How to create a Jewish Genealogy library

Presented by

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Planning

- Create a mission statement
  - What is the purpose or mission for your library?
  - Even if this isn't written down, you need to be clear in your own mind what types of materials you want in your collection!
  - You WILL get donated junk. You need some guidelines for what you want to keep.
- Create an Operations statement
  - Circulation policy (who can check out, check-out rules, etc.)
  - When your library will be open and will be staffed?
- Figure out how much physical space you need in that location

Get a home for your Collection

- Decide on a location to house the collection
  - You may be able to get space in a local public library
  - Try your local Jewish Community Center and local synagogues
  - OCJGS has our library in cabinets in Michelle's garage
- Get permissions (in writing if possible):
  - Get permission to house the collection there
  - Get permission to use their printer.

Create a Budget

- Create a budget for what you plan to spend to create the collection
- Create a book fund
  - The library should pay for the initial purchases necessary to create the library and initial purchase of books
- Things you might want to include in your budget:
  - Shelving
  - Furniture
  - Computer
  - Printer
  - Barcode Scanner (if automating the library collection)
  - Bookends

Create a Budget (continued)

More things you might want to include in your budget:

- Library Automation Program
  - Or spreadsheet program (online-only options like Microsoft Excel and Google Sheets are free)
- Library Supplies
  - Check-out cards
  - Book pockets
  - Labels
  - Label protectors
- Classification system book if you are using a Judaic classification system (Library of Congress and Dewy Decimal come standard on most Library Automation Programs)

Create a Budget (continued)

Library holdings you might want to include in your budget:

- Books
- Magazines and Journals
- Multimedia
- Databases

Build Your Library

- Purchase the shelving.
- Acquire a computer to automate the collection
- Create an account with a Library supply company
  - Demco
  - Brodart
  - Vernon
  - Library Store
  - Don't think you can save money by buying from Staples or Office Max or Amazon – you will get inferior products!
- Purchase your initial supplies
  - Spine labels, barcode labels, spine label protectors, pockets, book cards, library stamp, shelf markers

Build Your Library (continued)

- Acquire (or arrange access to) a printer to print out the various kinds of labels needed
- Acquire a Library Automation Program
  - ResourceMate
  - Library World
  - Library Thing
  - Excel, Google Sheets, or some other spreadsheet
- Acquire a barcode scanner (if supported by your Library Automation Program – we'll talk about this later)

Create an Initial Acquisition List

- Create an acquisitions list
  - See the handout *"Critical Books for a Jewish Genealogy Library"* for suggestions
  - Get suggestions from other JGS libraries or from IAJGS
- Purchase the books and multimedia
  - Avotaynu (they will have the largest collection of books for sale)
  - Book publishers: Jason Aronson, KTAV, Josey Bass, Genealogical Publishing Company, YIVO, Schocken, Yad Vashem
  - Various Jewish Genealogical Societies around the world publish books
  - Ancestry, New York Genealogical and Biographical Society

A quick detour:
Classification Systems and Subject Headings

- A **Classification System** organizes books on the shelves so that related books are close to one another
  - The Classification System specifies the **call numbers** at you will print on spine labels and attach to the book spines
  - Books are put on the shelves alphabetically by call number
- **Subject Headings** allow someone to look up books in a catalog "by subject"
  - Subject Heading systems are separate from Classification systems. For example, you can use Dewey as your classification system (Dewey tells you what call number to assign to each book), and Library of Congress Subject Headings to assign **one or more** subjects to each book in your catalog.

Classification Systems

Choose a classification system for your collection

- **Dewey Decimal System** was the first classification system, created by Melvil Dewey in 1876. Dewey accommodates general subjects and Christian subjects but is not well suited for Judaica or genealogy in general.
- **Library of Congress** (LC) is used mostly in universities and colleges. LC accommodates a broader range of subjects, and it may work for a Jewish Genealogical collection, but learning to use it takes a bit of work.
- **Elazar** is a classification system created by Daniel and David Elazar. Elazar is designed specifically for collections of Judaica; in fact, it has no provisions for non-Jewish (general subjects) material.
- **Weine** is another Judaica classification system based on Dewey. It is designed for non-librarians to catalog Judaica collections.

Subject Headings

Choose a Subject Heading system for your collection

- Library of Congress (LC)
- Sears Subject Headings
- Elazar has its own book of subject headings that may or may not still be available

Catalog Your Materials

- Cataloging is how you create a searchable catalog of your collection
- If you buy a Library Automation program, you can get "automatic" cataloging for most books that you will acquire
  - This is called "copy cataloging". The program goes to online catalogs from other libraries such as Library of Congress or MELVYL (University of California's online library catalog) and finds call numbers and subject headings based on the barcode on the back of the book, or the title and author if no barcode.
  - You will want to have a barcode scanner, but you can type in barcodes manually if you don't have a scanner
- If you just want to use a spreadsheet, then you need to figure out call numbers and (optionally) subject headings yourself

Process Your Materials

Once you have items in your catalog, it's time to put labels on materials so they can be put on the shelves in the correct locations

- **Spine labels** contain only the call number
  - The spine label goes on the spine of the book, underneath the title
- **Card labels** contain the material's title, author (optional), and call number
  - Each book has a card pocket affixed to the inside front cover. The card pocket holds a 3x5 checkout card that you will use to know which books have been checked out.
  - The card labels are affixed to the checkout cards
  - Card labels sever another important function: They let you know which spine label goes on which book!

Organize Materials on Shelves

- Time to make this happen! Organize your (processed) materials on your shelves
  - Arrange items on the shelves in **increasing alphabetical call number order**
    - Items sort alphabetically, not numerically. For example, 123 comes before 12345 (shorter number come before longer numbers). 12A comes before 12ABC.
  - Place shelf markers on the shelves (e.g., signs that tell patrons where important call numbers are)

Get It Online

- Create a dedicated Library page on your JGS website

- Put your OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog) online
  - Either directly on your JGS website Library page if it is something like a spreadsheet (PDF) for patrons to download or view
  - Or a button or link on your JGS website Library page if your cataloging software includes a separate website with a full-featured OPAC
    - For example, OCJGS uses Resource Mate, which puts our catalog (shared with the catalog for Temple Beth David) online at:
      https://15993.rmwebopac.com
      so, our website has a button that redirects to that URL