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Statement on Appraisal of Gifts

Developed by the Committee on Manuscripts Collections of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section. Approved by the ACRL Board of Directors on February 1, 1973, in Washington, D.C. This statement replaces the 1960 policy on appraisal (Antiquarian Bookman, v.26, December 19, 1960, p. 2205).

1. The appraisal of a gift to a library for tax purposes generally is the responsibility of the donor since it is the donor who benefits from the tax deduction. Generally, the cost of the appraisal should be borne by the donor.

2. The library should at all times protect the interests of its donors as best it can and should suggest the desirability of appraisals whenever such a suggestion would be in order.

3. To protect both its donors and itself, the library, as an interested party, ordinarily should not appraise gifts made to it. It is recognized, however, that on occasion the library may wish to appraise small gifts, since many of them are not worth the time and expense an outside ap-

praisal requires. Generally, however, the library will limit its assistance to the donor to: (a) providing him with information such as auction records and dealers' catalogs; (b) suggestions of appropriate professional appraisers who might be consulted; (c) administrative and processing services which would assist the appraiser in making an accurate evaluation.

4. The acceptance of a gift which has been appraised by a third, and disinterested party, does not in any way imply an endorsement of the appraisal by the library.

5. An archivist, curator, or librarian, if he is conscious that as an expert he may have to prove his competence in court, may properly act as an independent appraiser of library materials. He should not in any way suggest that his appraisal is endorsed by his library (such as by the use of the library's letterhead), nor should he ordinarily act in this fashion (except when handling small gifts) if his institution is to receive the donation. ■■

Statement on Legal Title

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1. Every library should acquire proper and

legal title to all gifts of books, manuscripts, and other materials, which have significant monetary value. It is recognized, however, (a) that it is often impossible to acquire title to collections many years after they have been received by the library; (b) that frequently, where small collections of materials are involved, the donor

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News editor: Allan Dyson, Moffitt Undergraduate Library, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720. Associate News editor: Susana Hinojosa, Assistant Librarian, Reference Department, Moffitt Undergraduate Library. Editor: Richard M. Dougherty, University Library, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720. President, ACRL: Russell Shank. Executive Secretary, ACRL: Beverly Lynch, ALA.