

Collection and Resources Development Policy

Philosophy and Religion

Philosophy covers traditional philosophical systems and studies such as metaphysics, epistemology, logic and ethics. Religion includes theory of religion, Christian theology and the Bible, Christian denominations and sects, comparative religion and other world religions.

Collection overview

Collecting is at a basic level, though emphasis is given to significant trends in philosophy and social aspects of religion.

Collection strengths

Philosophy

The collection is strong in 19th-century works and collected editions, and complemented by a representative collection of commentaries and major contemporary works. Collecting works by Australian philosophers is emphasised, while overall collecting is at a basic information level. The aim is to provide general reference and standard works, as well as those in subject areas that are of current public interest. Works by significant authors in cross disciplinary subject areas such as literature, women's studies, cultural theory, history and anthropology are emphasised. Biographies of significant philosophers are acquired.

Religion

Collecting includes world religions, reflecting the changing demographic pattern in Australia, and the community interest in ethical and spiritual issues such as bioethics, creationism, religious radicalism and the impact of historical and social aspects of religion on world events and communities.

The historical collection emphasises works on Christianity and is strong in 19th- and early 20th-century works. Current collecting represents all major religions. The collection comprises basic authoritative studies in the areas of history of religion, theology, comparative religion and classical mythology. Major reference works and publications about these religions are acquired. Interpretative works are acquired selectively. Studies of new trends, ideas and movements are also acquired.

Protestant theology from the 16th to 18th centuries, monumental series of the Fathers of the Church, the Hailperin Collection of early Hebrew printed books and manuscripts, and old material on the Society of Jesus are particular historical strengths of the collection.

Although historically focused on Christianity, the collection does hold a broad selection of classic 19th- and early 20th-century works on other religions. Biographies of well-known religious identities are collected.

Paranormal phenomena

Paranormal phenomena include parapsychology, occultism (magic, witchcraft and demonology), astrology, psychic phenomena, spiritualism, mysticism and extra terrestrial phenomena. Collecting places emphasis on historical, cultural and anthropological aspects of the subjects, with selections being made from serious studies. The Library holds a strong collection of Victorian historical material, mainly about spiritualism.

Material not generally collected

- material of a proselytising nature
- specialist academic works
- specialist commentaries of sacred texts.