audiovisual materials, audiobooks, e-books and formats other than printed books are also excluded from this study. Non-circulating books that are part of the library's reference collection are not included in this study. For question R4, religious books that are recommended in H.W. Wilson's *Public Library Core Collection: Nonfiction* and are owned by each library are included regardless of format, call number or location.

Assumptions

It is assumed that all books examined use similar cataloging and classification procedures. It is also assumed that shelf-lists generated for this study by each library's software are accurate and complete.

Importance of the Study

The library of First Baptist Church in Natchitoches is located across the street from the Natchitoches Parish Public Library. It is also open to the public, though few people outside of the church membership are aware of it. The results of this study may be helpful in promoting the use of the collection to the general public, beyond the church's own congregation. As budgets for many libraries continue to shrink, it is important for public libraries to find ways to provide users with the information they want and need. Because these two libraries are in such close physical proximity to one another, the public library may be able to use some of the resources of the neighboring church library to help them meet the needs of their patrons without duplicating resources unnecessarily. A cooperative partnership may be beneficial to both libraries.

Literature Review
Church Libraries in the United States
Though libraries have existed in churches worldwide for many centuries, there appears to be a lack of scholarly research on the development or role of modern church libraries in the United States. The majority of articles on church libraries that are indexed in the library and information science databases are historical pieces on specific church libraries, particularly those associated with Anglican and Catholic churches in Western Europe.

In the United States, church libraries have been traced to 1696. It was around this time that church leaders began allowing their congregations to use materials in their private collections. Church libraries in the United States really began to take shape around 1812, when the first library was opened to support a Sunday School program in Boston. By 1860, there were approximately 6,000 Sunday School libraries with a combined collection of more than two million volumes (Andrews, et al., 2004).

Over time, these Sunday School libraries evolved into church libraries designed to "carr[y] out the mission of the church by providing information through media for evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, and worship that results in numerical growth, spiritual transformation, ministries expansion, and kingdom advance" (Andrews et al., 2004, p. 11). In 1971, there were an estimated 35,000 church libraries in the United States (White, 1971). In 1984, more than 1600 libraries in the United States and Canada representing 29 denominations were members of the Church and Synagogue Library Association (White, 1984).

The religious collections of church libraries, particularly the resources they contain related to specific denomination of the church in which they are located, are often far superior than those in public libraries because "[t]he public library, after all, must keep its religion section in balance, not only insuring that all faiths are represented, but also that the section itself is properly proportioned within the whole collection" (White, 1971, p. 397).

Church libraries have long existed in the Christian Church. Similar libraries are also taking root in the houses of worship of other religions. One 1981 study compared the Christian church libraries of the United States with the mosque libraries in Tehran, Iran (Harvey & Musavi, 1981).

Collection Development Policies
According to Jacob (2011), there were virtually no distinctions between church, school, and public libraries in their early years. In writing about the parochial libraries of England, he states that any categorization "between sacred and secular, clerical and lay, ecclesiastical and borough" was nonexistent, as there was much overlap in the administration of towns, schools, and churches. As the functions of each of these became more compartmentalized, libraries were identified as either religious or secular.

This pre-determined role of a library, whether religious or secular, and the population it serves help to determine the services and resources that will be available to users. Collection development, as previously defined, is the process by which resources are selected and acquired in order to meet the informational needs of the library users. All libraries, regardless of type, should have a collection development policy in place that clearly articulates the library's selection criteria for the collection (Evans & Saponaro, 2005).

Media selection in church libraries will usually differ from the selection of media of the same topic in a public library because they service a highly specialized population. In a church library, media may be rejected if they do not support the teachings of that particular church. Fisher (2010) notes, "the one thing [church] librarians are most particular about is making sure the item being processed does not promote behavior discouraged by the church, or direct the reader away from the truth of what is being taught by the pastor and other leaders" (p. 20). In a church library, some texts may be labeled with a disclaimer if the teachings within do not fully support the church. This type of labeling may be considered censorship within a public library, but it is fully acceptable, and even expected, within a church library (Andrews et al., 2004).

In a public library, religion is often considered a controversial topic (Sargent, 1993). Sargent writes that public librarians should not feel required to cover all religions equally in their collections. He suggests that the collection should represent the predominant religious views of the community in which it is located and equates this idea serving the cultural interests of the public. Sargent (1993) writes, "No one thinks it amiss for a library in a predominantly black community to have a collection that is especially strong in black culture: it is taken for granted as an appropriate way of serving the particular interests of the community" (p. 11).

Because of the differences in user base and mission, the religion collections of a public library and a Christian church library may be expected to differ significantly. However, it is not unlikely to see differences in the composition of the religious collection among public libraries located in different geographic locations. Colom (2011) identifies differences in the juvenile science collections of public libraries located in different areas. For example, marine science books are more prevalent in regions located along the coast than in land-locked areas. Similarly, one might infer that religious collections of similar size public libraries, while striving to maintain a balanced collection, may also differ based upon the predominant religion practiced in that region.

In her article about religion collections in school libraries, Howard (1986) noted the importance of studying religion in order to better understand contemporary issues developing throughout the world. She states, "It is becoming necessary for students to explore the essentially religious issues of war and peace, nuclear developments and environmental dangers, plenty and scarcity, freedom and restraint" (p. 267). Howard also offers guidelines for the selection of religious materials in school libraries and offers recommendations on religious texts for school libraries. As public libraries usually strive to offer users a collection that represents a variety of viewpoints that does not support or promote one religion in particular, her recommendations on Bibles, atlases, encyclopedias, concordances and religious histories, as well as works on comparative religions, philosophy and ethics may also be helpful to public libraries in their development of the religious collection as they offer a basic foundation for the study of many different religions.

Gouker (1987) has noticed an apparent increase in reference inquiries regarding religion, particularly "from conservative Christians seeking Bible study, spiritual growth, and self-help materials," which can affect collection development (p. 342). Gouker offers librarians practical recommendations on resources and reviewing sources to assist public libraries with the development of their religious collections. His recommendations are particularly helpful as he

identifies materials, especially Bible commentaries, which offer a conservative perspective, a liberal perspective, or a stance somewhere in between.

Dewey Decimal Classification (200s)
In library terms, "the process of organizing knowledge into some systematic order" is known as classification (Chan, 2007, p. 309). Church library collections can range in size from a few hundred books to more than 10,000. Regardless of collection size, some kind of classification system is necessary in order for library users to locate and retrieve materials from both the library's online public access catalog (OPAC) and its physical location on the library shelves. The specific needs of the individual collection often dictate how library materials are organized and the type of classification system used (Chan, 2007). The three main classification systems used by both academic and public libraries are the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) system, the Library of Congress Classification (LCC) system, and the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) system (Zins & Santos, 2011). The Dewey Decimal Classification system is often recommended for use by church libraries because of its relative ease of use for the mostly volunteer, non-professionally trained staff compared to the other classification systems (Andrews et al., 2004; Gorman, 1985).

The DDC works well for a Christian library because it is inherently "Christianity biased," (Zins & Santos, 2011, p. 882) specifically toward American Protestantism (Chan, 2007; Gorman, 1985). The main class of religion (200) of the DDC is divided into 10 subclasses. Of all subclasses of religion, the majority are dedicated to some aspect of the Christian faith, while only one subclass is made available for all religions other than Christianity. In addition to the monotheistic religions of Judaism and Islam, the 290s encompasses ancient religions, including Egyptian and Greek mythology; the Asian religions of Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, Bahaism, and Zoroastrianism; the modern religion of Scientology; and the ethnic religions of Shamanism and Voodoo (Zins & Santos, 2011). Table 1 contains a chart from *A Classification System for Church Libraries* (Southern Baptist Convention, 2004) that lists all subclasses of the 200s in the DDC.

Table 1 Subclasses of the 200 class of the Dewey Decimal Classification system

200 Religion	**250 Christian orders and local church**
201 Religious mythology and social theology	251 Preaching
202 Doctrines	252 Texts of sermons
203 Public worship and other practices	253 Pastoral office and work
204 Religious experience, life and practice	254 Parish administration
205 Religious ethics	255 Religious congregations and orders
206 Leaders and organization	256 [Unassigned]
207 Missions and religious education	257 [Unassigned]
208 Sources	258 [Unassigned]
209 Sects and reform movements	259 Pastoral care of families and kinds of persons
210 Philosophy and theory of religion	**260 Social and ecclesiastical theology**
211 Concepts of God	261 Social theology
212 Existence, knowability and attributes of God	262 Ecclesiology
213 Creation	263 Days, times and places of observances
214 Theodicy	264 Public worship
215 Science and religion	265 Sacraments, other rites and acts
216 [Unassigned]	266 Missions
217 [Unassigned]	267 Associations for religious work
218 Humankind	268 Religious education
219 [Unassigned]	269 Spiritual renewal
220 Bible	**270 History of Christianity and Christian Church**
221 Old Testament	271 Religious orders in church history
222 Historical books of Old Testament	272 Persecutions in church history
223 Poetic books of Old Testament	273 Doctrinal controversies and heresies
224 Prophetic books of Old Testament	274 History of Christianity in Europe
225 New Testament	275 History of Christianity in Asia
226 Gospels and Acts	276 History of Christianity in Africa
227 Epistles	277 History of Christianity in North America
228 Revelation (Apocalypse)	278 History of Christianity in South America
229 Apocrypha and pseudepigrapha	279 History of Christianity in other areas
230 Christianity and Christian theology	**280 Christian denominations and sects**
231 God	281 Early church and Eastern churches
232 Jesus Christ and his family	282 Roman Catholic Church
233 Humankind	283 Anglican churches
234 Salvation and grace	284 Protestants of Continental origin
235 Spiritual beings	285 Presbyterian, Reformed and Congregational
236 Eschatology	286 Baptist, Disciples of Christ and Adventist
237 [Unassigned]	287 Methodist and related churches
238 Creeds and catechisms	288 [Unassigned]
239 Apologetics and polemics	289 Other denominations
240 Christian moral and devotional theology	**290 Other religions**
	291 [Unassigned]

241 Christian ethics	292 Greek and Roman religion
242 Devotional literature	293 Germanic religion
243 Evangelistic writings for individuals	294 Religions of Indic origin
244 [Unassigned]	295 Zoroastrianism
245 [Unassigned]	296 Judaism
246 Use of art in Christianity	297 Islam, Babism and Bahai Faith
247 Church furnishings and articles	298 (Optional number)
248 Christian experience, practice and life	299 Religions not provided for elsewhere
249 Christian observances in family life	

Because of its heavy emphasis on Christianity, the DDC might be the obvious choice among church libraries. However, though it is used often by public libraries, it may not always provide the best classification system for libraries who seek more balance in their religious collections.

The classification of religious materials poses numerous problems for the classifier. According to Gorman (1985), there are three main areas that make classification of religious materials difficult. The main issue is that "the primary literature in every culture and civilization has been religious in orientation, ranging from simple invocations and ritual inscriptions to substantial collections in the form of sacred books" (p. 204). Another issue is that religion is often used to interpret many other facets of human behavior (p. 204). Further complicating matters are the many different interpretations of beliefs within any religious tradition (p. 204).

The scope of religious literature is vast. Gorman (1985) writes, "Indeed in its fullest form theology is the most multi-disciplinary of all subject areas, encompassing textual and critical studies, linguistics, archaeology, history, philosophy, doctrine, anthropology, sociology, education, art and most of the social sciences from an ethical or pastoral standpoint" (p. 204). For these reasons, there have been many attempts to adapt these general classification schemes or create new ones for different denominations specifically to address some of the inadequacies of the accepted systems. Gorman provides an annotated bibliography of general resources to assist classifiers in dealing with religious materials, as well as resources that offer modifications of the general Dewey Decimal and Library of Congress schemes and special treatments for different religions and denominations.

Comparative Collection Analyses
When conducting a comparative analysis of the collections of two or more libraries, there are various methods that can be used. The contents of each collection, or a selected portion of each collection, should be examined individually and then the results compared to uncover relationships between the collections being studied, determine the degree of coverage in a specific area that each provides, and identify areas of overlap. Perhaps the most common method of bibliographic checking is to compare the resources listed in a bibliography of recommended titles to the items contained in the library's collection (Elzy & Lancaster, 1990; Porta & Lancaster, 1988). This type of evaluation can be conducted with a published list of recommended titles or a bibliography can be compiled by the researcher drawing upon the recommendations of multiple sources. This type of study is used "to estimate coverage in a subject area or, more importantly, to identify possible gaps in the collection" (Elzy & Lancaster, 1990, p. 1).

This method of evaluating a collection can be a good indicator of a library's coverage of a particular subject area only if the bibliography used for comparison purposes is free of bias and adequately represents the information needs and wants of the patrons of that particular library (Porta & Lancaster, 1988, p. 131-132). Another weakness of this method is that it can "indicate what a library should own, and does not, but tells us nothing about items the library does own but perhaps should not" (Elzy & Lancaster, 1990, p.2).

The reverse of this process—comparing the holdings of a library against an authoritative bibliography—does not yield the same results (Elzy & Lancaster, 1990; Porta & Lancaster, 1988). Goldhor (1973) refers to this reverse process as the "inductive method" of bibliographic checking (p. 6). When the holdings of a library are checked against a bibliography, the results can be used to estimate quality of a collection and not just degree of coverage. For example, if an item appears on five lists of recommended materials, it may be judged to be of higher quality or more useful than a similar item that is not recommended by any type of reviewing source. This inductive method of bibliographic checking is used less frequently than the aforementioned method of checking a bibliography against the items held in a particular collection (Elzy & Lancaster, 1990).

When performing either of these bibliographic checks, the size of the collection will determine if the entire collection or selected subject area is used. Additionally, the number of items listed on the selected bibliography will determine if all of the resources on the list are used. If either the number of items on either of these lists is too large, a random sample can be taken to arrive at an adequate representation of each (Elzy & Lancaster, 1990; Porta & Lancaster, 1988).

Once an individual collection is examined, the information obtained can be used to compare two or more collections. Colom (2011) conducted a similar study that compared the juvenile science non-fiction collections of three different branches of a public library. Her research focused on books classified in the 500s using the Dewey Decimal Classification system and shelved in the juvenile section of the library (J 500s). The three branches chosen for the study were a rural, a suburban, and an urban library located in Hillsborough County, Florida. To compare the collections, Colom investigated the age of each collection, the number of books in each, the proportion of juvenile non-fiction books to the entire juvenile non-fiction collection, and the number and proportion of books considered "science fair books" to the overall juvenile non-fiction collection (Colom, 2011). In addition to the collection of quantitative data, the researcher also interviewed each branch's youth services librarian to obtain additional information on the circulation and use of the juvenile science collections.

Colom's research, however, did not involve bibliographic checking with a published or compiled list. To determine the number of items considered "science fair books," she simply counted the number of items classified in the 507s of the Dewey Decimal Classification system instead of using a list of recommended science fair texts. Books that are assigned 507 generally deal with science fair experiments (Colom, 2011, p. 87).

Doll (1985) conducted a comparative study of the children's collections of public and elementary school libraries in order to determine if the collections reflected the popular belief among librarians and users alike that public libraries support children's recreational reading needs while school libraries are more likely to focus on their educational, or curricular, needs. Like Colom, Doll (1985) did not use bibliographic checking. Instead, she used a random sample drawn from the shelf lists of each library to study the overlap of specific children's titles held by both the public libraries and school libraries. She also measured the number of items in each library assigned Dewey numbers (non-fiction) and the number of fiction items, as non-fiction works are often viewed as instructional materials while fictional works are often considered recreational. The article does not offer specific details of how the random sample of titles was drawn.

Methodology
A shelf list of each library's adult 200s collection was generated using the library's automation software program. The First Baptist Church library uses the Concourse library software offered by Book Systems, while the Natchitoches Parish Library uses Library•Solution from The Library Corporation (TLC). The library software was also used to count the number of books classified with a Dewey Decimal number in the 200s in each collection. Additionally, the library software was used to count the total number of items in each library's collection, as well as the total number of items in the adult non-fiction collection. Using a calculator, the number of religious texts (200s) was divided by the number of total items in the collection to arrive at the percentage of the

total collection that is classified as religious non-fiction. Similarly, the total number of religious texts (200s) was divided by the total number of books in the adult non-fiction collection to determine the percentage of the non-fiction collection that is religious in nature.

H.W. Wilson's *Public Library Core Collection: Nonfiction* was used to identify texts that are considered essential to the development of the religious section of a library collection. *Public Library Core Collection: Nonfiction* is published every four years, with an update published for each year that the complete text is not published. As the 2012 edition was not yet available, the 2008 edition, as well as the 2009, 2010, and 2011 supplements, were used for this study.

A search of the Natchitoches Parish Library's OPAC indicated that this book is not available locally; however, a search of library holdings in the state of Louisiana using the Louisiana Library Connection identified a copy at the Terrebonne Parish Library in Houma, Louisiana, that was used for this study. Each library's OPAC was used to look up all core religious titles as identified in *Public Library Core Collection: Nonfiction* to determine if it is part of the library's holdings. Each title that is held by each library was counted to determine the total number of core texts held by each library. If an item appeared on more than one year's list due to the release of an updated version, the book was counted only once. Earlier versions of recommended titles held by each library were not counted if the edition was not an exact match of the recommended version.

In the Dewey Decimal Classification, books assigned numbers in the 290s are considered "non-Christian" or "other than Christian." Using the shelf list generated for each library, the books in the 290s was counted. This total was then divided by the total number of religious non-fiction books to determine percentage of the adult religious collection.

Finally, each library's automation software was used to determine circulation statistics for the adult non-fiction religious collection for the two-year period beginning Jan. 1, 2011 and ending Dec. 31, 2012. The results were used to determine which library has circulated more religious texts in the past two years.

Results
A shelf list of all books classified in the 200s of the Dewey Decimal Classification system was generated by a staff member of each library. Each library's automation software was used to count the number of items in each library's collection and the number of items in each adult non-fiction collection library.
R1. How many books in each collection are classified under the 200s using the Dewey Decimal Classification System?

R2. What percentage of the adult non-fiction books in each collection are classified in the 200s using the Dewey Decimal Classification System?

R3. What percentage of each library's total collection is classified in the 200s using the Dewey Decimal Classification System?
As of March 14, 2013, the Natchitoches Parish library had 1,585 books classified in the 200s using the Dewey Decimal Classification system. There were 98,653 total items in the library's collection, and 21,169 items in the library's entire non-fiction collection. According to these figures, the 200s collection accounts for 1.6 percent of the entire Natchitoches Parish Library collection, and 7.4 percent of the library's non-fiction collection.

As of March 20, 2013, the First Baptist Church Library had 2,127 books classified in the 200s using the DDC System. There were 9,219 total items in the library's collection, and 3,242 items in the library's entire non-fiction collection. In the FBC library, biographies are classified under the letter "B" instead of the more common 920, so those items with a call number beginning with "B" were added to the total number of items with Dewey Decimal numbers to determine the total number of non-fiction items. According to these figures, the 200s collection accounts for slightly more than 23 percent of the entire FBC library collection, and 65.6 percent of the library's non-fiction collection. Figure 1 compares the religious collections of each library as a percentage of the entire collection while Figure 2 shows a comparison of the religious collections of each library as a percentage of the library's non-fiction collection.

Figure 1 Percentage of overall collection that is classified in the 200s of the Dewey Decimal Classification System.
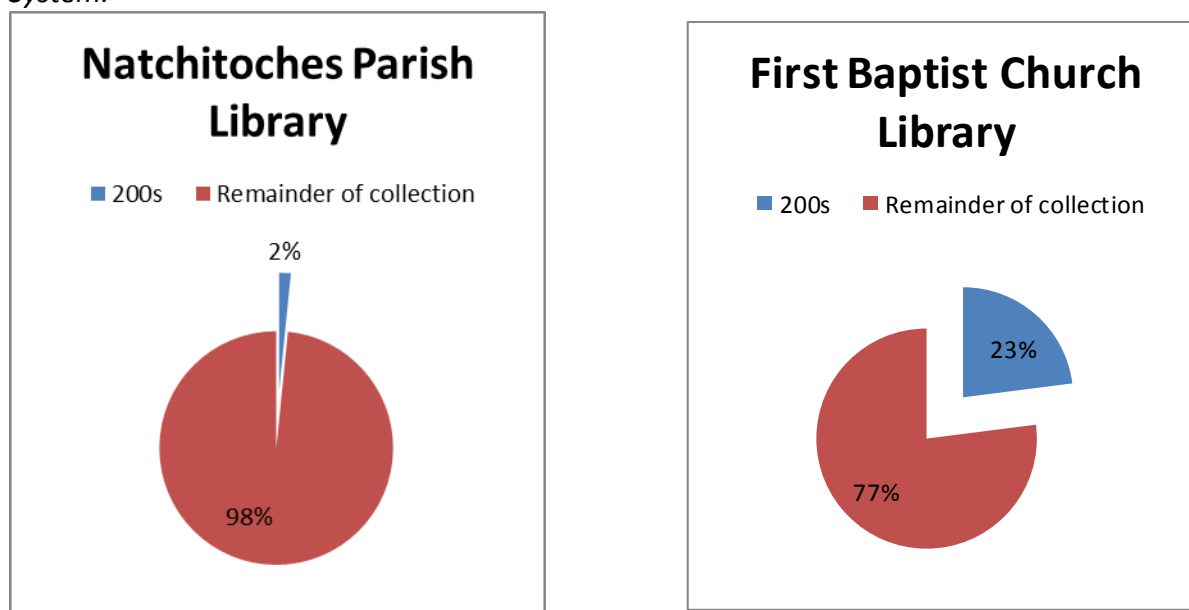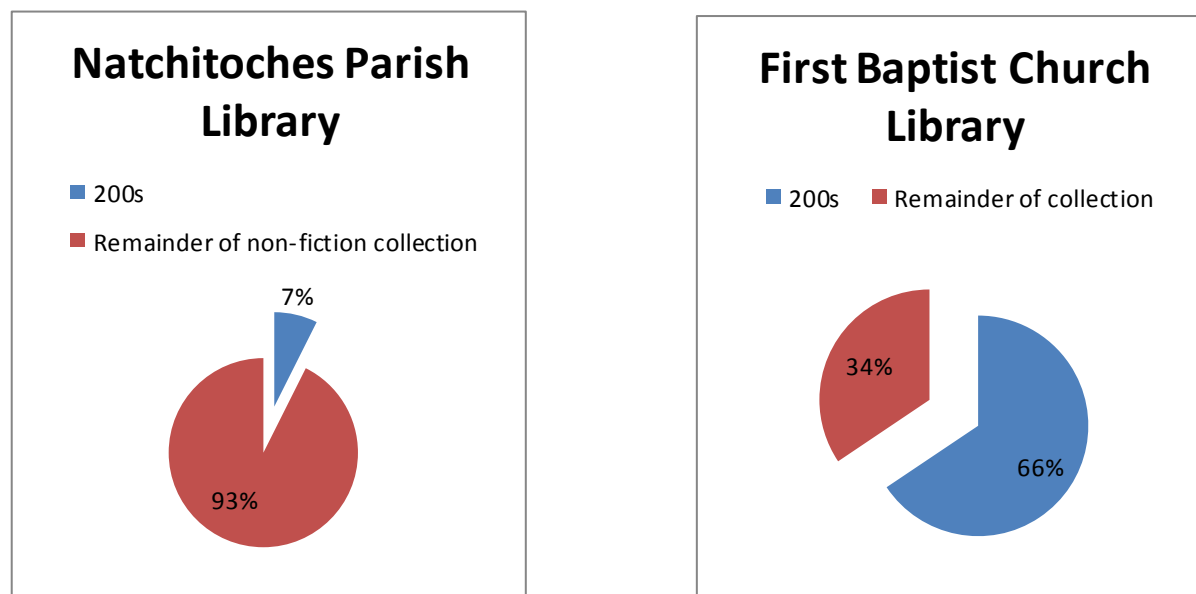
Natchitoches Parish Library

■ 200s ■ Remainder of collection

2%

98%

First Baptist Church Library

■ 200s ■ Remainder of collection

23%

77%

Figure 2 Percentage of non-fiction collection that is classified in the 200s of the Dewey Decimal Classification System

Natchitoches Parish Library

■ 200s
■ Remainder of non-fiction collection

7%

93%

First Baptist Church Library

■ 200s ■ Remainder of collection

34%

66%

R4: How many core religious texts (identified in H.W. Wilson's *Public Library Core Collection: Nonfiction*) does each library contain?

A manual count of the number of recommended religious titles in H.W. Wilson's *Public Library Core Collection: Nonfiction* revealed 427 recommended titles in the 2008 full edition, 20 in the 2009 supplement, 26 in the 2010 supplement, and 22 in the 2011 supplement. In total, there were 495 recommended religious titles listed in the selection guide. A small number of titles were listed in both the

2008 edition and a later supplement if a new edition was released after the publication of the full edition.

A search of the Natchitoches Parish Library OPAC turned up 90 of the 427 recommended titles from the 2008 full edition. However, eight of these were earlier versions and not exact matches. One was listed in the OPAC but no call number or location was provided. Three were marked as lost. This leaves 79 out of the 427 recommended titles (18.5%).

The library also owns nine of the 20 titles (45%) listed in the 2009 supplement, 10 of the 26 titles (38.5%) in the 2010 supplement and nine of the titles for 2011. For 2011, however, two of these were deleted as duplicates because they were newer versions of books listed in the 2008 full edition, leaving only seven of 22 (31.8%) exact matches. In total, the Natchitoches Parish Library owns current versions of 105 of 495 (21.2%) recommended titles.

A search of the First Baptist Church Library OPAC revealed that it owns 21 of the 427 recommended titles from the 2008 full edition. However, seven of these were earlier versions and not exact matches. Additionally, one book was a participant's guide for a study of the original book by the same title. This leaves 13 of the 427 recommended titles (3%). The library also owns 2 of the 20 titles (10%) listed in the 2009 supplement, 2 of the 26 titles (7.7%) in the 2010 supplement and one of the titles for 2011. However, this one title was deleted as a duplicate of an older version listed in the 2008 edition, leaving zero for that year. In total, the First Baptist Church Library owns current versions of 14 of 495 (3%)

recommended titles. Table 2 shows the number of core texts recommended by each edition of *Public Library Core Collection: Nonfiction* and the number and percentage of recommended texts owned by each library. A complete list of all books held by each library, along with call number and format, which were recommended in the selected editions of *Public Library Core Collection: Nonfiction* is provided in Appendix 1.

R5: How many non-Christian books (290s) are in each library's collection?
Using each library's shelf list to count the number of items with a call number in the 290s, it was determined that there are 267 books considered to be non-Christian in the Natchitoches Parish library collection, or about 16.8 percent of the religious collection. In the FBC library, there were 40 books considered to be non-Christian, or almost 1.9 percent of the religious collection. Figure 3 shows the percentage of the religious collection of each library that is classified in the 290s of the Dewey Decimal Classification system.

Table 2 The number and percentage of core texts owned by each library

Public Library Core Collection edition/ # of recommended books	Natchitoches Parish Library	First Baptist Church Library
2008 full edition/ 427	79 18.5%	13 3%
2009 supplement/ 20	9 45%	2 10%
2010 supplement/ 26	10 38.5%	2 7.7%
2011 supplement/ 22	7 31.8%	0 0%
Total for all editions/ 495	**105 21.2%**	**14 3%**

Figure 3 Percentage of religious non-fiction collection that is considered non-Christian
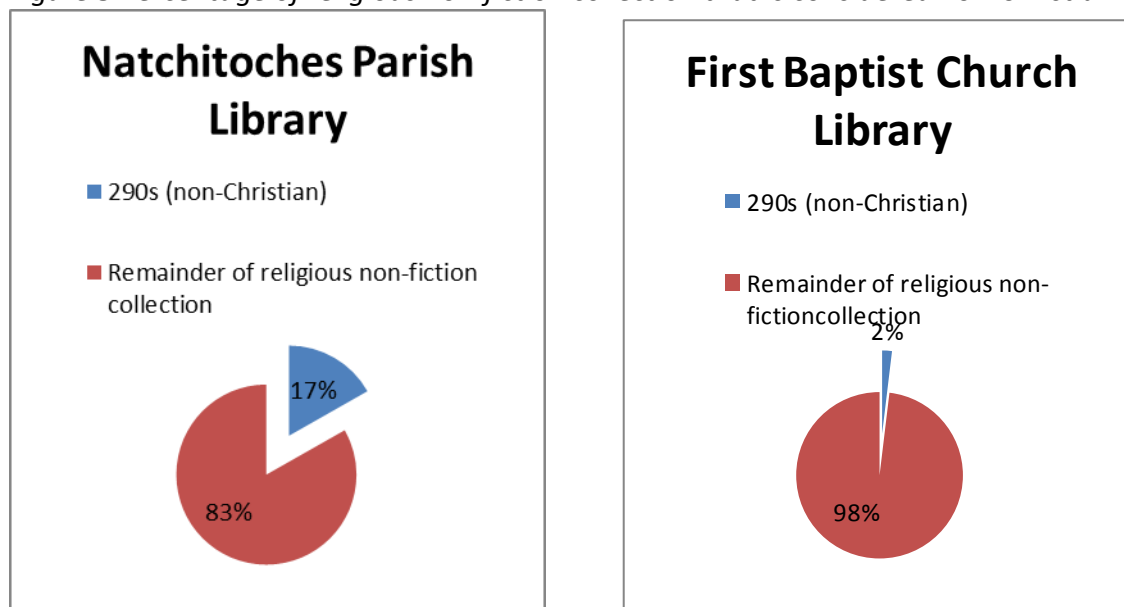
Natchitoches Parish Library

■ 290s (non-Christian)

■ Remainder of religious non-fiction collection

17%

83%

First Baptist Church Library

■ 290s (non-Christian)

■ Remainder of religious non-fictioncollection

2%

98%

R6: What is the rate of circulation of the books in each library's non-fiction religious collection (200s) for the two-year period of Jan. 1, 2011 through Dec. 31, 2012?

According to circulation reports provided by each library, there were 2307 circulations of religious texts in the Natchitoches Parish Library during the two-year period beginning Jan. 1, 2011 and ending Dec. 31, 2012. First Baptist Church library had 625 circulations of items in its religious collection during the same period.

Discussion/Conclusion

The religious non-fiction collections of the Natchitoches Parish Library and the First Baptist Church library provide a plethora of resources on religious topics for the people of Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana. When viewed according to collection size, the church library provides a larger selection of books of a religious nature than the public library. The church library holds 34 percent more religious non-fiction books than the public library while its overall collection is less than 10 percent of the size of the public library. With its religious non-fiction collection making up nearly a quarter of the church's total library collection and approximately two-thirds of its non-fiction collection, the 200s of the Dewey Decimal Classification system are obviously a main focus of the collection development efforts of First Baptist. The number of resources available, along with the fact that it available for use by the general public and

is located just a few yards away from the public library, makes the church library an attractive resource for patrons seeking information on religious subjects.

In spite of its size, however, both in total number of religious texts and as a percentage of total collection and non-fiction collection, the First Baptist Church library may not necessarily contain the strongest religious collection. The Natchitoches Parish Library contains many more of the recommended religious texts, including in the area of Christianity. A check of each collection against the recommended lists in *Public Library Core Collection: Nonfiction* shows that the public library owns seven times more recommended religious titles than the church library. It is interesting to note that the First Baptist Church library does not own the one text on the Baptist faith that is recommended in the *Core Collection* selection guide; however, it does own a book of prayer and rites commonly used by the Episcopal Church.

White (1984) offers an explanation why there may be so few recommended texts in the First Baptist Church library: "Church libraries are not intended to be research collections, nor little public libraries…They contain religious resources to support their parent institutions much of which are too specialized to be appropriate for the public library collection" (p. 1984). For this reason, religious and public libraries

should not view themselves as competitors, but as partners (White, 1984, p. 1894).

While this method of checking a library's collection against an authoritative bibliography is often used to determine coverage level or gaps in a particular area of a collection (Elzy & Lancaster, 1990, p. 1), Goldhor (1973) recommends using the reverse process of checking a collection against selected bibliographies to gauge quality of the collection (p. 6). The current research could be built upon in the future by using both methods to compare both subject-area coverage and collection quality. An interesting approach to the topic would be to compare the two collections using bibliographies focusing on both public library collection development and church library collection development. *A Basic Booklist for Church Libraries,* published by the Church and Synagogue Library Association, is one such bibliography geared toward church libraries; however, it does not appear to have been updated in more than 10 years. This method could provide a better idea of the each library's strengths and areas where they may be able to provide assistance to each other.

As the First Baptist Church library is located in a Christian church environment, the majority of its religious non-fiction collection is logically Christian. However, it does have a small number of books available on non-Christian topics for patrons who are interested in learning the details of other faiths. With nearly nine times more books on various religious groups other than Christianity, patrons of both libraries could benefit from the non-Christian collection of the Natchitoches Parish Library.

The religious collection of the Natchitoches Parish Library had more than three times the circulations of the religious collection of the church library. However, the public library has more than 10 times the number of registered users. When this massive difference in patron numbers is factored in, the church library exhibits a higher per capita circulation rate of religious materials than the public library.

The Natchitoches Parish Library and the First Baptist Church Library may differ in many ways, including size, focus, and user base; however, they do have at least one thing in common: their mutual goal of connecting patrons with the resources they desire to fulfill their information needs and wants. With their close physical proximity, these two libraries are in an ideal location to share their knowledge and resources. White (1984) acknowledges the value of a church library collection: "While we don't usually think of the church or synagogue library as a special library, it is, and as such it often contains specialized material not included in the public library" (p. 1894). White suggests ways in which public libraries and church libraries can work together to serve their patrons, and some of those suggestions are relevant to the Natchitoches Parish and First Baptist Church libraries.

First, an awareness of resources already available in the community, particularly right across the street as is the case in this situation, can reduce the amount spent by each library on duplication of materials. The church library, in particular, often orders any religious materials requested by the church staff and library patrons (H. Ferguson, personal communication, Nov. 14, 2012). A quick consultation of the public library's OPAC, which is available online, can determine if the item is already available nearby.

Second, the staff of the public library may be able to assist with the training of the church library's staff, the majority of whom are volunteers untrained in the management of a library (White, 1984, p. 1895). By working together in this manner, librarians at each facility can become more aware of the resources available at each and, in turn, refer more patrons to the other's collections, possibly resulting in increased circulation numbers for each library.

A third way the public library can work together with church libraries is by compiling a union catalog for the entire community where the public library patrons can easily locate the resources available at other locations throughout the community and obtain them through interlibrary loan (White, 1984, p. 1896). This type of arrangement could be mutually beneficial to each library as "the public library can offer more religious works than it could otherwise, without the problems of denominational balance or the justification of the expenditure of public funds for religious materials. The church library extends its

ministry of librarianship to a wider clientele than it otherwise could reach" (p. 1896).

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Natchitoches Parish Library. (2012c). Schoolmobile schedule. Retrieved from http://www1.youseemore.com/natchitoches/about.asp?loc=232

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Appendix 1

Core texts owned by each library – Complete table

Title/Author/Publication Date	NPL Call Number	FBC Call Number
2008 Full Edition		
A history of God: The 4000 year quest of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam Karen Armstrong, 1993	291.2 ARM	
World Religions John Bowker, 1997	200 BOW *oversized*	200 BOW
The encyclopedia of angels, 2nd ed*.* Rosemary Ellen Guiley, 2004	291.2 GUI *reference*	
God is not great: How religion poisons everything Christopher Hitchens, 2007	200 HIT	
Religious literacy: What every American needs to know--and doesn't Stephen Prothero, 2007	200.71 PRO	
The history of hell Alice K. Turner, 1993	291.2 TUR	
Apocalypses: prophesies, cults, and millennial beliefs through the ages Eugen Weber, 1999	291.2 WEB	
This far by faith: Stories from the African-American religious experience Juan Williams, 2003	200 WIL	
Wise women: Over two thousand years of spiritual writing by women Susan Cahill (ed.), 1996	200 WIS	
Encyclopedia of religion, 2nd ed. Lindsay Jones (ed.), 2005	E-resource	
Strong religion: The rise of fundamentalisms around the world Gabriel A. Almond, R. Scott Appleby, & Emmanuel Sivan, 2003	200 ALM	
The great transformation: The beginning of our religious	200.9	

traditions Karen Armstrong, 2006	ARM	
The God factor: Inside the spiritual life of public people Cathleen Falsani, 2006	200.92 FAL	
Where God was born: A journey by land to the roots of religion Bruce Feiler, 2005	200.95 FEI *2 copies- standard & large print*	221.93 FEI
New historical atlas of religion in America Edwin S. Gaustad & Philip Barlow, 2001	200.973 GAU *reference*	912 GAU *original 1962 edition*
Encyclopedia of American religions, 7th ed. Gordon Melton, 2003	E-resource	
Transformations of myth through time Joseph Campbell, 1990	291.1 CAM	
Don't know much about mythology: Everything you need to know about the greatest stories in human history but never learned Kenneth Davis, 2005	201.3 DAV	
The golden bough: A study in magic and religion (A new abridgment from the second and third editions) Sir James George Frazer, 1998	E-resource	
How to be a perfect stranger: The essential religious etiquette handbook, 4th ed. Stuart M. Matlins & Arthur J. Magida (eds.), 2006 *5th edition also in 2011 supplement	291.3 HOW *reference*	
The Oxford companion to world mythology David Adams Leeming, 2006	201.3 LEE *reference*	
The spiritual life of children Robert Coles, 1990	291.4 COL	
The varieties of religious experience: A study in human nature William James, 2004	291.4 JAM *has 2002 edition*	
The God delusion Richard Dawkins, 2006	211.8 DAW *print & E-resource*	
The language of God: A scientist presents evidence for belief Francis Collins, 2006		215 COL *sound recording*
The year of living biblically: One man's humble quest to follow the Bible as literally as possible A.J. Jacobs, 2007	220 JAC	
Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible David Noel Freedman (ed. in chief), 2000	220.3 NAT	

	*reference	
The HarperCollins Bible dictionary, rev. ed. Paul Achtemeier (general ed.), 1996	*in OPAC but no call # or location given	
The New Interpreter's dictionary of the Bible Katharine Doob Sakenfeld (ed.), 2006-2008		220.3 BUT *original 1962 5-volume set
The Oxford companion to the Bible Bruce M. Metzger & Michael D. Coogan, 1993	220.3 OXF	
Good news Bible: Today's English version American Bible Society, 1976		221.52 BIB TEV *large print
The Holy Bible; updated New American Standard Bible: containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, 1999	220.5 BIB *large print	220.5204 BIB NASB
The new Jerusalem Bible Henry Wansbrough (general ed.), 1985		220.52 BIB NJB
Cruden's Complete concordance: With index to proper names and their meanings A.D. Adams, C.H. Erwin, & S.A. Waters (eds.), 1968		220.3 CRU
The strongest Strong's exhaustive concordance of the Bible, 21st century edition John R. Kohlenger III & James A. Swanson (eds.), 2001	220.5 STR *1980 & 1985 versions	220.3 STR *1980, 1986 & 1990 versions
All of the women of the Bible Edith Deen, 1955		220.92 DEE
The HarperCollins concise atlas of the Bible James B. Pritchard (ed.), 1997 c1991		220.9 HAR
The Cambridge companion to the Bible Howard Clark Kee, Bruce Chilton (general ed.), 2008	220.9 CAM *reference; 1997 version	
Men and women of the Bible: A readers guide Nancy Tischler, 2002	220.9 TIS *reference	
The five books of Moses: A translation with commentary Robert Alter, 2004	222 FIV	
The Genesis of justice: Ten stories of biblical injustice that led to the Ten Commandments and modern law Alan M. Dershowitz, 2000	222 DER	
Abraham: A journey to the heart of three faiths Bruce S. Feiler, 2002	222 FEI	221.92 FEI
The beginning of wisdom: Reading Genesis Leon Kass, 2003	222.1 KAS	
Misquoting Jesus: The story behind who changed the Bible and	225.48	

why Bart Ehrman, 2005	EHR	
Peter, Paul, and Mary Magdalene: The followers of Jesus in history and legend Bart Ehrman, 2006	225.9 EHR	
The cost of discipleship: Containing material not previously translated Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1959		248 BON *university library*
Mary Magdalene: A biography Bruce Chilton, 2005	226 CHI	
Pontius Pilate Ann Wroe, 2000	226 WRO	
Beyond belief: The secret Gospel of Thomas Elain H. Pagels, 2003	229 PAG	
Mere Christianity: A revised and amplified edition, with a new introduction , of the three books, Broadcast Talk, Christian Behavior, and Beyond Personality C.S. Lewis, 2001	230 LEW *sound recording*	230 LEW *3 copies (books in main & univ. library plus sound recording of original 1952 version)*
Encyclopedia of early Christianity, 2nd ed. Everett Ferguson (ed.), 1997	270.1 ENC *reference*	
God: A biography *Jack Miles, 1995*	231 MIL	
Finding Darwin's God: A scientist's search for common ground between God and evolution Kenneth R. Miller, 1999	231.7 MIL	
Jesus and the Dead Sea scrolls James H. Charlesworth, 1992	232 CHA	
Jesus of Nazareth Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI), 2007	232.9 BEN	
A portrait of Jesus Joseph Girzone, 1998	232.9 GIR *large print*	
A marginal Jew: Rethinking the historical Jesus John Meier, 1991-2001	232.9 MEI	
The illustrated Jesus through the centuries Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, 1997	232.9 PEL *original (non-illustrated) 1985 edition*	
Mary through the centuries: Her place in the history of culture Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, 1996	232.91 PEL	
Surprised by hope: Rethinking heaven, the resurrection, and the mission of the church.	236 WRI	236.24 WRI

N.T. Wright, 2008		*youth library; 6-session particpant's guide*
The reason for God: Belief in an age of skepticism Timothy Keller, 2008	239 KEL *marked as lost*	
The African prayer book: Selected and with an introduction by Desmond Tutu, 1995	242 AFR *book and e-resource*	
The rosary: Prayer comes round Garry Wills, 2005	242 WIL	
The Screwtape letters; with, Screwtape proposes a toast C.S. Lewis, 2001	248.4 LEW *current print version, plus sound recording & e-book of earlier edition*	F LEW *1958 edition*
Into the region of awe: Mysticism in C.S. Lewis David C. Downing, 2005	248.22 DOW	
The mighty and the Almighty: Reflections on America, God, and world affairs Madeline K. Albright, 2006	261.87 ALB	
With God on our side: The rise of the religious right in America William C. Martin, 1996	261.8 MAR	
Papal sin: Structures of deceit Garry Wills, 2000	262 WIL	
The Book of common prayer and administration of the sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the church: together with the Psalter or Psalms of David according to the use of the Episcopal Church Episcopal Church, 1979		264.03 EPI
The new faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the global south Philip Jenkins, 2006	270.83 JEN	
Fox's book of martyrs: A history of the lives, sufferings and triumphant deaths of the early Christian and the Protestant martyrs John Foxe, 1978 c1926	272 FOX	272 FOX *2001 edition plus sound recording*
Stealing Jesus: How fundamentalism betrays Christianity Bruce Bawer, 1997	277.3 BAW	
The black church in the African American experience C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, 1990	277.3 LIN	
Handbook of denominations in the United States, 12th edition Frank S. Mead, Samuel S. Hill, and Craig D. Atwood, 2005		280 MEA

*13th edition also in 2011 supplement		*4th and 11th edition
Crossing the threshold of hope Pope John Paul II, 1994	282 JOH	
Inside the Vatican: The politics and organization of the Catholic Church Thomas J. Reese, 1996	262 REE	
Why I am a Catholic Garry Wills, 2002	291 WIL	
Making saints: How the Catholic Church determines who becomes a saint, who doesn't and why Kenneth L. Woodward, 1990	235.24 WOO	
The Book of Mormon: Another testament of Jesus Christ Translated by Joesph Smith Jr., 2004	289.3 DOC *1981 ed.	
Joseph Smith and the beginnings of Mormonism Richard L. Bushman, 1984	289.3 BUS	
Under the banner of heaven: A story of violent faith Jon Krakauer, 2003	289.3 KRA	
Science and health, with key to the Scriptures: Trustees under the will of Mary Baker G. Eddy Mary Baker Eddy, 2000	289.5 EDD *1994 edition	
The riddle of Amish culture, rev. ed Donald B. Kraybill, 2001	306 KRA	
Bones of the master: A Buddhist monk's search for the lost heart of China George Crane, 2000	294.3 CRA	
In search of Zarathustra: The first prophet and the ideas that changed the world Paul Kriwaczek, 2003	295 KRI	
To life! A celebration of Jewish being and thinking Harold S. Kushner, 1994	296 KUS	
This is my God; the Jewish way of life Herman Wouk, 1987	296 WOU	
Understanding the Dead Sea scrolls: A reader from the Biblical archaeology review Herschek Shanks (ed.), 1992	296.1 UND	
The Dead Sea scroll: A new translation, rev. ed. Michael O. Wise, Martin G. Abegg Jr., and Edard M. Cook, 2005	296.1 DEA	
When bad things happen to good people: With a new preface by the author, 20th anniversary ed. Harold S. Kushner, 2001	296.3 KUS *sound recording & e-book	296.3 KUS *2 copies of original 1981 edition
Kosher living: It's more than just the food Ronald H. Isaacs, 2005	296.7 ISA *marked as lost	

How good do we have to be? A new understanding of guilt and forgiveness Harold S. Kushner, 1996	296.7 KUS	
Who needs God? Harold S. Kushner, 2002	296.7 KUS *original 1989 edition*	
Following Muhammad: Rethinking Islam in the contemporary world Carl W. Ernst, 2003	297 ERN	
The Shambala guide to Sufism Carl W. Ernst, 1997	297.4 ERN	
Islam: The straight path, rev. 3rd ed. John L. Esposito, 2005	297 ESP	
What everyone needs to know about Islam John L. Esposito, 2002	297 ESP *marked as lost*	
Essential Sufism James Fadiman and Robert Frager (eds.), 1997	297.4 ESS	
The crisis of Islam: Holy war and unholy terror Bernard Lewis, 2003	297.72 LEW *2 versions - standard and large print*	
The Gnostic Bible Willis Barnstone and Marvin Meyer (eds.), 2003 *Revised edition also in 2011 supplement	299 GNO	
2009 Supplement		
Melton's encyclopedia of American religions, 8th ed. Gordon Melton, 2009	E-resource	
A case for the existence of God Dean L. Overman, 2008	212.1 OVE	
A visual history of the English Bible: The tumultuous tale of the world's bestselling book Donald L. Brake, 2008		220.52009 BRA
The Bible and the people Lori Anne Ferrell, 2008	220.5 FER	
Digging through the Bible: Understanding biblical people, places, and controversies through archaeology Richard A. Freund, 2008	220.9 FRE	
Original sin: A cultural history Alan Jacobs, 2008	233.14 JAC	
Love as a way of life: Seven keys to transforming every aspect of your life Gary Chapman, 2008		241.4 CHA
The lost history of Christianity: The thousand-year golden age	270	

of the church in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia – and how it died Philip Jenkins, 2008	JEN	
The great emergence: How Christianity is changing and why Phyllis Tickle, 2008	270.83 TIC	
Plain secrets: An outsider among the Amish Joe Mackall, 2007	289.7 MAC	
Surrender: Appeasing Islam, sacrificing freedom Bruce Bawer, 2009	305.6 BAW	
2010 Supplement		
The case for God Karen Armstrong, 2009	211 ARM *3 versions – book, CD & e- resource*	
Fingerprints of God: The search for the science of spirituality Barbara Bradley Hagerty, 2009	E-resource	
The letter and the scroll: What archaeology tells us about the Bible Robin Currie and Stephen Hyslop, 2009		220.93 CUR
Heaven: our 2000-year-old fascination with the afterlife Lisa Miller, 2010	202.3 MIL	
Fearles: Imagine your life without fear Max Lucado, 2009	248.86 LUC	152.4 LUC *2 versions – book & sound recording*
Saving Jesus from the church: how to stop worshipping Christ and start following Jesus Robin R. Meyers, 2009	E-resource	
The future of faith Harvey Cox, 2009	E-resource	
Jesus wars: How four patriarchs, three queens, and two emperors decided what Christians would believe for the next 1,500 years Philip Jenkins, 2010	270.2 JEN	
Understanding the Book of Mormon: A reader's guide Grant Hardy, 2010	289.33 HAR	
Nine lives: In search of the sacred in modern India William Dalrymple, 2010	294.09 DAL	
A mosque in Munich: Nazis, the CIA, and the Muslim brotherhood in the West Ian Johnson, 2010	297.3 JOH	
2011 Supplement		
In the valley of the shadow: On the foundations of religious belief (and their connection to a certain, fleeting state of mind) James Kugel, 2011	200.92 KUG	

American grace: How religion divides and unites us Robert D. Putnam and David E. Campbell, 2010	201.7 PUT	
~~*How to be a perfect stranger; the essential religious etiquette*~~ ~~*handbook*, 5th ed.~~ ~~Stuart Matlins and Arthur Magida (eds.), 2011~~ ~~*4th edition also listed in 2008 version~~ Duplicate removed	REF 291.3 HOW *reference; original 1996 edition*	
The rise and fall of the Bible: The unexpected history of the *accidental book* Timothy K. Beal, 2011	220.609 BEA	
Paul among the people: The Apostle reinterpreted and *reimagined in his own time* Sarah Ruden, 2010	225.92 RUD	
From Bible belt to sunbelt: Plain-folk religion, grassroots *politics, and the rise of evangelical conservatism* Darren Dochuk, 2011	277.94 DOC	
~~*Handbook of denominations in the United States*, 13th ed.~~ ~~Craig D. Atwood, 2010~~ ~~*12th edition also in 2008 edition~~ Duplicate removed		280 MEA *4th and 11th editions*
American Veda: From Emerson and the Beatles to yoga and *meditation: how Indian spirituality changed the West* Philip Goldberg, 2010	294.5 GOL	
The tenth parallel: Dispatches from the fault line between *Christianity and Islam* Eliza Griswold, 2010	297.2 GRI	
~~*The Gnostic Bible*, rev. ed.~~ ~~Willis Barnstone and Marvin Meyer (eds.), 2009~~ ~~*2003 edition also in 2008 edition~~ Duplicate removed	299 GNO *original 2003 edition*	