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INTERSECTIONS

faith + life + learning

NUMBER 1 SUMMER 1996

The Vocation of a Lutheran College

to be the church in higher education, calling and preparing people to serve in the world . . . enable and to encourage the development of the whole person . . . to prepare students for vocations, careers, graduate and professional study . . . to influence the affairs of the world by sending into society thoughtful and informed men and women devoted to the Christian life . . . to provide a strong foundation in the liberal arts . . . to develop future leaders of service to the world . . . to achieve academic excellence and individual development in a Christian context . . . to challenge and nurture for service . . . to help educate the 'creative minority of a civilization' . . . to fully integrate scholarship, creative activity, and encounters with the Christian Gospel and God's call to faith

INTERSECTIONS

faith + life + learning

NUMBER ONE **SUMMER 1996**

Contributors to this Issue

Mark R. Schwehn. . . . . *The Future of Higher Education*
Marsha Heck. . . . . *"Whose Future?" or "Social Justice and the Lutheran Academy?"*
Kurt Keljo. . . . . *Knowing and the Tradition to be Known*
Thomas Templeton Taylor. . . . . *Lutheran Colleges: The Context for the Conversation*
John Rehl. . . . . *Renewing Our Journey: Some Thoughts on Pursuing the Truth*
Florence Amamoto. . . . . *Diversity and Dialogue: Gustavus Adolphus College*
Sandra C. Looney. . . . . *Continuing the Dialogue: Augustana College*

Intersections **Number 1, July, 1996**
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Tom Christenson, *Editor*

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Cover

The cross, "plus sign," or "intersection" symbol is constructed of passages from the mission statements of a variety of ELCA colleges/universities. Design executed by Jessica Brown.

Purpose Statement

This publication is by and largely for the academic communities of the twenty-eight colleges and universities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is published by the Division for Higher Education and Schools of the ELCA. The publication presently has its home at Capital University, Columbus, Ohio which has generously offered leadership, physical and financial support as an institutional sponsor for the inauguration of the publication.

What is the purpose of such a publication?

The ELCA has frequently sponsored conferences for faculty and administrators which have addressed the church - college/university partnership. Recently the ELCA has sponsored an annual Vocation of the Lutheran College conference. The primary purpose of INTERSECTIONS is to enhance and continue such dialogue. It will do so by:

* Lifting up the vocation of Lutheran colleges and universities
* Encouraging thoughtful dialogue about the partnership of colleges and universities with the church
* Offering a forum for concerns and interests of faculty at the intersection of faith, learning and teaching
* Raising for debate issues about institutional missions, goals, objectives and learning priorities
* Encouraging critical and productive discussion on our campuses of issues focal to the life of the church
* Serving as a bulletin board for communications among institutions and faculties
* Publishing papers presented at conferences sponsored by the ELCA and its institutions
* Raising the level of awareness among faculty about the Lutheran heritage and connectedness of their institutions, realizing a sense of being part of a larger family with common interests and concerns.

From the Publisher

It is good to have the first issue of INTERSECTIONS become a reality. It represents a great deal of labor, primarily by EditorTom Christenson. We appreciate his labor of love and Capital University's willingness to be the locus for this publication.

The Vocation of a Lutheran College lives, yes, in the words of institutional mission statements. But it comes to life when the academic community becomes engaged in conversations about these intersections of faith, life and learning. We have now put in place an annual Vocation of a Lutheran College Conference where campus representatives come together to engage these topics. The publication of INTERSECTIONS will enhance these conferences. More important, it will enhance the continuing dialogue which we hope will take place on each of the campuses. Our future as colleges and universities in partnership with the church depends on it.

We are thrilled that the Lilly Endowment has made a sizable grant to support the 1996 Conference, to encourage campus dialogues, and to assist in birthing INTERSECTIONS. Our appreciation to Lilly for this commitment.

James M. Unglaube
Director, Colleges and Universities
ELCA Division for Higher Education and Schools

From the Editor

I am feeling like a proud parent. This publication has been talked about, hoped for, planned for and worked on for what seems like a long time - now here it is! I sincerely hope that all of you who read it will celebrate with those of us who have been in attendance at its birth.

I want to personally recognize the contributions of three people. First, Naomi Linnel, recently retired from the ELCA office for Higher Education and Schools, encouraged the idea of such a publication from the beginning. Second, Jim Unglaube, the real publisher, has made it turn the corner from plan to viable process. Third, Josiah Blackmore, president of Capital University, has given advice, encouragement, and personal and institutional support to the project. Without each of these people INTERSECTIONS would still be just an idea waiting to happen.

This is a publication in process. All of us connected with it invite your reactions and suggestions for improvement. Most of all, of course, we seek your active involvement. We will need, as we go along, editors, reviewers, authors, artists, and critics. We are anxious for people to engage in dialogue over the issues they see raised here and to advance to INTERSECTIONS the form that dialogue takes in the variety of campuses that make up this ELCA college/university family.

Tom Christenson
Professor, Dep't. Of Philosophy and Religion
Capital University

Focus: The following paper was presented at a conference of educators from Lutheran institutions of higher learning. The conference, *The Vocation of the Lutheran College*, brought together faculty, administrators and recent graduates from ELCA colleges to consider how the theology of vocation might inform the teaching and mission of the colleges and universities related to the ELCA.

The Future of Lutheran Higher Education

Mark R. Schwehn

When I was in my last year of graduate school, one of my favorite teachers, the American historian David M. Potter, said in the middle of one of his lectures, "If historians had a little more foresight and a little less hindsight we would all be better off by a damnsight." Potter was right about this, I think, as he was right about so much else. So I have been from the beginning ambivalent at best about my assignment here today. To speak confidently about the future of anything, much less the future of Lutheran higher education, would seem to be the height of folly. And this would be especially true for an historian who is, by virtue of occupational handicap, long on hindsight and short on foresight.

Let me begin then by turning first to the past and inviting you to listen to selections from another address given by a Lutheran educator who was attempting to enable his audience to envision the future of Lutheran higher education.

By this time even the most optimistic observer of the course of human events knows that the world has come to an hour of crisis in the life of man which threatens to destroy all the values of Western Civilization as we have known them since the Church emerged from the catacombs. We have come now to the winter of the modern world, and there are few signs of spring.... Once before in the history of the Western world the lamps of Truth were kept alive by men in hidden places, in half-forgotten schools and monasteries, while the captains and kings had their little day for almost a thousand years. And then the relentless dust of time covered the sons of the sword, as it always has and always will, and out of the darkness came the bearers of the light, the lone watchers of the lamps, the blessed and terrible Meek for whom Truth is greater than Power, and Wisdom is sharper than a sword.... Today, only the school with a Christian orientation can stand before the rising generation and say: We have something to offer you which you can find nowhere else. Others may try to make men scientific; we must do that--and make them wise. Others may give men knowledge; we must give them that--and understanding. Others may try to make men useful; we must do that--and we must make them noble as well. We are not asking you to come to an ivory tower to escape from the realities of life or to a market-place where the voices and minds of men are confused by the immediate and material things of life. We are able to give you the fellowship of men and women whose respect for Truth is not vitiated by doubts concerning its reality and permanence. We are able to offer you a school which recognizes the supreme dignity and worth of the individual human being. We are committed to the principle that the destiny of a Christian University lies in the quality of the men and women who are graduated from its halls rather than in quantitative production. Our future lies in the development of men and women, perhaps relatively few in number, whose quality will be so high that they will exert an influence on society which cannot be measured in terms of numbers alone.

Mark Schwehn is Professor of Humanities and Dean of Christ College at Valparaiso University.

This address, delivered over a half century ago must seem to all of us a bit quaint and at times even embarrassing (I am thinking here of the sexist language, the supreme confidence that only a Christian University can do thus and such, and the magisterial tone of voice). And it does indeed belong to another era delivered as it was in October of 1940, one year after the outbreak of World War II and one year before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, as the inaugural address of the sainted Otto Paul Kretzmann who served as Valparaiso University's president for twenty-eight years until 1968.

Think for a moment of what he and Lutheran higher education faced in 1940 compared to what we face today. He envisioned a possible end to Western Civilization brought about in no small part by many of his own blood relatives and co-religionists in Germany. We worry over declining enrollments, cost containment, and the waning of denominational identity. We are seeking in the midst of less obviously perilous times to strengthen the explicitly Lutheran character of our schools. He, on the other hand, never once used the word 'Lutheran' in his inaugural.

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As we enter together the twenty-first century, it will become increasingly important that we think of our schools as formed by the Lutheran tributary of the Christian intellectual tradition rather than as following a distinctively Lutheran stream of thought.

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I would like to expand upon contrasts like the ones I have just drawn between our time and Kretzmann's to order my remarks about the future of Lutheran higher education. His address, however remote it may seem to some, will help us to bear in mind that the challenges we face are not all that unprecedented--in magnitude or significance. It will also help us deeply to feel and consider how radically our world has changed and yet how much it has remained the same as we seek together to envision Lutheran colleges and universities in the twenty-first century. I propose to organize my remarks in terms of the following four topics: the idea

of a Christian University, the pursuit of truth, the critique of knowledge, and, last but certainly not least, Christianity and liberal learning.

Let me begin with what will doubtless seem to this audience the most controversial topic. I have already noted that Kretzmann in 1940 never once used the word 'Lutheran' in his inaugural address. The more I have thought about this crucial rhetorical decision, the more I believe that he was right in every way to speak of the idea of a Christian University rather than the idea of a Lutheran University. And--now comes the controversial part--I think we would be very well advised even today, perhaps especially today, to follow his example. As we enter together the twenty-first century, it will become increasingly important that we think of our schools as formed by the Lutheran tributary of the Christian intellectual tradition rather than as following a distinctively Lutheran stream of thought. This is no small matter, and, as I shall try to show, the proposal carries with it an enormous number of practical implications.

First of all, those of us who are Lutherans are not very good Lutherans if we do not ask ourselves regularly why we are not Roman Catholics. Let me hasten to say that I can still answer this question to my own satisfaction fairly quickly and that if I were a woman I could and would answer it even more quickly. Even so, it is more difficult for me to answer the question now than it was twenty years ago. And, in any event, we Protestants must always bear in mind that Calvinism and Lutheranism were and are intended as enrichments of and finally as a steps toward the unity of the church catholic, not as ends in themselves.

The educational implications of this constant critical self-examination are, to my mind, enormous. First, we should come to regard our lay people's demotion of the import of denominational identity less as a dreadful departure from orthodoxy and more as a presciently pious act of theological common sense. We might come to see some of our co-religionists as insisting upon something more grand, something with greater intellectual magnitude and spiritual depth, than the sometimes embattled positions we formulate as we try for the fiftieth time to articulate what it means to be Lutheran. Yes, Lutherans should continue to do their part to preserve and extend certain crucial interpretations of the Christian faith, but we should be equally eager to receive correction and instruction from other Christian colleges and universities about the ways to organize our common life and to integrate higher learning with the Christian faith.

Second, we should come to question what has become in some quarters the proverbial wisdom about church-related higher education, namely that a move from denominational (in this case Lutheran) to Christian is the first step down a slippery slope that leads inexorably from generically Christian to merely religious and from merely religious to wholly secular. As we gather here to consider the future, we need to abandon this devolutionary scheme, as developed most forcibly by Professor James Burtchaell in his article. I would offer in its stead another image of church-related higher education that is based more upon theological and experiential considerations and less upon the historical and ecclesiastical ones that Burtchaell emphasized. My proposed image is briefly this: in our present circumstances, it is more fruitful because it is more accurate to envision the many and various Christian colleges and universities, including the Lutheran ones represented here, as voices within a conversation than it is to construe them as phases in an irreversible process.

I said that my proposed image is theological and experiential, so let me attend briefly to each of those aspects in order to give the image more substance and precision. My principal theological inspirations here are H. Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture* and Alasdair MacIntyre's several more recent works. Niebuhr, as Professor Benne and others have already observed, gives us a very useful vocabulary, derived from a loose application of his typology, to distinguish theologically among the several voices in the current conversation among Christian institutions of higher learning. So, we have some schools who construe their relationship to the secular world as one of Christ transforming culture, others who construe theirs as one of Christ creating a culture, still others who construe theirs as one of Christ above culture, or against culture, or in tension with culture. In other words, we have in the many institutions of higher learning that call themselves church-related social embodiments of distinct theological points of view on the question of the exact meaning and significance of the Christ event for our times.

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In brief, Lutheran colleges must stand against all reductionist equations of truth with power save one.

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This may seem to some of you terribly abstract, so let me quickly turn to the experiential aspect of my image. Here I mean simply to reflect upon my own experience in several ongoing interdenominational projects that concern themselves primarily with religion and higher education. I have thus far experienced very little interest in the kind of distinctions among schools that Burtchaell has drawn. I have felt instead a high spirited sense of a common enterprise that has expressed itself in dialogue, in writing, in argument, and in worship. And I have learned from all of the distinct voices in the conversation that I have described already. So I have been challenged by the example of Goshen College, a strong Christ-against-culture voice, to rethink the shape of my own university's overseas studies programs. Goshen's program is designed to render service and to teach eighty-five percent of their students to see the globe from the perspective of the poor and marginalized. Valparaiso's overseas programs, by contrast. are for the most part indistinguishable from their counterparts at secular schools. I have been moved by the evermore strenuous endeavors of a Wheaton college to create a Christian culture of inquiry through rigorous and extensive faculty development programs for all new Wheaton appointments. And I have been persuaded by initiatives at the Jesuit Institute at Boston College that one of the best ways to reinvigorate the Christ-above-culture view of the world is to make research -projects informed by the Christian faith

the centers of intellectual energy on the campus.

If my experiences are at all typical, they do support the image of Christian colleges as voices in a conversation. And if this is accurate (here we turn briefly to Alasdair MacIntyre), we can construe the conversation as a tradition, as a socially embodied argument extended over time. The colleges and universities are themselves the social embodiments, the argument is over the relationship between Christ and culture, and the voices in that argument are speaking out of one or another of the several classical theological positions on this broad question. The role of the Lutheran college, if this analysis is at all cogent, would be not simply to maintain and reinvigorate the Lutheran accents and emphases in this conversation but also to open itself up to change and enlargement of its own vision of the relationship between Christ and culture. In so doing, the Lutheran college can prepare itself and its students for an even more vital and urgent conversation, the conversation among the Christian tradition and the other great religious traditions of the world.

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It is time for Lutheran Christians, together with Christians of all types, to be more aggressive in developing and pressing forward their own theories of knowledge and truth . . .

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When we turn from the idea of a Christian University to the principal aim of such an institution, the pursuit of the truth of matters, we may, if our ears are attuned to post-modernity, find that Kretzmann's remarks seem hopelessly dated, even naive. "Truth [with a capital T] is greater than Power," he boldly proclaimed, and he promised, "We are able to give you the fellowship of men and women whose respect for Truth [capital T again] is not vitiated by doubts concerning its reality and permanence." Which of us here today can speak with such reckless confidence about the Truth? I would suggest that, with some important qualifications and elaborations, our continued ability to do so might lie close to the heart of our collective calling in the twenty-first century.

If we consider for a moment the current relationship between all church-related colleges and post-modem culture, we are struck at once with an astonishing fact. The several Christian colleges can be said collectively to represent a tradition at the very moment when post-modem culture, at its worst, has proclaimed that tradition of any kind is at best a delusion. Post-modernity has tended to flaunt the pastiche, *bricolage*, and other incoherent and jumbled patterns in art, architecture, and music, and even philosophy. It has called fundamentally into question the very idea of historical continuity and the possibility of personal identity. It has substituted the quest for meaning for the quest for truth and has then insisted that we all make our own meanings apart from or in opposition to the meanings of others. Post-modernity at its worst is a mere heap of fragments: fragmented selves, fragmented societies, fragmented institutions. Within the university, if there is a quest for truth, post-modernity understands that quest as a thinly disguised quest for power.

Lutheran Christians and the colleges and universities that they support should contest this postmortem notion by first embracing it. Indeed, one could say that in some aspects to remain an old-fashioned Lutheran long enough is to wake up and suddenly find oneself to be a post-modern. Lutherans do, after all, believe that even our highest and best purposes are driven to some extent, given our fallen condition, by selfish interests. Following Augustine, we think that only God can know what is really in our hearts. We are strangers even to, perhaps especially to, ourselves. And how many of us have recently attended a department meeting to consider whether the department's part of the general education program should be reduced? How could we ever, in view of the conversation that invariably ensues, deny that the so-called pursuit of truth is often if not always a quest for power and that the University, church-related or not, is really to a large extent a vast constellation of interests contesting for power.

But having acknowledged this much, we must admit that most postmodernists do not defend the equation of the quest for truth with the quest for power in the nuanced, self-critical, and carefully qualified way that Luther would have. Instead, following Foucault whose name is invoked sooner or later in most of these discussions, postmodernists defend this equation cynically and in an altogether reductionist way in order to urge upon all of us abandonment of any pretension to the pursuit of truth whatsoever. To say that something is true, on this view, is at best to pay a trivial compliment and at worst to make a repressive gesture.

I think Hilary Putnam, among others, is right to dismiss this proposal on the grounds that it is "simply dotty." (p. 124) Putnam agrees with many postmodernists in thinking that a certain philosophical tradition, and with it a certain picture of the world, is collapsing. But, Putnam argues, the retail collapse of certain conceptions of representation and truth that went with that picture of the world is very different from a wholesale collapse of the notions of representation and truth. In their assaults upon a "metaphysics of presence," the view that reality dictates its own unique description, postmoderns, especially the deconstructionists among them, have ironically given to metaphysics an exaggerated importance, according to Putnam. Our language and way of life have not been destroyed by the passing of a certain world picture. We still make perfectly good sense of the idea of an extra-linguistic reality that we did not create.

Putnam's own rejoinder to the postmodern invitation to regard talk of reason, justification, and truth as politically repressive is worth quoting. Such an invitation is "dangerous," says Putnam, "because it provides aid and comfort for extremists (especially extremists of a romantic bent) of all kinds, both left and right. The twentieth century has witnessed horrible events, and the extreme left and the extreme right are both responsible for its horrors. Today, as we face the twenty-first century, our task is not to repeat the mistakes of the twentieth century. Thinking of reason [and truth] as just repressive notions is certainly not going to help us do that."(p.132-133) Here we have Hilary Putnam, among the most gifted Jewish philosophers of this generation, echoing in his 1990 Gifford Lectures some of the same concerns that O.P. Kretzmann, a devout

German Lutheran, articulated fifty years before, in 1940, on the eve of the Holocaust. We may be led to wonder, in view of these and many other historical ironies, whether if and when religion disappears altogether from its formative influence upon higher learning truth itself will be the first casualty.

In brief, Lutheran colleges must stand against all reductionist equations of truth with power save one. And the one version of that equation that Lutherans can embrace wholeheartedly is at one and the same time a critique of the position. I have in mind here the saying of Jesus that my father passed on to me as my confirmation text: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." In short, for Christians, the quest for truth is bound up inextricably with discipleship, and therefore the shape of power is for them always cruciform. To put it another way, the Christian discovers truth *ambulando*, in the course of becoming what she already is, one marked with the sign of the cross. So long as Christians remember that, for disciples, power is not dominion but obedience, faithfulness, and suffering servanthood, they can rightly claim an integral connection between truth and power.

We have already broached my third topic, the criticism of knowledge. My thesis here is rather simple. It is time for Lutheran Christians, together with Christians of all types, to be more aggressive in developing and pressing forward their own theories of knowledge and truth, theories that emerge both from the classics of the Christian intellectual tradition and from the rich diversity of Christian reflection and Christian practice around the world today. For Lutheran colleges and universities this more ambitious agenda will not, of course, take the form of a set of impositions or restraints. We should not be asking our biologists to abandon their research methods in favor of meditations on the book of Genesis. Instead, Lutheran colleges and universities should so order the common life of their faculty and students that all of them must consider together from time to time certain epistemological questions that involve intense engagement among certain Christian accounts of knowing, teaching, and learning and the myriad rival contemporary accounts of these matters.

Notice that this is a somewhat different prescription from those that other writers and speakers, including Professors Benne and Lotz, have set before you. They have stressed the Lutheran teaching that within the earthly kingdom reason reigns supreme. And so they have been more or less content to let the separate academic disciplines pursue their own methods in their own ways for their own purposes so long as this methodological autonomy does not lead to a kind of ontological autonomy, so long as the claims of reason do not infringe upon the kingdom of heaven. This is well and good, and I agree entirely with Professor Benne that Lutheranism's full-bodied secularity has prevented our colleges and universities from deteriorating into Bible schools.

But new occasions teach new duties. As Benne himself noted, "Luther and the early Lutherans were operating in a world pregnant with Christian meaning and values." In that world a Christian celebration of secularity is a very different matter from a similar celebration of secularity today. I take it that Professor Benne would not think that it behooves us as Lutherans to read George Marsden's account of the secularization of the academy cheerfully as a kind of fulfillment of the Lutheran program for higher learning in America.

And there are other difficulties that are mentioned but, I think, underestimated by Professors Benne and Lotz. No terms in contemporary academic discourse are as contested as the terms 'reason' and 'knowledge.' We have, to cite a recent book title, *Women's Ways of Knowing*. And we have the questions, posed in the title of another book, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* This profusion of competing accounts of rationality and the related academic replacement of all talk about Culture with a capital C with talk about lower case and multiple cultures renders much Lutheran talk about a simple dialectical tension between grace and reason anachronistic at best and downright unintelligible at worst If H. Richard Niebuhr were writing his classic today, he would surely entitle it Christ and Cultures, and if we are to carry his project forward, we must be alert to the possibility that some forms of human rationality may not so much conflict with faith and hope and love as complement them. There has been, for example, a resurgence of interest in Jean LeClerc's wonderful book on the monastic (as opposed to the scholastic) tradition of study in the Middle Ages, The Love of Learning and the Desire for God. We Lutherans may soon wish to revisit Luther's own great teacher St. Augustine who thought that love of the truly lovable was itself both a precondition for and a part of all genuine knowledge. That insight might well resonate with at least some contemporary accounts of human rationality in such a way so as to attenuate or even to transform the Lutheran sense of a perpetual tension between the life of reason and the life of faith.

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. . . part of what it means for humankind to be fashioned in the image of God is that we are imbued with this capacity for critical self-consciousness.

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Whatever the case may be here, the destruction of a unitary concept of human rationality presents the Lutheran college or university with a new and urgent set of infinite tasks. These tasks are best pursued, I think, piecemeal and on a case by case basis. We must for a time suspend the urge to new and grand syntheses and foster on our campuses a myriad of smaller but more intense and intensely focussed conversations between thoughtful Christian specialists and thoughtful secularists about how we can best understand ourselves and our world. In these conversations the term 'University' must modify the term 'Lutheran' as much as the term 'Lutheran' modifies the term 'University.' The idea of university should press Lutherans to think in terms of a more capacious, even a universal Christendom, even as Lutheranism presses the university to keep alive certain accounts of truth, reason, and knowledge that strive to integrate the life of the mind with the life of the spirit and that take up ultimate questions as well as penultimate ones.

I realize that this is getting terribly abstract, so let me try to make some of my implicit recommendations more concrete by turning to my fourth and final topic, the relationship between Christianity and liberal learning. Though liberal learning is extremely difficult to define theoretically, it is relatively easy to recognize in practice. It involves the cultivation of certain arts and skills of analysis, criticism, and interpretation. It frees students and teachers from unexamined tyrannies that hold dominion over their souls and minds, even as it frees them for love of the world through responsible and life-long engagement with fundamental human questions. Liberal learning therefore includes both the improvement of the mind and the cultivation of those virtues that are indispensable to the pursuit of the truth of matters. Since liberal learning is a public, not a private, endeavor, most of these virtues are social, governing the manner in which human beings relate to one another. In *Exiles from Eden*, I sought to demonstrate the interdependence of liberal learning and the cultivation and practice of certain Christian virtues like humility and charity. Let me turn now briefly to two other examples of the close connections between liberal learning and Christian virtue.

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I really do think that the future of our schools will depend less upon material factors and more upon the power of our collective imaginations to refurbish an ideal of the Lutheran college or the Lutheran university for the twenty-first century.

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Let us first reexamine briefly what thoughtful Christians might say to the almost unanimous contemporary rejection of the notion that objectivity is a precondition for knowledge. Let us agree with our postmodern colleagues who construe objectivity as a Janus-faced concept, referring on the one side to being in touch with the object, with the way things are, and on the other side to being impartial, i.e. to becoming free from the distorting lenses of personal bias. Let us also agree with them that this ideal can be and has been both crippling and impossible of attainment. Finally, let us agree that we should celebrate the several different standpoints from which various postmodernists see the world as giving them access to realms of reality that would otherwise be extremely difficult to come by. Let us, in other words concede to the postmodernists that all knowledge is to some degree perspectival.

The trouble with this wholesale concession is that it omits or abbreviates important features of both academic life and our ways of thinking generally that require careful attention if Christians are to join the general celebration of perspectival knowing. First of all, we should all recognize that our narrative identities might just as well distort as disclose aspects of reality, and we need to be able somehow to distinguish at any given moment whether we have an instance of the former or the latter condition--distortion or disclosure. Christians would or should insist that all human beings share a capacity for self-transcendence, an ability to bring their own narrative identities under some measure of critical scrutiny. There is, after all, as Nick Wolterstorff has observed, a "conviction, fundamental to Christianity, Judaism, and Islam alike, that there is more to human beings than the merely particular." I would put it this way: part of what it means for humankind to be fashioned in the image of God is that we are imbued with this capacity for critical self-consciousness. That consciousness is, moreover, best exercised within communities of learning that cultivate certain habits like attention and certain practices like repentance and forgiveness.

As Wolterstorff also acknowledges, "'The current argument for allowing [particularist perspectives] entrance [into the academy] is purely political: it assumes that no one ever has any awareness of reality, and argues on that ground that it would be unjustly discriminatory to exclude any perspective." He might have added that this postmodern position leads directly, both logically and sociologically, to tribalism, to a lack of genuine engagement and a hardening of the lines that divide human beings from one another, and finally to the argument that diversity is an end in itself rather than a means to a larger end that is connected to the pursuit of the truth of matters.

Is there an escape from these difficulties short of a return to an untenable notion of objectivity? I think that objectivity, properly refurbished under Christian auspices, should refer neither to the notion of unmediated access to reality nor to the view that we could ever become free from bias or purified of distortions or generically human (whatever these achievements might mean). Rather, I think objectivity should refer, and to a larger extent than we realize it has always referred, to what Thomas Haskell calls, "the expression in intellectual affairs of the ascetic dimension of life." Though he ignores altogether the significance of the historical connection between asceticism and monasticism, Haskell is right, I think, in understanding ascetic practices like objectivity as "indispensable to the pursuit of truth. The very possibility of historical scholarship as an enterprise distinct from propaganda," Haskell continues,

requires of its practitioners that vital minimum of ascetic self-discipline that enables a person to do such things as abandon wishful thinking, assimilate bad news, discard pleasing interpretations that cannot pass elementary tests of evidence and logic, and, most important of all, suspend or bracket one's own perceptions long enough to enter sympathetically into the alien and possibly repugnant perspectives of rival thinkers. All of these mental acts --especially coming to grips with a rival's perspective--require <u>*detachment*</u>*, an undeniably ascetic capacity to achieve some distance from one's own spontaneous perceptions and convictions, to imagine how the world appears in another's eyes, to experimentally adopt perspectives that do not come naturally --in the last analysis, to develop, as Thomas Nagel would say, a view of the world in which one's own self stands not at the center, but appears merely as one object among many.(p. 131)*

What Haskell has said here, about historical scholarship applies, I think, to liberal learning in general. If we really mean to be freed from the tyrannies that hold sway over our minds, we must be able, to some degree, to distance ourselves from our own prejudices rather than to construe all of our intellectual experiences--

perceptions, judgments, and interpretations--as mere manifestations of those prejudices.

My second point about liberal learning and its connection to Christianity involves the way many academics read today, and it is more a speculative idea than a settled conviction. I would propose to you that we must maintain two seemingly incompatible things at once if we are to be credible teachers of the liberal arts today: first, that these arts have no subject matter, second, that liberal learning is nonetheless subject-centered, that in another sense these arts always have a subject. Perhaps our principal pedagogical challenge these days is to maintain these two positions at once in the face of congeries of invitations from colleagues to deconstruct our subjects altogether or to dissolve them without remainder into the imagination of the teacher or the responses of the students or both.

What resources, if any, are still available to us as warrants for the tacit assumptions upon which a great deal of liberal learning rests, e.g. that texts have something to teach us, that their meanings, though perhaps inexhaustible, are nonetheless discernible through disciplined inquiry and available through interpretations that really are better and worse, and that we become more fully human and perhaps more fully humane as we come to extend and enliven the conversation that they collectively represent? What, in short, can prevent our texts from becoming what they have in fact become, in operational terms at least, at so many universities: at best intricate historical formations and at worst occasions for psycho-photography or imaginative license.

I would suggest to you that all that remains as a stay against these confusions of our time is a set of several religious traditions, including in this country especially Judaism and Christianity, that regard at least some texts as revelations, as manifestations of the divine diagnosis of and remedy for the human condition, as sources that have claims upon us, to which claims we must be in some sense or another obedient or otherwise responsive if we are to comprehend them. This is not a proposition I can fully defend: it is an agenda for research, not a considered conclusion. The historical aspect of the research program would surely include a revisitation of the New Critics, of the Chicago Neo-Aristotelians, and of other formalist readers who were themselves deeply religious people--Protestants, Catholics and Jews--and who helped to found those liberal arts programs that have served many of us as models or inspirations for our own liberal studies programs over the course of the last fifty years. The philosophical aspect of the research program would seek to locate the tradition of rationality implied by the kind of pedagogy practiced in most liberal arts programs within an ongoing set of habits and beliefs that regard at least some texts as sacred.

And so I leave you with tasks rather than predictions, opportunities rather than prescriptions, and large ideas rather than a set of discrete practical and programmatic suggestions. I really do think that the future of our schools will depend less upon material factors and more upon the power of our collective imaginations to refurbish an ideal of the Lutheran college or the Lutheran university for the twenty-first century. Let me nevertheless close by putting in a word for rhetoric, for a sense of audience, for a renewed devotion to what seems fitting-- and to the discovery and invention of the most fitting ways to articulate our common Lutheran heritage for our times.

I began by quoting to you what once seemed like stirring words addressed to a generation of young people on the brink of World War, the Holocaust, and the nuclear age. It may be that Kretzmann's peroration to the effect that we must make men and women noble as well as useful, wise as well as scientifically literate, and understanding as well as knowledgeable seems either too exalted or too presumptuous by our own standards. But unless we find an idiom in the way in which we order our intellectual communities, in the force of our living examples, and in the vocabulary of our collective convictions, to move young people today to feel in their bones the truths that we bear, we shall leave the field of higher learning open to those who increasingly pander to whatever our students most want instead of giving them the few things truly needful.

It is true that people young and old long for meaning; we must convince them that an education that addresses simultaneously the mind and the spirit is the most meaningful. It is true that our democracy is on trial. We must convince our young citizens that the Lutheran tradition of education will not only equip them for informed citizenship but will also cultivate within them those social virtues that make democracy possible. It is true, as we have always said, that the Lutheran idea of vocation gives to all walks of life work a measure of dignity and meaning that they would not otherwise possess. It behooves us now, however, to render more explicit the intricate connections between vocation and commitment on the one hand and vocation and truth on the other.

Finally we must ponder anew the fact that both the corporate vocation of our colleges and universities and our individual vocations as teachers and scholars depend upon faith. In God's hands and not in our own rest the final fruits of our endeavors. We cannot fully regard our academic work as a calling without a reckless confidence in the promises of the One who calls us to our common tasks. Absent faith, our calling will become an intolerable and lonely burden. Absent a deep commitment to the truth and a deeper conviction of it, our vocation will diminish to mere career. And absent both of these things, faith and truth, we will become what Max Weber foresaw as the final corruption of the Protestant ethic--specialists without spirit and sensualists without heart. Let us pray that, whatever successes and failures the future may hold for us, God may use our own efforts on behalf of the Lutheran tradition of education, however weak and fretful they may sometimes be, to bring about the fuller presence of the peaceable kingdom. And may we hear in our teaching and our learning, our reading and our writing, our knowing and our doing the faint articulations of eternity.

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Responses:

"Whose Future?" or "Social Justice and the Lutheran Academy?"

Marsha Heck

Introduction. Like Mark Schwehn, I will look back to look ahead. Unlike Schwehn, my focus will address what we might do--faith in practice--the "body" which is excluded from the meaningful education he says must simultaneously address "mind and spirit." I propose a redefinition of how Lutherans activate the moral dimensions of our relationships with others as a key to energizing the future of our higher education tradition: particularly, Kretzmann's suggestion that our future lies in the development of those who might influence society, with all its inequalities and injustices. It seems to me that if we are to promote this development with integrity, the meaningfulness of theological reflection and academic scholarship must be grounded in day to day experiences and face to face relationships with others.

While service learning is one model for such a dialectic of theory and practice, this discussion will not address models. Rather, I believe our future lies in reminding ourselves of Kretzmann's call to action in 1940. Perhaps he would concur with Arthur Preisinger who suggests 56 years later, that being Lutheran requires a dead honest look at the human condition and the truth of it, and offers, for those who care about it, a radical way out. It is our supreme responsibility to... be ready to speak and hear "the truth in love." (Preisinger 1996)

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. . . Our future may have less to do with considering what it means to be Lutheran, or even Christian, and more about the moral clarification of how we act out our commitment to those who have less or who are different.

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Kretzmann's development as well as Preisinger's "dead honest look" necessitate discourse among divergent, even non-Lutheran, perspectives of the truth as Schwehn implies. We are challenged to engage with the living, breathing pluralism of the earthly kingdom rather than considering diversity from the safe, pristine distance of a purely academic perspective. (Digging a foundation is messier than creating architectural blueprints.) Doing must be given a higher priority than the last of six articulations of eternity (see Schwehn's closing sentence) and our definition of "social" must go beyond his acknowledgment that education is public.

David Lotz articulates a definition of the earthly kingdom and its relationship to education and service which will gauge this conversation:

...the earthly kingdom includes the whole of humanity, Christians and non Christians alike, all of whom are God's agents, ultimately answerable before him, for maintaining the world in peace and order... Rigorous education at the highest levels is required, therefore, indeed is commanded by God, to the end that the citizens of the earthly kingdom are enabled to appropriate their intellectual heritage, and are thereby equipped for responsible service in the world. In the process their own best capacities of mind and spirit are cultivated to their full potential. (Lotz 1979, p17)

In other words, while Schwehn claims that our young people must feel in their bones the truths, in practice it may be more important for them to struggle against what is not true, however that may be defined. And, I will look back to Luther and ask different questions (it has been said that what we question is what we value) than Schwehn about our future. My queries about how faculty, staff and students at Lutheran colleges and universities can LIVE our faith, Lutheran or not, day to day in community with one another and the world around us, in a way which makes a difference, are introduced powerfully by Starla Stensaas of Dana college. In her response to materials for the Vocation of a Lutheran College Conference Stensaas asked,

Does the "church" demand the canon (and a particular theological, denominational canon at that) over the experience of living in community as an act of waiting for God together? Do we prefer to sit like the Pharisees and wring our hands over those who do not keep the Sabbath as we do? Or have we forgotten the cost of a "church" gone mad: the Inquisition, the Crusades, the white churches who rose up against civil rights? (1995)

She further legitimizes my response by explaining that she has been "lead to the church as a feminist academic who chose to teach at an institution that claims to value the whole person, an institution which makes this claim based on the Gospel and a church-relatedness." Accepting that claim as a truth claim, she notes that she is "empowered to engage in conversation on social justice issues from a spiritual as well as an academic ground." This paper will do the same, adding a call to action.

Luther's Legacy. If all that remains as a "stay against the confusions of our time is a set of several religious traditions" as Schwehn implies because they offer a remedy for the human condition, I suspect we will wait a very long time for clarity and justice. Although working toward a world which offers safety and sanity for all, regardless of faith, cultural, personal or political traditions seems more urgent than refurbishing an ideal of the Lutheran College, Luther does offer support for social justice.

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Luther, as Simmons points out, was a relational thinker:

He saw all human life as existing simultaneously in relationship with God and neighbor, so all discussion of human life, including the life of faith is to be expressed through a dialectical understanding. It is the simultaneity of these relationships which gives human life its tension but also its ultimate meaning. (Simmons 1966)

This relationship with the world must be sustained in love. One of Simmons' key points is that we have lost the call of vocation in service to our neighbor, in the earthly kingdom, and replaced it with vocation based on material satisfaction. It seems to me that we have also lost the sense of power the church community has to take action. Perhaps our influence is needed even more than in 1940 when the injustices were clearer. Schwehn offers various perspectives of how Lutheran institutions live out the relationship of Christ and culture. Luther further contextualizes this relationship when he "explicates his ethical teachings in terms of dualities. The antithetical duality pits the kingdom of God against the kingdom of the devil... in a complementary duality ...God uses two governances (the spiritual and the temporal) as instruments in helping creation overcome the evil of the antithetical duality." (Preisinger 1995) Add to this discussion Luther's view of vocation as a calling, a call to moral responsibility, and his conviction that we must do our duty (and our best) in whatever situation God places us, and our future may have less to do with considering what it means to be Lutheran, or even Christian, and more about the moral clarification of how we act out our commitment to those who have less or who are different. How we identify and meet these needs may vary; as Lotz explains, education itself is "an instrument and expression of this freedom of will, and exists to instruct the will to choose rightly and wisely." Of service he continues, "Given its placement and legitimization within the earthly kingdom, education is above all education for citizenship, for responsible service to one's city and country." (Lotz 1979)

Schwehn values an education which simultaneously addresses the mind and the spirit. I would propose that an education which simultaneously embodies theory and action, faith and practice, reflection and execution has a more dynamic meaning and significance for the future. Clearly, a liberal education is not enough. The Nazis, Hitler himself, appreciated the classics and could probably pass any test or teach any class offered by our general education programs. Nor is faith alone enough.

For example, of the Nazi German Lutherans Preisinger explains that it was "the misinterpretation of, the misapplication and the distortion of the doctrine [Luther's] which was used by German churchmen to justify their pro-Nazi attitude during the third Reich." (Preisinger 1995). Preisinger continues that Luther's teaching not only "can but MUST be used to motivate action toward peace and social justice," even though misinterpretations of Luther's ethics led the church to feel it should not get 'mixed up' in politics." (Preisinger 1995) Thus, I think our future lies more in the moral consideration of how we, and our graduates, choose to be citizens whose influence makes a difference, than it does in pondering our Lutheran version of the Christian faith.

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Our future lies less in defining the distinctiveness of being Lutheran than in discerning the universality of being human; less in students "feeling in their bones the truths" than in moving their muscles against what is not true.

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Differences. "Making a difference" is an interesting colloquialism for this discussion in that most social injustice occurs precisely because, like the Jews, one is different than others with power. Those who are different become marginalized--become the Other. In a world which I argue is not so "obviously less perilous" than Schwehn might consider it to be, being culturally responsive and embracing diversity by demonstrating respect for differences may not be as easy as it sounds encouraging. Being politically correct does not necessarily mean being morally responsive or response-able. Actually living with someone who has decidedly different views is much more challenging than being a tourist in an exotic culture or undertaking a mission project to enlighten those deemed less fortunate. I write this response in a sense as an Other. Although I am an Anglo woman, of partial German descent who grew up Lutheran, I write also as someone from the Northeast and a convinced member of the Religious Society of Friends, a Quaker, in a Southern, Lutheran college. These differences, and my perspectives, have not always been to my benefit. For example, some may dismiss this essay, and in the process my voice, as simplistic, more affective than scholarly and decidedly "non Lutheran." Ironically, I have realized more about my Lutheran roots, and discovered more about my colleagues in the process of writing this essay; I now have deeper and more meaningful connections to both. Long lunches, shared literature and anecdotes with others on campus empowered our understanding of each others' perspectives. Thus, the discussions intended to result from reading this journal not only prompted its inception, but also its composition.

Stensaas explains eloquently that without the voice of the other:

the church has little of the hope of the gospel to offer. The hope is for all people --not just Lutherans with a particular political point of view. To live out our vocation, or mission, as a college of the church, means to me to work intentionally, institutionally and individually toward community that models the kind of acceptance that Jesus willingly gave to those not like him/us. (1995)

Lutherans are not always open to this. It seems that too often those who don't fit the mold or model are viewed as antithetical rather than complementary.

The future of Lutheran Education then seems to lie within the challenge of integrating our faith and practice in relationship with others; those who teach, eat, worship and celebrate with us in our institutions, and those who suffer because of our privilege. Schwehn prioritizes, "the role of the Lutheran college is...to open itself up to change and enlargement of its own vision of the relationship

between Christ and culture." (p3) which he feels will lead to "the more urgent conversation among the Christian tradition and other great religious traditions." I suspect it would be more timely for "change and an enlarged vision" to lead both to meaningful conversations among others with whom we come face to face on a daily basis and to action in a Freireian (1970) dialectic of empowerment with marginalized and disenfranchised others.

Conclusion: Given that there are multiple interpretations of Schwehn's view of the future Lutheran Higher Education may anticipate, I again challenge his opening contrast between Kretzmann's time and our's. I question the priorities implied by Schwehn's suggestion that we do not envision a possible end to Western Civilization but instead "worry over declining enrollments, cost containment and the waning of denominational identity ... in the midst of less obviously perilous times to strengthen the explicitly Lutheran character of our schools'. For a moment, it would seem Schwehn shares my sense when he notes that Kretzmann's address will "help us deeply to feel and consider ... how much it [our world] has remained the same..." But he seems at best to oversimplify and at worst to vilify the significance of his comparison.

He quips only a paragraph later, that if he were a woman he could and would more quickly explain his(her) choice to be Lutheran rather than Roman Catholic. I would suggest that if he were a woman, or a person of color, the waning of denominational identity may not be a priority. And, if the comparison of Kretzmann's time to our own did help him/her to "deeply feel and consider" how much our world has remained the same, the future of Lutheran higher education would be less defined by theological identity and more committed to social action.

For example, how might Texas Lutheran College maximize its impending change to Texas Lutheran University as an opportunity to renew , redefine and/or reenergize its maxim "community of faith and learning." The Scholars Leadership Program at Guilford College, in Greensboro, North Carolina offers a summer intensive Spanish program in Mexico for women of faith committed to social justice and in the ELCA, Augsburg's Cuernevaca, Mexico program is geared toward peace and justice issues. I want to see more programs like this offered in Lutheran institutions of higher education. Those who would suggest such programs are more appropriate as auxiliary programs rather than integrated across our curricula and our day to day lives are missing my point. And, according to Preisinger, Luther's; he notes that if "German Lutheranism had understood the two kingdoms teaching correctly, it might have resisted the tyranny of Nazism on theological grounds." (Preisinger 1995) I think if we are to understand correctly, our curricula must include moral reflection in a dialectic with moral action. Our future lies less in defining the distinctiveness of being Lutheran than in discerning the universality of being human; less in students "feeling in their bones the truths" than in moving their muscles against what is not true..

Certainly, the time has come to provide living examples which will compel our students to moral action, trusting that through heartfelt scholarly reflection they will soon make the connections between their faith and such practice? An exaggerated view of Schwehn's analysis and Luther's notion of "saved by grace not by actions" might lead us to spend time and energy engaged in theological and philosophical reflections rather than righting the wrongs of a perilous society. Lutheran higher education has been so reflecting for decades and we still haven't clarified the distinctive value and future of being Lutheran. Yet, the world around us continues to struggle with, as James B. MacDonals might say, " what it means to be human and how we might live together." I have tried to make a case, with the support of Luther and Kretzmann, as cited by Schwehn, which will compel us to compassionate service in the cause of truth and love. It is time for action. It is time for us to do our best.

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Knowing and a Tradition to be Known

Kurt Keljo

I have a bird feeder on two of the windows of my house. A number of birds which have become quite familiar to me over the years make regular appearances at those feeders, but occasionally an unfamiliar bird shows up. On these occasions, I quickly pull out my field guide to try to identify the stranger. Colleges and universities can also be viewed in such a manner. There are colleges and universities that are immediately recognizable as to their species, but there are also those strangers out there. In Lutheran higher education, there are colleges and universities that are immediately recognizable as such, and then there are those other Lutheran schools for which we must get out our field guides. For better or worse, much of what has been written about Lutheran or even Christian higher education often has the character of a field guide or perhaps a diagnostic chart. Mark Schwehn's paper provides a welcome contrast to such fare. Schwehn extends a vocational call. While I embrace the call, I would like to challenge some of his perspectives and issue an alternative form of his call to vocation.

Schwehn begins his discussion by inviting Lutheran colleges and universities to consider themselves to be Christian. He is not distinguishing Christian from Lutheran. Rather he is trying to remind Lutherans that they are part of a larger family. While this move has ecumenical implications, I believe it is chiefly a call to vocation. When we focus on our Lutheran identities, we often become preoccupied with what it is that makes us dis-tinctively Lutheran and wind up producing field guides to Lutheran colleges and universities. Schwehn wants to call us to a task. The first element of that task is ecumenical. He calls us to be a voice in conversation with other Christian colleges and universities "about the ways to organize our common life and to integrate higher learning with the Christian faith."

I am not sure that the appellation, Lutheran vs. Christian, matters as much as the call. We are indeed called to have a voice in a larger conversation. I sometimes wonder if we have both lost our voice and ignored the conversation. To the degree that we have done either, Schwehn offers a welcome invitation. We do have perspectives to bring to the larger Christian conversation regarding the role of Christianity in shaping colleges and universities. There also is a larger conversation to engage than our own intra-Lutheran discussions. As Schwehn suggests, there is much we could learn from other Christian colleges and universities. In addition to the institutions Schwehn identifies, I would lift up such institutions as Calvin College and its intentional efforts to maintain a coherent academic ethos, Earlham College and its commitments to consensus and peace-making, Alverno College and its curricular innovations, Berea College and its emphasis on regional, low cost education, and Emory University and its work with inter-disciplinary faculty seminars.

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Beyond this ecumenical aspect, Schwehn suggests that being a Christian university has certain epistemological implications which he develops in four sections. First, he argues that to be a Christian university means that our central task is to pursue the truth in an age in which such a pursuit has often been understood as a quest for power. I must confess that I am not entirely clear as to what is at stake for Schwehn here. What is the nature of the Christian contribution to the pursuit of truth? What sorts of truth are we dealing with? Is truth objective, propositional, relational, existential, or contextual? Do Christians have particular insight into the truth? To some degree, the mere call to pursue the truth is relatively empty.

His major concern is dissociating the quest for truth from the quest for power. Can we truly dissociate the two? In contrast to Schwehn, I am not convinced that the association of truth with power is either avoidable or negative. The larger question here has to do with the nature of power. The relationship between truth and power looks very different in the light of the Cross than it does in the light of empire. I share with him the desire to dissociate the quest for truth from the quest for domination, repression, and oppression. However, truth may well be closely associated with power, power understood in terms of love and service.

I would also suggest that we are not so much called to pursue the truth as we are to bear witness to the Truth. Christians are a people who follow someone who is described in our tradition as the Truth. We are committed to One in whom the universe finds its foundation and center. This faith gives us hope. There can be hope that at some deep level the disciplines hold together, that the academic enterprise has meaning and value, and that academic community, even human community, is possible. To have hope for such things is a great gift that Christian higher education has to offer. To have such a hope is part of what it means to bear witness to the Truth.

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We do not have a way of knowing to offer as much as we have a tradition to be known. Our challenge is to give the tradition life in the context of the acadamy and to allow to rub up against the disciplines and epistemologies of the modern world.

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Schwehn's second epistemological point is that Christians have certain ways of knowing to offer to the academy, "our own theories of knowledge and truth." That we have such theories is a worthy hypothesis. Modernity has sufficiently affected the tradition to cause me to question the hypothesis. I am more persuaded that certain theories of knowledge and truth fit more comfortably with the tradition than do others.

There likely are certain ways of knowing embedded in the tradition and in our communal habits. However, I maintain that we offer our tradition to be known as much as or more than we offer particular ways of knowing. The tradition has been productively studied and explored in many different ways, even if some ways may have been more fruitful than others. Our tradition is rich and complex enough to transcend any particular ways by which it is known, and is robust enough to endure multiple forms of inquiry. Indeed, I believe there are multiple ways of knowing which could be derived from the tradition.

To illustrate this contention, one can examine Schwehn's third point. Here Schwehn argues that Christianity needs to advocate for objectivity as an important form of knowing. He draws on the story of our being created in the image of God and the theme of repentance as support from the tradition for objectivity. However, a similar case can be made for connected knowing.

Created in the image of God we are called to relationship with God, connection to God. One of the chief failings of humanity is idolatry. Idolatry is the problem of wrong attachment. It is not so much that we fail to see ourselves objectively. Rather, we have the wrong loyalties. To know rightly we need to be rightly attached. We need to be connected. In a similar vein, to repent in the Bible means to turn around. This is not necessarily a matter that flows from seeing reality more objectively. To return is a matter of reattachment. We are reconciled, connected to what we had become alienated from. One could further build the case for connected knowing by drawing on such things as the biblical notion of knowing, which is associated with sexuality, and the Christian understanding of the Incarnation, God's connecting with us.

My point is not to claim that connected knowing is more biblical or more Christian than objective knowing. Instead, I would like to suggest that there is not any single Christian way of knowing. The Truth, truth and truths are subject to and the result of multiple ways of knowing. There may indeed be modes of knowing that are less suited to the Christian tradition than others. Even so, in Christianity the problem may not be so much what ways we know as who and what it is we know.

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Too often, Lutherans have removed the tensions from the relationship between faith and reason, allowing them to function in totally different spheres.

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Schwehn's final point is that Christians can help the academy recover a reading of texts whereby they bear what I would call authority. He suggests that if we are to maintain a liberal arts tradition whereby texts are able to teach us, we may need to learn from religious traditions wherein some texts are regarded as sacred. I do agree that the Christian tradition has something to offer here. We have a long hermeneutical tradition to contribute. Yet, we also have many allies within the liberal arts tradition for the endeavor to recover the authority of texts. Indeed, it is not clear to me that the authority of texts in the academy has been as badly eroded as Schwehn suggests. Christians do have ways of understanding texts as authoritative to bring forward, but we are not and will not be alone in this task.

Christians do not have a particular epistemology to offer as much as we have a foundation for epistemology. We do not have a way of knowing to offer as much as we have a tradition to be known. Our challenge is to give the tradition life in the context of the academy and allow it to rub up against the disciplines and epistemologies of the modern world. This is not to say that we cannot advocate certain kinds of epistemologies. I appreciate Schwehn's doing so. He provides a wonderful model for a dialogue that ought to enliven academic discussion at Lutheran colleges and universities. I have sought to contribute to that discussion in this response. In responding, I am aware that my perspectives have been informed by James Fowler's discussion of the public church, an image I offer as a slightly different formulation of the kind of calling I have tried to shape.

Fowler (1987), drawing on the writing of Martin Marty and Parker Palmer among others, maintains that the public church has four characteristics:

> *First, the public church is deeply and particularly Christian.... It is a particular community of faith standing in the normativity of a religious tradition.*
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> *Second, it is a church committed to Jesus Christ, under the sovereignty of God, that is prepared to pursue its mission in the context of a pluralistic society.... A public church, therefore, is one that is faithful to its particularity and shares its central story but is prepared to join shoulder to shoulder with non-Christians in order to address and work redemptively at problems confronting or threatening the common good.*
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> *Third, a public church is one in which the encouragement of intimacy within its community and the concern for family feeling are balanced by care about the more impersonal and structural domains of public life.... The public church blesses and strengthens persons for Christian presence in the ambiguities and amoralities of large-scale corporate and governmental processes....*
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> *Fourth, a public church is one unafraid of engagement with the complexities and ambiguities of thought and ideologies in this age of ideological pluralism.... Therefore, it engages with others in confident openness, guided by the confidence that God often uses the truths of others to refine, reground, or correct our own. The public church is a nondefensive church: it does not have to coerce or control.... It can be a witness that God's kingdom is not advanced by violence or by tactics of ideological storm troopers even if they carry the sign of the cross. (pp. 24-25)*

Fowler claims in developing the fourth characteristic of a public church that these communities are committed to civility - "to a quality of rigorous but calm discussion of truth."(p. 25) This

brings me to my final point. Even as we are called to bear witness to the truth, are we not called to embody love? In an age that is increasingly polarized, alienated and violent, what greater calling could there be than to find ways to embody love as communities of learning? While I would not wish to reduce love in community to civility, neither would I want to dissociate the two. We could do far worse in our communities than aspire to civility in our efforts to embody love. In any case, love and truth are closely tied together in our tradition. Both are central to our calling as Christian colleges and universities in the Lutheran tradition.

In sum, I very much appreciate what Mark Schwehn has contributed to the conversation about Lutheran higher education through his article. I agree with his vocational call to dialogical reflection on our communal life and on the integration of Christian faith and higher learning. While I challenge his epistemological hypotheses, I value the model he provides. Too often, Lutherans have removed the tension from the relationship between faith and reason, allowing them to function in totally different spheres. We have failed to keep the dialogue going between the Christian tradition and academic disciplines. The future of Lutheran higher education does depend on our ability to revitalize the role of the Christian tradition in academic life. The tradition must become integral to the academic endeavor, not simply the possession of the religion department or campus ministry. It belongs in dialogue with the whole life of the college or university as we seek to bear witness to the truth and to live in love.

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Lutheran Colleges: The Context for the Conversation

Thomas Templeton Taylor

This essay focuses on the first of Mark Schwehn's arguments, that we ought to conceive of Lutheran colleges/universities not as ends unto themselves but as voices among many within the conversation over Christ and culture. That is a worthy goal for church-related colleges. But ultimately, I will suggest, Lutheran colleges face a predicament: the American academic culture from which we seek respect is not much interested in such a conversation. Schwehn's sage advice is of much use in my personal vocation as an academic. The issue I will address is that of the vocation of the institution we call the college.

I have been deeply influenced by Lutheran educators: a Missouri Synod Lutheran undergraduate advisor, an LCA/ELCA Lutheran master's thesis director, and a Lutheran-turned-Episcopalian dissertation director. Their training in intellectual history rooted me in the traditions upon which Schwehn skillfully draws. References to Niebuhr and MacIntire, to Haskell and Putnam, not to mention Augustine and Luther, are comfortable and comforting.

But colleges are about more than traditions. They are dynamic communities whose members change yearly: The student body changes at a rate of about 25% every year, while the faculty changes at a rate of about 25% every eight years. By the time the ink is dry on any report, the special community around the report has changed--mission statements reflect yesterday's consensus. Change is the great constant, and we would do well to ask how the transforming trends of our age have affected the affinity between the purposes of the church and those of the academy.

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. . . the trend among mainline Protestant colleges has been first to play down and then to abandon their religous identities, a process in which many Lutheran colleges are only behind, not headed in a different direction.

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When Lutheran colleges were founded, the commonalities between higher education and church were great, and not simply because the church often started the college. The pursuit of "academic excellence" corresponded well to the educational needs of churchly people in the nineteenth century. One did not need to choose between academics and spirituality. But that was then. Nowadays, we are hard-pressed to defend "Lutheran higher education." We now face choices; the question haunting church-related colleges is whether the academy and the faith have anything left in common. Ecumenism, secularization,

and the decline of liberal education have combined to shift the ground on which Lutheran higher education stands.

1. Ecumenism, and the Changing Face of Christianity. This is an age of the collapse of the differences between the old-line Protestant groups. Schwen rightly notes that good Lutherans always should ask why they are not Catholics--a fair question, one rooted in tradition. But an equally good question is why I am not Presbyterian or Episcopalian or Baptist or Methodist or what-have-you. The common sense of the laity, to which Schwen refers, is that the differences do not matter very much. This may reflect their deep devotion to core doctrines, or it may signal a kind of homogenization based on the unimportance of all doctrine. Probably it signals both, but judging from the sociological literature, among the mainliners this movement says more about the un-theological leanings of the laity. The ELCA is serious about dialogue with Roman Catholics, and it is moving toward formal relations with Episcopalians and Presbyterians--even at the top, our distinctive qualities are less important than our points of commonality. The appearance of the ELCA--the fourth largest religious body in the U.S.-- comes at surely the most peculiar time in history for Lutherans to attempt to define themselves as Lutherans: We have joined together as Lutherans when being Lutheran per se matters less and less even to Lutherans.

The most astute observer of the trends in American religion, Princeton sociologist Robert Wuthnow, has noted that the old differences do not matter much anymore, that the defining line in American Christianity lies between liberalism and evangelicalism. And liberal Christianity is weakening: Methodists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians have been hemorrhaging members for years now, and it is not clear that the ELCA won't do the same. But the conservative groups, whether evangelical or fundamentalist, are growing enough to maintain their share of the total population. On the whole, the academy is uncomfortable with evangelical Christianity.

2. The Secularization of Higher Education. There is much debate about whether or not the U.S. truly has experienced the kind of secularization that sociologists often describe. Religion and religious faith *have* proven remarkably resilient in this culture. (For example, the current percentage of the population attending church or synagogue in a given week corresponds to that before World War II). And yet few would argue that America's public institutions--the media and the government come to mind--are not much more secular in orientation than they were.

As the research of George Marsden and others has demonstrated, American higher education certainly *has* experienced this process of secularization. This is especially true of the most prestigious graduate programs, both private and public. The reasons are complicated and many are positive. But a result--unintended by many but no less real--is that the dominant strands of the academic profession now have little, if anything, to do with religion. There are religious people in academia (though sociological research indicates that they are less plentiful there than in other professions), but the dominant values in graduate or professional training are frequently hostile, if usually just indifferent, toward religious faith.

Marsden argues that there is a natural evolution in colleges toward less and less identification with their roots and greater and greater identification with the dominant aspects of broader academic culture, and that this has meant for hundreds of colleges, both public and private, the de-Christianization of higher education. According to the Marsden model, Lutheran colleges like mine are no different. They enter into a phase in which they hope to embrace the accouterments that go with status in the academy without sacrificing the values of a churchly past, but that phase is merely transitory and self-delusional.

3. The Decline of Liberal Arts Colleges. Higher education at the undergraduate level has experienced a massive expansion and restructuring since the end of World War II. Both the high school graduation rate and the percentage of high schoolers going to college have risen steadily, and one result was an enormous expansion of state university systems, at the same time that court decisions were making public education more secular, or at least less avowedly religious.

With increases in students came dramatically increased needs for faculty in a wider variety of fields than before. American undergraduate education remains less specialized than that in Europe, but it nonetheless is more job-focused now than half a century ago. This has two consequences for us. There is now less overlap between the agenda of the church and that of the academy than at any time in the history of higher education. And liberal arts colleges--those institutions whose curricula are dominated by the traditional fields of the arts and sciences--have been under greater pressure and have declined in number in recent decades (even while the Arts & Sciences Colleges within state universities have increased in number and size). Some liberal arts colleges responded with more "professional programs," such as in Education or Business. All but the most elite find it more necessary than ever to explain to prospective students and their families the value of a "liberal education." Most observers agree that private liberal arts colleges will face greater economic pressures in coming decades.

Lutheran Colleges. These forces create one whale of a predicament for Lutheran colleges. Those who wish to preserve the "faith dimension" in those colleges find it awkward to defend "*Lutheran* colleges" when "*Lutheran*ness" matters less and less even to *Lutherans*. How does one defend particularity in our ecumenical age? Most of our colleges have adopted equal opportunity guidelines for employment. Though it is officially a part of their missions, religion (of any sort) often plays but a small part in admissions and is irrelevant to the hiring of faculty.

As our colleges have steadily improved the quality of their faculties, those faculties come more and more to reflect the values of the academic mainstream. Many of these faculty members find strong church ties a frank embarrassment, a remnant of an age of narrow-minded sectarians, racial exclusion, and gender inequalities. Efforts to fortify the church relationship--to defend the particular--face strong suspicion from faculty and often from administrators. And such faculties find "Christian college" an even more frightening appellation than "Lutheran college", because Lutheran can be taken to mean respect for the old tie--whereas Christian sounds like we might

actually mean something.

Most Lutheran colleges are liberal arts colleges, though several have strong programs in areas like education, business, and nursing. In marketing terms, therefore, they are under the gun and cannot afford to do that which might cost them students. They compete not only with other private colleges, but also with public colleges and universities. They cannot afford--and the church should not want--to weaken their academic programs or profiles. And yet undergraduate education entering the twentieth century has less and less to do with the work of the church.

Tough Choices. If this analysis is correct, there are few options here. While many American colleges choose to emphasize their religious orientation--think of the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities--the trend among mainline Protestant colleges has been first to play down and then to abandon their religious identities, a process in which many Lutheran colleges are only behind, not headed in a different direction. When push comes to shove, our colleges and perhaps even our church would rather identify with the liberal wing of American Protestantism than with the evangelical wing. The result, for now, is an in-between stage, in which there are enough vestiges of church influence with which to assuage those who care about such things, but not enough real presence to make anybody--even the most avowed secularist--wary.

This description will sound extreme to many. But then it would, especially for Lutherans. These trends move very slowly and are not discernible in year-to-year snapshots. It is something of a truism that the rhetoric of a certain kind of culture will survive in the culture even after the substantive source of the rhetoric has passed. (Remember that the rhetoric of pre-Revolutionary America was monarchical even though the culture was not, as became painfully clear in 1776). The rhetoric of a church relationship easily lasts longer than the substance, especially if it is useful for a time in order to placate Board members or to solicit contributions.

It is especially tough for Lutherans to come to grips with such questions. Lutheranism has been culturally conditioned by hundreds of years of state sponsorship to be more passive about such things than might other groups. Following Richard Niebuhr, it often is said that Lutherans, unlike other groups, are particularly prone to see the relationship between Christ and Culture as one of paradox--not exactly at odds with one another but not in harmony either. Such a notion fits our current situation--temporarily at least--very well. I tell myself, my college is not in league with the church against a hostile secular culture. We like much of that culture, its financial rewards, and its academic and professional status. We could never throw in with those "other colleges" who identify themselves so religiously! My ambivalence, I can claim, is rooted in paradox, in traditional Lutheran theology! How comforting. And how naive.

The eventual result, of course, is that we are no different from other private colleges, and are distinguishable from state universities only by higher tuition and lower class sizes. My religious vocation as an academic becomes purely personal. Matters of faith appear here and there in the classroom, but they do not significantly enter the intellectual climate. The campus church becomes, if it is fortunate, a campus ministry program. We might as well be public.

And that observation reminds me that my three Lutheran mentors taught me at UNC at Greensboro and at the University of Illinois. Both were and are terrific state universities, with strong religious influences on their origins, numerous people of faith on faculty and among the student body to this day--and are secular to the core.

And this is the point: All four of Mark Schwehn's arguments--each of which I more or less endorse--apply to any Christian (or person of faith) teaching on any campus. But the key question is, are distinctively Lutheran *or Christian* colleges necessary for the advancement of those arguments? If so, why? What are the implications for ELCA affiliated colleges? And are we willing to address them?

Religious communities rely as much on institutional affiliation as on unity in the spirit. As Father Neuhaus has observed, "While conviction is more important than affiliation, affiliation can help sustain conviction. Convictions are sustained by communities of conviction.... All institutions are prone to losing their way, and therefore must be held accountable to a community that can recall them to their constituting purpose."(p. 20-22) The institution to which Lutheran colleges can be affiliated will remain the Lutheran church. Defending such a particular connection in the present age is difficult for lay people and anathema for academics. And yet, an institution cannot be related to religion in general, and Lutheran colleges cannot be institutionally connected to the entire church yet. So if they are to remain in any sense Christian, their institutional affiliations must remain, for a time at least, actively Lutheran. Embracing such a choice rubs against both the academic and the church grains. But is such friction worse than where we are headed?

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Renewing Our Journey: Some Thoughts on Pursuing the Truth

John Rehl

Heresy, I've been told, is an occupational hazard of being a theologian, and I think the point is well taken. Invoking the truth is a risky project, one requiring a light but unhesitant hand, and a bold enough presentation to make one's vision real. In what follows then, I hope to speak forcefully, though without presumption, in the belief that such an approach can serve our conversations most well.

In his reflections on Lutheran higher education, Mark Schwehn invites us to think again on the nature of truth -- perhaps even Truth with a capital T -- and suggests that our continued ability to seek and speak the truth might be central to the task at hand. I will follow Schwehn's invitation and insight, and take a few first steps down the path he offers. My contention here is that a renewed understanding of the role and relevance of Truth can shape our future and our self understandings in remarkable ways, and can re-enliven our vocation as church-related colleges and universities.

To begin, I'd suggest that we discard a few popular conceptions of truth which have not, I think, proved helpful. Most significantly, truth is not fruitfully understood as a matter of information. We live in the self-touted information age, and have seen the limited promise of information. New information, however precise and timely, might make us more comfortable, more secure, and perhaps even more wealthy, but information alone is insufficient fare to sustain us. Our information may be accurate or not, but is never true.

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The quality of our teaching can and should be a first priority. . . because we believe that truth is an event that happens in the classroom, and that good teaching and good learning involve giving birth, individually and in conversation, to our own relations to the truth.

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Second, truth is best not seen as an object. We may collect facts and figures and descriptions of the world, but these remain information. Truth is not a prize to be won, nor an heirloom to be passed down, nor a formula to be memorized. Instead, truth is an event, met and explored in the living of it.

And finally, the truth is not merely words about the truth. Our language may successfully invoke the truth, and will shape and direct our understandings, but can never encompass or exhaust the whole. Indeed, the best discussions of truth are self-effacing, and plan in advance to fall short. Honest discussions of the truth make no presumption to permanence, but point beyond themselves.

With these conceptions set aside, the truth remains as the ultimate source and the ultimate goal of all our choosing. For our vision of the truth, of life's meaning and value, of our circumstance and possibility, both shapes and is shaped by all our actions. Our relationship to the truth is borne out in our priorities, in the risks we take and the sufferings we bear, in the hopes which sustain us and the dreams we pursue. In short, the truth represents the primordial question we are always already answering with our lives.

This remains at best a partial treatment, inviting more careful qualification and development if space and time would allow. Yet even these meager beginnings are enough to spur our conversation, and suggest their own path for exploring our institutional calling. For against this backdrop, our church-related colleges and universities are easily seen as among the few places today where we can still seek the truth in all of its richness and urgency. To suggest that our task is unique would be false, and to argue that we are the best qualified to perform this task can only serve as a self-congratulatory diversion. It is enough that this is *our* task, and one for which we are remarkably well suited. Our church-related colleges and universities, educational communities which are grounded in faith and reason together, remain as one of the few public forums fully open to the life of the spirit, fully prepared to ask and answer our lives' most urgent questions. Moreover, in pursuing this task well, we can easily respond to those who might misunderstand or misconstrue our relation to the church as some sort of retail outlet for religious doctrine. In this vision, church and church-related college are twin communities, linked together by their common loyalties to the truth. Like the church at its best, the church-related college can genuinely equip all its members -- its faculty and staff, students, and alumni -- to live reflectively, to act responsibly, and to choose well.

With these thoughts come immense practical implications for our teaching and learning. Most obviously, this approach brings a renewed emphasis on classroom teaching. Many have linked the decline of church-related higher education to the emerging prominence of the large research universities. For all of their accomplishments, these research institutions have reinforced a small-minded vision of truth: truth as something to be measured, collected, quantified and published. Within this vision, universities serve as factories of information, first produced in the laboratories, and then "delivered" in the lecture hall. Within this framework, the classroom too easily degenerates into merely a loading dock, for unloading booty collected elsewhere. Ironically enough, our understandings of truth have faced much the same assault from another source: the growing number of technical colleges with their focus on training and their celebration, as one advertising campaign has put it, of "hire education." None of this is meant to insult, but to stress instead that we, as church-related colleges and universities, have taken up a different and deeper commission. The quality of our

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teaching can and should be a first priority, not only because excellence is nice and good teaching sells, but because we believe that truth is an event that happens in the classroom, and that good teaching and good learning involve giving birth, individually and in conversation, to our own relations to the truth. Kierkegaard's rich image of the teacher as midwife deserves our careful attention once again.

This is no call for even less research support for our faculties, but simply a suggestion that we reflect our research energies back toward the classroom, or even more personally as sustenance for our own truth journeys. Indeed, a key feature of such an approach is to convene a faculty engaged in their own journeys alongside of their students. In short, we need brave and articulate professors who can and will profess, who can and will publicly own and defend their thoughts, opinions and conclusions. Playing "the devil's advocate" may well be amusing sport, but scarcely serves as effective teaching today. Perhaps in an earlier age, hiding one's own position served well to dethrone the pretensions of an absolute perspective, but this is not our highest problem. I would suggest that most of our students are quite at home with the thought that they have a "right" to their own opinions, but are ill-equipped to articulate, defend and explore their own thoughts. They need examples of clear thinking and careful conversation; they need reference points and foils against which to respond. To give them anything less than our own best ideas, carefully and reflectively held, is to bear false witness -- to pretend that ideas are mere playthings and that the stakes are trivially low.

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We honor our Lutheran heritage, not by defending it or preserving it as a museum piece, but by testing it, exploring it, and putting it to work.

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To be sure, we must always guard against shallow agreements, against our students' desires to agree with us and to be our intellectual allies, but this charge is already part and parcel of our vocation as teachers. And the wide field of ideas is best explained and explored by one who has moved deeply, carefully, and passionately into a position of one's own, not by one who pretends only to be a spectator.

As students as well, this approach to truth can bring a renewed focus and challenge to our endeavors. Our studies bring skills and credentials, but more importantly they bring us into relation to the truth, into our own sense of purpose and direction, however crass or noble. Ultimately, our education involves taking up the tools which promise to sustain us through a richly unfolding, lifelong relationship to the truth. Past generations, in their seemingly quaint idiom, have spoken of "moral education," of teaching virtues and building character, and we can do well to rediscover the full import of such a project. We should teach the virtues, not so much to promote decent and civilized behavior, but to equip ourselves and our students for fruitful and enduring relationships to the truth. We should teach courage, both to live our convictions and to bravely confront the shortcomings of our lives. We should teach discipline, to hone and polish our efforts and guard against sloppy thinking. We should teach patience, to persevere on a journey into truth which is new each day. And we should teach love, so that we might care for and enjoy a world over which we so desperately seek mastery.

These suggestions may seem well and good for the humanities, and perhaps especially for core courses in philosophy and religion, but more difficult to apply in other fields. But I have in mind here a conversation over truth which engages all the disciplines. To borrow Tillich's phrase, the dimension of depth is explored in all our studies. No field is immune to the human condition. Every fact is value laden, shaped by a context of interests and priorities. Beauty and precision can be explored and appreciated in mathematics and music courses alike. And who can deny the need for a genuine, reflective value-laden foundation for our training in journalism, law, health care and education?

For an example, I would comment on certain difficulties in one of my own fields of e. perience: economics. Introductory courses (and indeed every textbook I've seen) typically begin with a simplistic discussion of the difference between facts and values, and a quick division of economic debates into positive and normative statements. Economists are not without values, but normative discussions are subsequently ignored, or simply deferred beyond the end of the course. The professional difficulty, I think, is that economists, as a rule, have no formal training in addressing questions of value. This may not be troubling so long as economists content themselves with ostensibly positive questions, but normative matters invariably arise. Economic study revolves around a handful of striking assumptions -- about human motivation, the importance of animals, the nature of hedonism, and the value of wealth -- assumptions which bring many urgent questions about the values which inform and affirm our studies. And the sad problem remains that these questions urgently call for answers, answers which might fruitfully be developed by trained economists and economic students who were also trained in the task of moral inquiry. And this remains an even bigger problem for all who believe responsible living involves responsible voting, saving, spending, and investing.

My second example also comes from economics, but applies as well, I think, to other fields which pursue empirical inquiry through statistical techniques. In teaching and doing empirical work, we most frequently begin with a handful of elegantly simple statistical tools to organize, summarize, and explore the evidence. Most typically, we set up our statistical tests to carefully limit (to 10%, or 5% or 1%) the chances of mistakenly finding relationships where none really exist. And there are good reasons for beginning here. The math is straightforward enough; the test is easily explained, and our conclusions are readily comparable with those of our colleagues.

This approach may be a good example of skeptical scientific inquiry, and may serve well as an opening strategy for exploring the world. But it can also foster remarkably poor habits for careful, responsible choosing and thinking. When taught alone, or as the common model of "thinking scientifically," it too easily encourages our students to endorse a policy of waiting, of deferring action until the evidence and our algorithm tell us what we can confidently believe. Some times this posture of waiting may be appropriate. But at other times, when

possible threats to our health, our environment, our families and our cultures are contemplated, such a stance may be imprudent, irresponsible, unnecessarily costly -- and even disastrous. So we need to equip our students to discern these different times, to understand the stakes, and to realize that the absence of scientific proof does not absolve us from choosing.

In closing these thoughts, I would add three last observations. First, I have pursued this argument in a wholly secular idiom, and have done so by choice, not necessity. We need to begin, I think, with a commitment to keeping our conversations and our schools accessible to outsiders, for whom the vocabulary of faith does not yet resonate. Nonetheless, this is no call to jettison our familiar symbols, terms, and stories. To touch on but a few possibilities, the imagery of sin and grace, idolatry, revelation, confession and conversion continues to guide and shape our thinking in wonderful ways, and can bring a greater richness to our conversations. I envision here a project of faithful translation, and a promising journey of rediscovery. Moreover, such an effort should not be seen as a plea for watering down our Christian symbols, but as a call for making them real and relevant once again. We must urgently address the painful possibility that most of our students, and even many of our colleagues, have but a shallow understanding of the Christian faith. And we must resist the trend of becoming nominally Christian, with the language of faith a self-contained jargon that merely decorates our lives.

Second, the journey into truth provides a natural and promising way for re-embracing the Lutheran tradition which has shaped us. Our tradition's vigor stems from its fruitfulness -- from its continued potential for shaping, guiding, and sustaining our efforts. As such, we honor our Lutheran heritage, not by defending it or preserving it as a museum piece, but by testing it, exploring it, and putting it to work. And it promises to serve us well. The theology of glory, for instance, meshes nicely with a vision of truth as information, to be triumphantly captured and shared around. Luther's theology of the cross, however, rejects this notion of redemption as a trophy to be won, or borrowed, or inherited, and suggests a truth that must be re-encountered daily, by our sinful, saintly selves. To follow up on one of Professor Benne's suggestions, a renewed confidence in our tradition, and a renewed commitment to seeking and speaking the truth, will bring a refined logic to our recruitment agendas. We need excellent, competent professors, and part of their competence must be their ability to converse on matters of truth both within their fields of expertise and across the university at large. Moreover, a significant fraction of these conversation partners -- in Benne's terms a "critical mass" -- can and should be steeped in the Lutheran tradition.

Finally, I would suggest that we need to carefully prepare our students for living in a world of Untruth. Their relationships to truth will unfold against a world of false goods and false gods, and we must equip them to resist the lure of the crowd, to humbly guard against self delusion, and to face the loneliness of being different. Indeed, with Julian of Norwich, we may strengthen them, and ourselves, with her famous thought that "all will be well, and all will be well, and all manner of things will be well." But we might well pass along her other insight: that God does not promise that we won't be tested, nor that we won't be tried, but only that we will not be overwhelmed.

Diversity and Dialogue

Florence Amamoto

I usually do not start my articles with autobiography - in fact, this is unique, but I feel it is important to say something about myself to put my remarks in context. I am a third generation Japanese-American who teaches American literature at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN. I am a Buddhist--who regularly attends daily chapel. Although I went to large research institutions for all of my own schooling, I have always wanted to teach at a small liberal arts college and feel the church-relatedness of Gustavus is a bonus. In other words, this is the perspective of a sort of "inside outsider."

Mark Schwehn began the closing section of his address "The Future of Lutheran Higher Education" by noting:

And so I leave you with tasks rather than predictions, opportunities rather than prescriptions, and large ideas rather than a set of discrete practical and programmatic suggestions. I really do think that the future of our schools will depend less upon material factors and more upon the power of our collective imaginations to refurbish our ideal of the Lutheran college and the Lutheran university for the 21st century.

The pressures of "material factors" *are* immense as any college president will tell you, as are the pressures toward secularization. However, I would argue that first, church-related colleges are vitally important to our society and second, part of this "refurbishing" needs to consider the issue of diversity. Last, I will examine some of the ways in which Lutheranism or church-relatedness is manifest at Gustavus and some of the pressures surrounding them. Although every school is unique, I suspect the issues at Gustavus are not so

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different from those at other ELCA colleges and perhaps discussing "discrete practical and programmatic" practices at Gustavus can help spark the dialogues that will help keep these colleges vital--and Lutheran--into the 21st century.

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I know from experience that being Buddhist at a Lutheran College has not only taught me more about Lutheranism but has deepened my knowledge of and my faith in my own religion.

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I. In speaking to prospective students and their parents, as I often do, distinguishing between us, a small, liberal arts Lutheran college and large research universities like the ones I attended as a student is easy--smaller classes, bright and accessible professors who care about teaching and students, a friendly atmosphere, greater opportunities to be involved with extracurricular activities. But these attributes do not separate us from what is often our more serious competition: small, secular, liberal arts colleges. Here the obvious difference, perhaps the only difference, is our church-affiliation. I would submit that it is a vital difference.

Perhaps because I am an Americanist, I feel one of the crucial functions of college is to mold good citizens and community leaders. The optimism that the racial situation was improved and that "the people" could change "the system" of my own college years have disappeared. Political, economic, social changes, and the widening gap between haves and have nots have fueled social problems which continue to mount in an atmosphere ever more divisive and volatile. An education that "addresses simultaneously the mind and the spirit" is not just the "most meaningful" as Schwehn argues, but necessary. The moral vision and commitment required to address these problems are more easily developed in church-affiliated schools where discussion of values and faith are part of the identity of the school.

II. If church-affiliated colleges are uniquely positioned to make this important contribution to society, it is because they embody and carry on the conversation about the relationship between "Christ and culture," which Schwehn notes. Although worship may strengthen one's faith, real faith to me is shown in how one acts in the world. Perhaps the most salient characteristic of our culture is its diversity. As W.E.B. DuBois prophetically foresaw, this has been the major problem of the 20th century. Religiously affiliated colleges allow us to address questions of diversity in a way that goes beyond the easy appreciation of exotic music and food to ask the harder questions: Who is my brother? How shall I treat my neighbor?

Schwehn argues that "the role of the Lutheran college... would be not simply to maintain and reinvigorate the Lutheran accents and emphases in this conversation but also to open itself up to change and enlargement of its own vision of the relationship between Christ and culture." I couldn't agree more, but opening itself up to engagement with the culture as well as with other voices can help this reinvigoration. Exploring the connections between life, faith, and learning give all more meaning and depth. As for diversity in particular, I have found in teaching that comparison is an effective way to highlight and explore. I know from experience that being Buddhist at a Lutheran college has not only taught me more about Lutheranism but has deepened my knowledge of and my faith in my own religion. From conversations I've had with Christian friends here, I know my homilies, which often reflect on Scripture passages from a Buddhist perspective have done the same for them. I agree with Schwehn that a Lutheran college should engage in constant critical self-examination and have a desire for dialogue; I believe that the two reinforce and deepen one another.

Although I am accenting here the need for diversity in the curriculum and in personnel, to create the most meaningful educational experience for our students, I think that dialogue would be healthiest if the school maintained its Lutheran identity. The Lutheran identity keeps us mindful that there is a larger framework within which we live our lives and do our work although we might not all define it in the same way. It is a delicate balance, but one that can produce a creative tension. I have felt very fortunate to be at Gustavus because I think it has such a creative tension. But it is under pressure from many sides, and both the ways in which Gustavus has expressed its Lutheran heritage and the pressures facing their continuance are the subject of the rest of this article.

III. The Lutheran church is visible at Gustavus quite literally in the form of Christ Chapel, a large and beautiful building in the center of campus. Its steeple is the highest point on campus and its lit silhouette can be seen standing over not just the campus but also the town of St. Peter. Plans for expansion of the campus have been designed to keep the chapel as the focal point of campus, a physical statement of its centrality to the identity of the college.

But the chapel would be an empty symbol without an active chapel program. The chapel is home to many important college events--convocation, Christmas in Christ Chapel, May Day, Honors Day, Baccalaureate. Although chapel attendance is no longer mandatory, there are no classes between 10 and 10:30 a.m. so people can go to daily chapel, a powerful statement of the importance the institution places on spiritual life.

Much of the credit for the vitality of the chapel program and its visibility on campus must go to Richard Elvee, the chaplain at Gustavus for more than 30 years. A professor in Communications regularly asks his classes to name the three most important people on campus. It is no surprise that Chaplain Elvee is consistently one of the three most frequently mentioned names. Elvee is important not just because he is visible and not just because he has built and sustained a vigorous chapel program. Elvee also provides a model of a man of the church who is also deeply committed to the life of the mind. Elvee has been instrumental as the main organizer of the Nobel Conferences. The quality of the participants which Gustavus has been able to attract to this conference has been astounding but just as impressive to me has been Elvee's insistence on a format that has always included a philosopher or theologian participating in these discussions on an equal footing with the scientists. As importantly, Elvee can be found any day of the week in the Canteen, in his office, walking around campus, provoking, questioning, arguing, equally ready to discuss controversial and cutting-edge issues in theology,

science, or politics.

Elvee's leadership is half of the equation for the successful chapel program. The other half is the professional staff and strong faculty and administration support. The chapel program is ecumenical and inclusive. Lutheran, Catholic, Episcopalian, Jewish, Quaker, Buddhist, agnostic speakers have all been welcome in the pulpit, providing a real diversity of views and traditions. I believe it is important for the professors to think of the spiritual side of their lives to keep their lives and their work in perspective--and I think it is important for the students to see their professors in the pulpit and to hear the fruits of those reflections.

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. . . challenges are opportunities to make us define and refine our ideas about the purposes of our colleges and our vocations as teachers. Let us seize these opportunities -- together.

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As important as the chapel program is, it is also important that consideration of spiritual issues at Gustatuvs does not stop at the Chapel doors. Although the religion requirement for general education is now only a single course, the recently instituted First-term Seminar must involve questions of values. As we reconsider our general education program there has been some talk of adding a senior values capstone course. One of the things I value about a church-related college is that considerations of questions of values in courses is encouraged.

It is also encouraged outside the classroom. The Religion Department for several years has sponsored a series called Tuesday Conversations: Religion and Society, where a faculty member speaks on research relating to religion and society with a commentary by a faculty member from a different department followed by questions from the audience. These forums are open to everyone on campus--students, faculty, administrators, and staff. In the last few years, Gustavus has also stepped up its support of service programs. We hired a director of community services programs who has not only coordinated the volunteer programs but has also worked to expand service programs and make them more visible on campus. In addition, Philosophy professor Deane Curtin organized an India study abroad program focussing on women, community, and development issues in the third world. He also arranged to have Desmond D'Abreo, highly respected community organizer in India, here this year on a Fulbright. Generous donors have helped strengthen the college with gifts like the Sponberg Chair in Ethics in the Religion Department, which brings speakers to campus.

Obviously, religion, particularly Lutheranism, values, and ethics currently permeate Gustavus in many forms. However, none of these things happen automatically. The fact that a number of these programs are new argues for the importance of change, of "refurbishing our ideal of the Lutheran college." But change is also threatening that ideal. Chaplain Elvee's long tenure means that we will have to face his retirement sometime in the foreseeable future. His pungent personality, wide-ranging intellectual curiosity, and charismatic presence will be impossible to replace, but it will be important for Gustavus to think carefully about his replacement. We need to find someone who can keep the chapel program vital and linked to the intellectual life of the college. If we are very lucky, we might find someone like Elvee who will also bring vision to that position.

The fragility of the Lutheran/religious presence on campus has also been underlined by other recent occurances. Although it is one of the few truly unique programs in our study abroad offerings (which otherwise resemble those of other colleges), Deane Curtin has been having trouble finding other faculty members willing to lead the group. The Tuesday Conversations for the past few years have been somewhat sporadic, as money and people's schedules get tighter. Faculty--especially untenured, non-Lutheran faculty like me--become concerned when Board of Trustees members raise the issue of "ethos"--but recent events have also raised concerns that the push for "excellence" measure mainly by the number of publications may eventually erode the commitment to service, values, and community that has long distinguished religiously affiliated liberal arts colleges including Gustavas from their secular sister institutions.

If Gustavus is any indication, we are at a critical juncture in our history. Financial pressures are acute and the pressure toward secularization tremendous and subtle, fueled as it is by valid concerns for excellence and marketability. But if my students (and the graduate students at last year's conference on the vocation of Lutheran higher education) are any indication, what they value most about their education is that these schools are genuinely concerned with the growth of the whole person and actually nurture the intellect, the emotions, <u>and</u> the spirit. The faculty are academically challenging but personally accessible and supportive. I believe that the kind of education of the whole person offered by church-affiliated colleges and universities has an important part to play in our world--and that it is marketable.

It has been precisely the tension between Christ and culture, the intersection between life, faith, and learning, which has produced some of the most innovative and exciting new programs on campus. I would like to see us continue to balance our concerns for our Lutheran heritage and professionalism. At the least, we need to think critically about where our colleges are going and where we want them to go. And we all--students, faculty, administration, Board members--need to talk to each other. Too many of these conversations--when they are happening at all--are happening in isolation, within but not across groups. We need dialogues--on campuses, but also between campuses, at conferences, in journals like this. Although each ELCA college has its unique history and set of circumstances, or perhaps because they do, we have much we could learn from each other. There are many ways church-relatedness may be manifest, many ways the common challenges facing us may be met.

Challenges certainly abound for those of us who would like to see our colleges retain their religious and specifically Lutheran character. But challenges are opportunites to make us define and refine our ideas about the purposes of our colleges and our vocations as teachers. Let us seize these opportunities--together.

Continuing the Dialogue: Augustana College

Sandra C. Looney

Mark Schwehn begins his address with Otto Paul Kretzmann's statement, given in October 1940, on Lutheran higher education: "We are committed to the principle that the destiny of a Christian University lies in the quality of the men and women who are graduated from its halls rather than in quantitative production." This commitment is the present commitment. How we define the quality we wish to promote varies over time and statement. Augustana College has been debating its present mission statement; what has triggered the debate *this time* is its length: too unwieldy, say some board and faculty members. I was a faculty representative on the large committee which developed that, yes, unwieldy statement. And the attempts to shorten the statement and yet encompass our mission stalemated. The 1994 Bush faculty, administration, and staff fall workshop started our defining process once again. Launching a productive year of discussion, the Mission and Values committee, led by religion professor Dr. Arthur Olsen, reached out to different constituencies and asked them to define Augustana's values. Augustana's named values are Christian, Liberal Arts, Community, Excellence, Service.

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I know we are not only watching ourselves, but we are being watched.

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Two values that particularly distinguish our mission are Christian and Community. We have elaborated each value word as it interprets the college mission. We are Christian by being a college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We believe in Community by caring for one another and our environments. Community has further meanings of responding to needs, respecting human differences, empowering one another, tending to the ecology of place. The committee recommended a systematic review of college policies, procedures, and programs to determine whether they are currently reflecting the values statement. President Ralph Wagoner uses Augustana's fundamental values in his address to college groups and prospective students.

We continue to consider and revise our mission statement. In time we will probably alter the particular language of the mission statement, but the values will remain constant. The task of the Mission and Values Committee followed the critical self-examination conversations by ELCA Region III colleges on "What Does It Mean to be a College of the Church?" Augustana's local committee called itself the T'N'T--Through Thick and Thin--and organized four discussions as well as hosted a major symposium entitled "World, Tradition, and Task." The act of naming our fundamental values is itself powerful.

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Yet I hear distinguished colleagues sadly voice their opinion that we do not know who we are or what we are about or that we are just now slowly getting back on track. Critics merit respect. A woman professional in my hometown, when learning I taught at Augustana College, pointedly said, "I hope Augustana knows what it's about. Some colleges don't." Her sons had graduated from another Christian liberal arts college. I replied, "We discuss our mission constantly." I know we are not only watching ourselves, but we are being watched.

At the faculty conference on the vocation of a Lutheran college, the discussion of Lutheran identity and the movement to the secular rather surprised me. Lutherans make up 56% of Augustana's student body; Roman Catholics make up 17%. Christmas Vespers is presented in both Our Savior's Lutheran Church and St. Joseph's Cathedral. We have daily chapel at 10:00 am, the center point of the academic day. The decision to maintain daily chapel, to have a student congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is important to our tradition and to our identity. Augustana has strong outreach teams and a church and college coordinator. For many faculty, worshiping and communing together is central to campus life. It is a fact that many students use chapel time for "power naps," breakfast, or study. It is a fact that some faculty want to replace the 10:00 am chapel time with classes. And chapel attendance varies with semester stresses. However, daily chapel helps define the shape of our institution. Even those who pass by the chapel as the Carolines ring across campus know that faith is a defining element of our college. What we uphold is literally in the air and part of our Christian landscape. The mind stores these associations.

Schwehn calls on Lutherans "to preserve and extend crucial interpretations of the Christian faith." We are, he further maintains, "voices within a conversation" of Christian colleges and universities. Yes, we are places emphasizing the freshness and the vital energy of the Gospels. Breathing a freshness into students' belief is what Lutheran higher education is about. In her chapel talk, Kayci Emry, Augustana senior, explained how her faith expanded over four years. She defined herself as one who had loved the fences, the spiritual rules that kept her right and safe. She spoke about coming to freedom, the freedom of the open gate and the awaiting Good Shepherd. Our colleges have the privilege to talk about the soul and the mind.

Augustana struggles with enlarging the number of voices in our conversation. Native American voices define our area and need to be heard in our college. We have succeeded in part and failed in part to hear them. We have had rich connections with the Jewish voices in our community, but our connections are intermittent. We have reached out in dialogue with the Islamic voices in the city and in the region. They are old voices in our region, but new voices to our awareness.

Augustana College faculty collaborate on Capstone classes, inviting students into conversations on moral and aesthetic issues. These conversations center on two questions: How shall we live in the face of fundamental moral and aesthetic issues? And how can we live as responsible members of church and society? Course titles show the richness of the quiestions: An Invitation to Care: Issues of Life, Health, Death; Light in the Darkness: Courage and Evil in the Twentieth Century; The Land: Perspectives and Challenges; Odysseys of the Spirit; and Forced Options: Business, Technology, Values.

In the March 1996 issue of the journal *College English*, Jeff Smith reviews recent critiques of American higher education. Smith feels that although students voluntarily and consciously choose to go to college, few understand why they're there. So the message of our mission must be repeated, again and again, messages that are particular to our places.

Otto Paul Kretzmann's 1940s speech still reflects our core message: that our colleges and universities stand for things unchangeable in the midst of chaos, that our colleges and universities stand for the belief that evil will not triumph over good ultimately, that our colleges and universities stand for the belief that equipped with knowledge, understanding, and some wisdom, our men and women will exert a difference.

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Bethany College
Linsborg. Kansas

California Lutheran University
Thousand Oaks, California

Capital University
Columbus, Ohio

Carthage College
Kenosha, Wisconsin

Concordia College
Moorhead, Minnesota

Dana College
Blair, Nebraska

Gettysburg College
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Grandview College
Des Moines, Iowa

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Hickory, North Carolina

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Decorah, Iowa

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