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## Full Issue, Number 3, Summer 1997

The Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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# INTERSECTIONS

faith + life + learning

NUMBER THREE

SUMMER 1997



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Gregg Muilenburg . . . . . *An Aristotelian Twist to Faith and Learning.*

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**Intersections**

**Number 3, June, 1997**

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James Unglaube, *Publisher*  
Tom Christenson, *Editor*

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*Cover Art by Forest Walker, age 8*

## 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.

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.

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### From the Publisher:

With the publication of this issue of **Intersections** we have begun our second year of this valuable part of the **Vocation of a Lutheran College Program**. This entire effort has caught the attention of hundreds of people on our 28 college and university campuses and has been able to play an important role in nurturing the Lutheran tradition in higher education. **Intersections** has served as an important bridge between the annual summer conference and the conversations which have been occurring on the campuses.

As I write this, the 1997 conference is just around the corner. This year we will be looking at the Lutheran tradition in higher education from two perspectives. The first is from the outside. Richard Hughes from Pepperdine University will share insights from the Lilly Endowment project which included publication of the book he co-edited: **Models for Christian Higher Education**. David Johnson, President of the University of Minnesota at Morris will look at the tradition from the perspective of someone in the public sector. David is a Luther College graduate and served for many years as the chief academic officer at Gustavus Adolphus College. The second perspective is from the inside. Ann Pederson from the Religion faculty at Augustana in Sioux Falls looks at the tradition from the campus setting. Timothy Lull, President of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary will give a broader view from the church. We will be gathering on the Carthage College campus in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

An exciting new development in this program will be shared in its initial stages at the conference at Carthage. Eric Eliason, Associate Professor of English at Gustavus Adolphus College, has been working on a model for the development of an Academy of Scholars in Lutheran Higher Education. He will share with us his thoughts on creating such an academy as a vehicle for summer seminars wherein faculty from our campuses will be able to do intensive scholarly research topics related to the sub-title of **Intersections**, namely the intersections of faith, life and learning, enabling participants to venture into this area and out of their more narrow academic discipline. We look forward to his report.

These are exciting days for Lutheran Higher education.

James M. Unglaube  
Director, Colleges and Universities  
ELCA Division for Higher Education and Schools  
June, 1997

## From the Editor:

With this issue of *Intersections* we have deviated from the pattern of the first two issues which featured a principle paper with several responses. In this issue we feature three principle papers, one with responses, two without, plus a page of poetry and one of reflective bemusement. Instead of the single focus issues we have had in the past we here feature work on three completely different issues: the environment, the education of desire and hiring and personnel policies. Yet all of these essays have the same sub-focus namely the Lutheran college/university, its educational mission and its priorities. I am particularly pleased with this issue because of the provocative issues I see raised here. Paul Santmire focusses our attention on the ambiguities about ethics in our own tradition and provokes us to examine the sources of our anti-urban prejudices. He also provides an inspiring picture of what Lutheran education ought to include. Gregg Muilenburg uses an Aristotelian analysis of education to challenge the common Lutheran assumption that a *dialogue* of faith and reason is the best we can do. Bruce Reichenbach, Wendy McCredie and Harry Jebson provoke us to explore the dimensions and difficulties of relationship between mission and hiring/promotion priorities at our institutions. Gary Fincke has provided us with two poems that explore surprising meanings of food and eating. Finally Chuck Huff comes clean through honest but not very contrite public confession. There is plenty here to argue with and about. We hope to hear your responses.

I wish to use the rest of my editorial space to recommend a text to your reading. Though I will summarize the focal argument of the book very briefly, my point is not to review it (I hope someone else will take on that task in these pages) but to provoke your reading of it. The book is George Marsden's *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*, (Oxford, 1997) mentioned and quoted in Reichenbach's essay.

Marsden tackles head on the prejudice against faith - informed scholarship that is very common in American academic circles. He cites and argues with several influential authors who argue that though it may be appropriate to have one's scholarship informed by one's political views or by one's gender or class - influenced outlook, there is no place in the academy for faith - influenced scholarship. Marsden then goes on to point out that this view is widely held even among most Christian scholars who have a very hard time articulating what difference their faith makes to their scholarship. Christians have thus, for the most part, been silently complicit in the view that faith does not and should not inform really good scholarship. The most interesting and challenging parts of Marsden's book are the two latter sections where he details excellent examples of Christians whose faith explicitly informs their scholarship and suggests some Christian theological principles that he believes could have a positive effect on Christian scholarship in several fields.

Those of us who teach in Lutheran colleges and universities like to think that the "Lutheran-ness" of our institutions makes some substantial difference to the sort of institutions we are. But we are usually quite silent when it comes around to answering the question that Marsden raises: How do the particulars of our faith inform our scholarship and consequently the learning and teaching that takes place in our institutions? Does the difference appear only in *what* we may study (a requirement in religion, a course in Luther)? Or does it also appear in the assumptions we make when we study (assumptions about the nature of humans, the fallibility of knowledge, our relationship to the culture, our responsibility to our neighbor)? Or does it even appear in the way we construct and weigh theories within our disciplines (is a Christian scholar as likely as anybody to be a positivist, a behaviorist, a chaos theorist)?

Calvinists and Christian evangelicals have done a good deal more explicit work on these questions than Lutherans have and have come up with some extremely interesting things in the process (e.g. Nicholas Wolterstorff's *Reason Within the Bounds of Religion* and his subsequent *Art in Action: Toward a Christian Aesthetic*, both published by Eerdmans). I do not want to argue that Lutherans should simply adopt the Calvinist approach to Christian scholarship. What I am suggesting is that Lutheran scholars ought to become sufficiently familiar with the work that Wolterstorff and others have done to be able to state explicitly how our own approach should differ (if it should) from theirs. I believe that this would make a great multi - year project for a team of Lutheran scholars. A project that all of us who teach in Lutheran institutions would benefit from. Run, don't walk, to your nearest bookstore and add Marsden's book to the top of your reading stack.

Tom Christenson  
Capital University

# THE LUTHERAN LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE AND CARE FOR THE EARTH

*H. Paul Santmire*

I am one who still holds to what is perhaps no longer a popular notion, that the liberal arts college *has* a viable social vocation, that it should attempt to foster what the World Council of Churches has called a just, sustainable, and participatory society, that it is *not* to be considered an effete afterglow of a now discredited, under constructed academic era. I still believe that the faculty, staff, students, and the constituent supporters of a liberal arts college are in a position to shape the future of our society, for better or for worse, as we together launch students into a variety of social orbits, whether they be first ladies or first social workers or first biology teachers or first lawyers or first nurses or first engineers: and that if we work together, inspired by a common vision of the intellectual and moral relevance of our academic irrelevance, we can indeed influence society, by the character of our students and by the quality of our learning, more nearly to approximate the good, the true, and the beautiful. On the basis of that conviction, with reference now to the theme before us, I want to propose three mandates for your consideration.

## **First Mandate: Take Responsibility for Your Spiritual Particularity**

Everybody comes from somewhere. It is tempting to disregard that historical truism, as the liberal arts community charts its course in this multicultural, pluralistic era. It is tempting to leap prematurely into the heady world of global intellectual commerce, neglecting both the skeletons in our own closets and the riches in our own vaults.

To take responsibility for your particularity as a Lutheran liberal arts college, I believe, must mean at least this much, in light of the topic before us.

### *A. Confront the Ambiguity of the Classical Christian Tradition toward Nature*

Since the publication of a still ubiquitously cited essay by historian Lynn White, Jr. in the late sixties, it has become fashionable in some academic circles to blame Christianity for causing the current global environmental crisis. White argued that the Christian religion has historically been so anthropocentric, so focused on the meaning and value of the

human creature alone, and so spiritual, focused on a world-transcending Deity alone, that Christianity bears "a huge burden of guilt" for all the environmental destruction and desecration that has occurred in the modern West. Much of what White argues is historically justified, insofar as one can allow that religious faith can exercise in fact a significant historical causality. As I showed in my study, *The Travail of Nature*, historic Christianity has exhibited a strong impulse to drive its adherents to rise above nature toward communion with a wholly spiritual Deity and to treat the biophysical world, correspondingly, either as merely a platform for Divine - human interaction or as merely a field to be plowed for the sake of human productivity and prosperity.

But that is only half the truth, and to that degree Lynn White and his many latterday followers in the academy have failed miserably as historians. Pre-modern Christianity produced not only a St. Francis, whom White cites as the towering exception to his historical rule, it also was the seed bed for a rich theological tradition of ecological thinking, from Irenaeus in the Second Century, through Augustine, positioned on the bridge between the ancient church and the medieval world, to Luther and Calvin in the sixteenth century. It is only a slight exaggeration to call this pre-modern ecological tradition in Western theology "Franciscan."

The ecological tradition in Western theology envisions God as the Creator and Redeemer of all things, as a profoundly immanent Deity indeed who has a cosmic purpose, not merely a human purpose. This tradition, in turn, is deeply rooted in the imaginative projections of biblical faith, which begin with a vision of a God who creates all things with a purpose for all things and end with a vision of a God who will one day bring all things to fulfillment in a new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells, when all things will be consummated in a New Jerusalem situated in the midst of that new heavens and new earth. The ethos of this vision is one that prompts its citizens to approach the earth in terms of caring and the creatures of the earth in terms of the canon of friendship.

Take responsibility for this particular Christian history. Examine the skeletons in your closet, for sure. But do not fail, either, to contemplate the riches in the vaults. Do not prematurely go running to Zen Buddhism or Native American religions, surely not to the saccharine sweet enticements of New Age religion or to the quick-fix spiritual syncretisms of theological pied pipers like Matthew Fox. Do not prematurely

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conclude that all historic Christianity has to offer is anthropocentrism and the domination of nature. Learn instead to see with the eyes of ecological visionaries in the Christian tradition among who St. Francis is perhaps the greatest, but still a representative figure. Learn what it means to call the animals brothers and sisters and to hear the glory of the Lord resounding from the galaxies.

As you take responsibility for your *Christian* particularity, by confronting the ambiguity of the classical Christian tradition toward nature, I now want to encourage you to do more, regarding your *Lutheran* particularity

### *B. Confront the Ambiguity of Classical Lutheran Social Ethics*

Whether a Lutheran liberal arts college has only a minority of Lutheran students in its midst or a majority is beside the point. Every member of a Lutheran academic community is associated, for better or for worse, with the ethos, if not self-consciously with the theology, of the Lutheran tradition. It is better to deal with that tradition self-consciously than to be its unconscious captives.

Luther espoused what is usually called a "Two Kingdoms Ethic." This is the idea. God establishes two realms, which overlap and interpenetrate, but which are fundamentally dissimilar, the Kingdom of creation and the Kingdom of redemption, the world of the Law and the world of the Gospel. God rules by his left hand in the Kingdom of creation, in, with, and under all things, to be sure, but except for certain structures or "orders of creation," such as the state or the family, God rules in the Kingdom of creation fundamentally in inscrutable and unapproachable ways, according to Luther. In contrast, God reveals Himself by His gracious Word as He rules by His right hand, in the Kingdom of redemption, the church of Jesus Christ.

According to classical Lutheran teaching, these Two kingdoms, creation and redemption, intersect only in the person of the individual believer, who is called by God to be a law-biding citizen in this world and also a witness in this world to the Gospel and to the final Kingdom of Glory that is yet to come, through Jesus Christ. At its best, the Lutheran tradition has sent forth forgiven sinners to be good citizens and witnesses to the Kingdom of God that has arrived in Jesus Christ.

Admirable as this theological construction is as an affirmation and defense of the theology of God's grace, it leaves much to be desired as an affirmation and defense of the theology of God's justice. Critics of the Lutheran Two Kingdoms ethic have called it morally quietistic and socially indifferent, and not without good reason. Lutheranism historically speaking was born in the territories of the ruling aristocracy, and, until very recently in places such as South Africa, the protagonists of this historic faith have typically sided with the ruling classes and the status quo,

and have been profoundly suspicious, not to say hostile, toward any agents of social change, whether they be rebellious peasants in sixteenth century Germany or unionized workers in twentieth-century U.S.A.

The most sobering Lutheran story, of course, was written by the Lutheran masses in Germany during the Third Reich. Although it is surely historically simplistic to assert the Lutheran ethos was responsible for the monstrosity of Adolf Hitler's National Socialism in Germany, it is also historically necessary to own up to how that Lutheran ethos made possible the rise of National Socialism and the perpetration of the Holocaust, precisely because its chief social doctrine was rooted in Romans 13: that the powers that be are ordained by God, precisely because its chief spiritual doctrine was rooted in Romans 1: that the singular meaning of the Gospel is the justification of the sinner by grace apart from works of the law.

With the wisdom of hindsight, which still is wisdom, it is sobering to observe that those who adhered to the Lutheran Two Kingdoms ethos in Germany were vulnerable to, even powerless in the face of, a venomous new state-promoted religion of nature: a return to an alleged neolithic spirituality of communion with the wilds, where might makes right, especially where macho might makes right. To be sure, there were some Lutherans in Nazi times like the martyred Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who claimed the world of creation in the name of Christ and did not forsake it to the inscrutable Left hand of God. But those theologians were indeed few in number.

Such is the ambiguity of classical Lutheran social ethics. In light of this history, it is not encouraging to hear more than a few Church leaders in American Lutheranism today being more concerned about whether to hold hands with Episcopalians or with the Reformed or with both, than with responding to the groaning of the earth and its masses in this era of global environmental crisis. Nor is it heartening to read otherwise responsible theologians in American Lutheranism today identifying those Christians who champion environmental concerns with the protagonists of New Age religion.

Fundamental issues of social justice are being obscured in our time, in many Lutheran circles in the U.S. That the greatest number of toxic waste dumps are located near minority and impoverished communities does not appear to be a matter of theological concern for many Lutherans today, while the status of the historic episcopate or the historic teachings about Grace or the best mechanisms for church growth clearly are issues of major concern in the same circles.

Take responsibility for this particular spiritual History. Contemplate the riches in these Lutheran vaults, surely. But also be honest about the skeletons in the closet. Confront the

ambiguity of classical Lutheran social ethics.

### **Second Mandate: Promote Responsible Cultural Criticism**

It would be interesting to do a study of the values of typical liberal arts graduates today, especially those who have been nurtured by American churches, to determine how much those values have been shaped by the liberal arts experience itself and how much they have been shaped by earlier formative experiences, above all the ethos of the summer Bible camp: and if not the Bible camp, then surely the ethos of a Henry David Thoreau, which in some watered down form is the still inebriating spiritual potion being served freely by many teachers in secondary education today and by most summer camp counselors.

This is the cultural religion of *getting away from civilization by getting back to nature*. It would be tempting to blame this sociopathic cultural religion on the advertising media, given their propensity to sell cars by perching them on mountain tops or cigarettes by pinching them in the mouth of the Marlboro man in the wilderness. But in this case, the advertising gurus are mainly addressing a pervasive cultural condition.

Henry David Thoreau, the great American transcendentalist writer of the nineteenth century, is very much a venerable case in point. No student of the liberal arts who is concerned with environmental issues should be unaware of the philosophy of this Concord, Massachusetts sage, given its pervasive influence and exemplary significance. Thoreau's mythic move to Walden, leaving behind what he considered to be the corruptions and the decadence of urban civilization, to find his true self, alone in the midst of the wilderness, was a primordial act of American culture.

For Thoreau, the wilderness is the source of all human vitality, not the "pomp and parade" of the town. "Our village life," he writes, "would stagnate if it were not for the unexplored forests and meadows which surround it... We need the tonic of wilderness... We can never have enough of nature. We must be refreshed by the sight of inexhaustible vigor, vast and titanic features..."

This kind of religion of nature was permeated by an elitist social ideology: it promoted contempt for the town and spawned an anti-urban bias in American culture which to this day shows no signs of weakening. Thoreau himself was an ambiguous figure in this respect as is evident in his deep feelings of opposition toward slavery. But upon close examination his passionate moral commitments against slavery do not appear to have flowed from his articulated social ethic. Thoreau's articulated social ethic is an ethic of withdrawal from social institutions and of striving for individual moral purity. "It is not a man's duty," he writes, "as a matter of course, to devote himself to the

eradication of any, even the most enormous wrong...but it is his duty, at least, to wash his hands of it, and, if he gives it no thought longer, not to give it practically his support." This is what his celebrated act of civil disobedience in opposition to slavery was about, to make his life what he called "a counter-friction to stop the machine," not to make any sustained participatory attempt to change social mores and social institutions.

It is the pure child of nature who speaks here, the one who has found Deity by himself, alone in the light and darkness of vital natural forces, not in any historical call to the human community for moral obedience by a God who struggles for justice in human history. For Thoreau, if society is corrupt, leave it be. Forsake it for the sake of your own moral purity, which can then be undergirded by the original virginity and fecundity of nature.

One might think of Thoreau as the first and most exemplary of American suburbanites. Contemporary suburbia was built and is sustained by a Thoreauvian mythos and a Thoreauvian ethos. Get away from it all. Don't go into the city. Surround your house with spacious lawns and gracious trees. Get out the barbecue and imagine that you are alone facing the elements in the great wide American wilderness, like the Marlboro Man or Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman. And, by the way, vote against school levies that would serve urban children. Vote, likewise, against candidates who champion environmental clean-ups in the city and the greening of urban life. Why, after all, have anything to do with the dirty, violent urban wasteland, when you can daily live in a protected natural retreat called suburbia and have regular access during your vacations to majestic ocean vistas in Florida or to ski-lodge mountain panoramas in Colorado. So go surfing or backpacking or white water rafting or mountain climbing. Go back to nature and be surrounded by the awesome wonders of God's great wilderness in America. But stay away from the city.

On the contrary. Beware of the anti-urban bias of your cultural heritage in America -- a cultural legacy in which many liberal arts colleges, founded at the edge of the wilderness rather than in the town, have shared. Thankfully some of our liberal arts colleges, like Capital, are immersed in urban settings. But where are your minds and where are your hearts? Do you begrudgingly study or teach at a liberal arts college located in the city? Do you carry around in your head a picture of the academy that looks like a calendar photo of a New England town green, bedecked with the brilliant colors of the fall? Do you fervently long for the day when the spring semester is going to end and you and a few intimates will be able to escape to God's great outdoors? Are you perchance tempted to take a different kind of "trip" with the help of so-called consciousness-expanding drugs or by setting out on sexual adventures where you imagine yourself to be living in Tahiti like Gaugin? Yet again, are you what in olden times we used to call a "wonk" or a "grind," totally devoted to academic



achievement twenty-four hours a day, so that you can get into law school and earn the kind of income that will allow you to escape from it all later?

Beware of the sociopathic individualism of your cultural heritage in America, typically justified in the name of getting back to nature and getting away from the city. Is it any accident that the advertising gurus sell you cars with the images of you alone racing out into the wilderness, not with the images of you getting stalled in a commuter traffic jam and getting poisoned by fouled urban air on your way into the city?

### **Third Mandate: Promote a Holistic Environmental Ethos**

#### *A. A Community of Ecological Understanding*

Without treading on the prerogatives of departments or reinventing the interdisciplinary wheel that may have been long ago installed in your institution, and surely with no intention of becoming involved in the morass of departmental politics, I now venture where angels fear to tread with this proposal: that there should be a required, interdisciplinary, core curriculum designed to promote ecological understanding, on the part of both faculty and students, and for the sake of the entire college community and its constituent supporters.

I would further venture to propose that in this case ecology serve as the queen of the sciences. I may be totally mistaken, but it is my impression that many, if not all, of the remaining disciplines are typically afflicted by a mental pathology that might be called hardening of the categories. I would certainly warn against installing theology once again as queen of the sciences, since as far as I can see much of the Church's public theology today is much more parochial than ecological. If a student learns nothing else, and if a faculty member teaches nothing else, it will be a genuine gain if the core curriculum of a liberal arts college is shaped by the ecological assumption that everything is related to everything else. While it is shocking that many graduating high school students in this country cannot read, it is all the more shocking that many graduating college seniors still think that water comes from the faucet, that bread comes from the supermarket, that heat comes from the furnace, and that when you flush something down the sewer it goes away.

When I attended a meeting at the World Council of Churches in Canberra, Australia a few years ago, I was shocked to learn, and then embarrassed with my own response, that the issue that most troubles the Christians who live around the Pacific rim and on the Pacific islands is what I had thought had been the esoteric issue of global warming. For, if the atmosphere heats up and the polar ice continues to melt, the level of the oceans will rise and their homes will be washed away. Everything is related to everything else. That is a principle of life and death that the

people of the Pacific know and understand, however much we may continue to consider it to be a topic that should be of concern only to specialists.

Such topics must be at the forefront in all our disciplines so that all of us can constantly deepen our awareness of the interconnectedness of all things. Overall, the liberal arts education must be predicated on a Declaration of Interdependence, not on a Declaration of Independence.

I can imagine, for example, an introductory sequence of core courses on "The City, Its Bioregion, and the Earth." These courses could be team-taught by historians, biologists, political scientists, theologians, philosophers, scholars of the arts and literature, and others. The experience of planning this sequence of courses itself, bringing together scholars from many fields, would be worth the sequence's weight in gold. Hopefully the impact that such a sequence would have on the intellectual and moral life of students and, through them eventually, on others would exponentially heighten the value of that gold.

What, pray tell, is the impact of your KFC chicken on the world in which you live? Is it the case that the fish catch off Peru is being diverted from the people of Peru, many of whom live in poverty, to the chicken ranches of North Carolina in the form of fish flower in order to fatten up mass produced birds which, in turn, are going to fatten you up? What about the fertilizer runoff and the soil erosion from the lands that grow potatoes for your Micky D fries? And what kind of lives, by the way, do the people who serve you the fast food lead? Have you ever contemplated what it might mean to support a family on fast food wages? Your fast food is interconnected with a global economic and environmental network.

Further, what are you going to say to your friends or your neighbors who, as true believers in false prophets like Rush Limbaugh, think that environmentalism is a socialist plot engineered to rob us of our property and our freedom? How will you respond when they tell you that the green tree has red roots? Are you intellectually equipped to define a position that takes both human justice and ecological interconnectedness seriously?

What will you say, likewise, to your significant other, when he or she wants you both to work as hard and as long as you can so that you can buy a house in the suburbs and thereby get away from the city and live in peace with your two-and-one-half kids? Or set aside the thought about moving upscale for a moment. Consider merely the works of art which you will want to take with you into your home, wherever it might be. Will they be romantic escapist prints or paintings of sailboats and mountains, inspired perhaps by the Hudson River School? And if so, will you recognize them for what they are and for what they say about you?

Is this the case? You want to get a liberal arts education so you can get a good job. That's not an unreasonable aspiration, and your teachers will surely want to help you to achieve it. But to what end? Consider the urgency of ecological understanding on the part of all. Why shouldn't any liberal arts college worth its name today as a matter of course have a required interdisciplinary core curriculum shaped by ecological thinking? If not, why not?

### *B. A Community that Liberates the Social Imagination*

This thought follows from the preceding construct, and is predicated on the assumption that normative human life has urban centers, the way the bloodstream has a heart. Can anyone even *imagine* how a massively growing global population that is now increasingly trapped in gargantuan urban shanty-towns around the world can find a social existence on this planet that is ecologically sustainable, fundamentally just, and genuinely participatory? Is there a dreamer somewhere who can invent and portray new environmentally and socially humane visions of urban life? Can such a dreamer, if he or she exists, survive in our often hyper-specialized academic environments, never mind be considered for tenure? Why is it that intellectual giant such as Lewis Mumford, who in the first half of this century imaginatively assessed economic and social megatrends and issued dire warnings against the human megamachine: and who imaginatively proposed a new kind of communitarian urban existence, green and fair and joyful -- why was it that he never "made it" in the American academic environment?

I was involved at the edges of a research project at M.I.T. and Wellesley College many years ago, involving political scientists, philosophers, urban planners, ecologists, and biologists. It focused on the then dramatic challenge of cleaning up the Boston Harbor. After two summers of interdisciplinary study, drawing on all their specializations and expending sizeable grant monies in the process, this elite team of scholars concluded that you cannot clean up the Boston Harbor.

The reason they offered was essentially political. When you ask all the Boston power groups, the Irish, the Brahmins, the Italians, the African-Americans, the Asians, and others whether they want the Boston Harbor to be cleaned up, they all will say Yes. But when you examine their particular political priorities, cleaning up the Harbor for almost all of them ranks fourth or fifth or lower. The team of scholars concluded that politically the city needed a majority of ones and twos if it were ever going to be able to take effective steps to clean up the Harbor. Call it realism, perhaps. But it sounded to me at the time as if it were a colossal failure of social imagination.

To whom, indeed, is this society going to be able to look to dream such dreams if not to that strange collection of irrelevant academics who still cherish the traditions of the liberal arts

education and who, by now hopefully, have instituted interdisciplinary core curricula shaped for the sake of ecological understanding?

I am thinking here in terms of what Herbert Marcuse once called the power of negative thinking. This is the idea. If you let your mind be carried away to live in the world of Plato's *Republic*, for example, you will have a vantage point -- good, bad, or indifferent as it may be -- from which you can look back on your own world. You can then say No to your world as the only world. And that rejection can then prompt you to consider alternative social worlds, if not Plato's republic, then some other. Without the power of negative thinking the liberation of the social imagination is hardly imaginable.

### *C. A Community that Offers a Cosmic Liturgical Praxis*

I am well aware that going to church, or practicing religion of any kind, is not much in fashion on the campuses of many liberal arts colleges today. Nevermind how intellectually indefensible religion sometimes appears to be. Nevermind how morally corrupt it all too often has been. *You* just do not have time even to explore the matter, since you are too busy either teaching or learning: so that students can get jobs and so that the instructors can keep theirs and so that alumni/ae will support the institution after they have found the jobs they so desperately worked to attain.

Consider your "career" for a moment, or the career to which you aspire. Are you aware that the word career comes from the French for race-track? Is that the world to which you aspire, either in academia or out there in the so-called "real world?" Going around and around in circles, racing at the highest speeds you can imagine so that you can "make it" ahead of everybody else? Maybe you will allow yourself a pit stop now and again, a spring break in Florida or a trip with the family to Disneyworld. But then it is back on to the fast track all over again, is it not?

These days, remarkably, you don't even have to leave your room if you want to work yourself to death. You may have seen the *New York Times* story about Blitzmail at Dartmouth College. Thanks now to the worldwide web and your computer connection in your own room, you can race around in the circles of your career twenty-four hours a day, if you want to, and you will never be forced to meet another real human being. Nor will you ever have to venture off campus into the urban jungle that seems to be everywhere around us.

Liturgy is just the opposite. You can't do it alone. Your computer can never serve you bread and wine. Further, you do have to take the time away from the fast track to do weird things that you will not want to put on your resume, like being immersed in water for a new birth, like lifting up your hands and

hearts to give thanks to an invisible Deity as you break bread and drink wine. Not everyone has to worship in such holy array, by any means. But I would hope that at a Lutheran liberal arts college, rooted deeply in the Catholic traditions of the West, some remnant community, if not the many, would still take the time to practice the Liturgy. This, in my experience, is the fountain of the liberated imagination par excellence. This, in my experience, is where you most powerfully learn not just to stand apart from the established order with a prophetic No, a la Marcuse, but to dream dreams and see visions of a totally new order of things, inspired by biblical traditions: where you can learn to say yes to Being as well as No to the world as it is, and claim the Spirit of hope as your own.

In our time of global ecological crisis, universal cosmic pessimism, and popular academic deconstructionism, the theology of hope that is celebrated in the Church's classical liturgy is perhaps needed as never before, at the heart of the liberal arts experience. Where else is anyone to hear the word of hope these days? Where else is one to participate in a ritual of hope that builds up the habits of hope in one's soul? To be sure, other religious traditions must have a place in the academy, and their adherents doubtlessly will also seek to address environmental and justice issues in their own terms, some of them resonating with fundamental Christian convictions, some not. But there is reason, I believe, in a church related college, to make a particular effort to foster the cosmic Liturgy of the church itself, in a way that itself is informed by the creative imagination which the academy, at its best, regularly encourages.

I have explored the parameters of a cosmic liturgical praxis in a recent essay "How Does the Liturgy Relate to the Cosmos and Care for the Earth?" This essay represents but one expression of an ecological paradigm shift that has been underway in one tradition in American theology during the last thirty years. For this theological movement, the primary biblical text is no longer the one that was so critical for Luther, Romans 1:17, "the righteous shall live by faith," although that text is surely and securely presupposed. The primary biblical text in this context is the christological vision of the Pauline author of Colossians and the primary vision of the cosmic Christ who is at once the creative unity and the redeemer of all things in the cosmos:

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible...all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the*

*blood of the cross. (Colossians 1:15-20)*

Contemplating this cosmic Christology, we see a Christ-figure whose resurrection from the dead is comparable in scope and depth, in power in mystery, only with the creation of the world from nothing. The Resurrection, as the beginning of the ending and the fulfillment of all things, is a new creation, of incomparable glory. What happened before the Big Bang, if that indeed was the temporal beginning of this cosmos, here happens anew and all the more powerfully and gloriously in this particular event which encompasses and unites all things.

The God attested by this theological movement is the God attested also by the Letter to the Ephesians, the God and Father of all, who is above all and in all and through all, who together with the Christ, the cosmic center, in the power of the Spirit Creator, energizes all things, visible and invisible. This is the God to be magnified and adored in the cosmic Liturgy of the Church Catholic, in Baptism and Eucharist and in the hearing and doing of the Word. In communion with this cosmic God of righteous power and gracious love, the faithful are transformed to be participants in the whole life of God, as they, in turn, seek to lead lives that give testimony to, and reflect, the cosmic scope of His Grace. Likewise, since God is the Lord of justice and liberation, who calls all humans, created in His image, to image-forth his eternal life of equality in community and community in equality, the faithful are thereby shaped to be practitioners of justice and ambassadors of mercy, especially for the downtrodden, the meek of the earth, who are one day to be gathered with peoples of every time and every nation in to the embrace of God's eternal glory and freedom for life in the transcendent City of God, set in the midst of a new heavens and a new earth.

The cosmic Liturgy of the Church Catholic is thus a school for cosmic hope and care for the earth, situated, hopefully, at the heart of the liberal arts experience in Christian colleges. This is the rite that inculcates faith, hope, and love in the hearts of those who participate. This is the rite that builds up an ecological moral character in all who choose to be shaped by it. They, in turn, can serve as ministers of the ecological imagination and servants of the common environmental good, in an exemplary way for the entire academic community.

#### *D. An Academy that Models Ecological Responsibility*

Those who practice the cosmic Liturgy of the Church will then hopefully join with like-minded representatives of other faiths and with a variety of sensitive souls to help transform the liberal arts college into an exemplary environmental community.

Recycling for such a community is not an obligation but an opportunity. The use of environmentally friendly products in the kitchens and the laboratories of the college is not a duty but a

down payment on a dream. The clarification of values and the transformation of values in the processes of interdisciplinary ecological learning is not a fad but an investment in the future.

Hands on participation by students and faculty in the study and the betterment of urban ecology is not necessarily an act of patronizing philanthropy. It can readily be an expression of solidarity of the academy and the city for the sake of social justice and environmental integrity. The environmentally sensitive and diversified design of, and care for, the campus buildings and grounds, moreover, is not necessarily a waste of badly needed funds, but hopefully can be an investment in the establishment of a holistic environmental community. The field trips to wilderness areas, perhaps in companionship with classes of urban school children, to experience the interconnectedness and the glories of wild nature first hand need not be a diversion from relevant learning, but a far more illuminating kind of irrelevant learning than the drab careerist exercises that take place in some classrooms and in some laboratories today.

The emphasis on holistic health for all members of the academy, including training in nutrition and self-care and the availability of exercise programs for all and support groups for smokers and other substance abusers, is not a quaint luxury of the affluent, it is rather an essential expression of commitments to human integrity and wholeness in God's good creation. Physical education is an essential component of the liberal arts experience: and this means physical education for all, not merely

support for a surrogate group of quasi-professional athletes.

The promotion of human sexuality in conjunction with interpersonal fidelity and social responsibility likewise goes to the heart of the matter: the development of intellectual and moral character. An institutional bias in favor of sexuality bonded with fidelity and responsibility is not an expression of prudishness, but a rejection of the sexual escapism that is symptomatic of the sociopathic American back to nature spirituality. Can we not ask the Student Services staffs at our colleges not merely to train dorm counselors in the logistics of condom use, the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases, and the definitions of date-rape, but also how to offer support groups that are aimed both at clarifying and transforming values? Are we in fact committed to "education the whole person?"

In addition, the cultivation of alumnae and alumni as people who can participate in this overall academic process of modeling, and who thereby can establish networks that will not only help to undergird the whole process financially but also link graduates with positions that promote a society that is just, sustainable, and participatory is not some pipedream. It is a real possibility. Alumnae and alumni might even support their colleges more enthusiastically with financial gifts if they were allowed to be genuine participants in a modeling process of social transformation and not merely treated as sources of monetary support.

# AN ARISTOTELIAN TWIST TO FAITH AND REASON

Gregg Muilenburg

## INTRODUCTION

Aristotle taught us much of what we assume about intellectual methodology. He maintained that any well-designed investigation must determine the nature and scope of the subject matter, establish its end or purpose, examine the existing wisdom on the matter and argue for that which under critical scrutiny remains essential to the proper understanding of the phenomenon. This brief investigation of church-related higher education will follow a similar pattern. In the first section, I will briefly characterize the traditional categories for understanding the relationship between faith and reason. In the second, I will examine the epistemic structure of values and argue that one understanding of faith sees it as sharing that structure. In the final section, I will propose a new view of the relation of faith to learning in the context of church related higher education and draw some initial conclusions concerning the nature of that education.

Since any investigation must proceed with the aid of assumptions, and, since the disclosure of such assumptions is essential to responsible scholarship and critical assessment, allow me to confess the following operational assumptions: First of all, recent developments in epistemology have shown it philosophically undeniable that all of our knowledge is perspectival in character. Knowing and learning take place in contexts and unavoidably reflect those contexts. That there is no Archimedean point is now as obvious in epistemology as it is in physics. The debt for this change in epistemic attitude is owed to the philosophers and historians of science who argued persistently and painfully for a position that often alienated them from their colleagues and their tradition. As a consequence, we are now "invited" to see faith and learning as much more intimately related (owing to the shared quality of perspective) than any self-respecting scholar would have admitted during the prior two centuries (in the so-called foundationalist era, a time when knowledge was thought to have an indubitable base).

That few, if any, persist in the error that is foundationalism does not, however, entail that the new perspectivalism is immune to error. Very often the truth of the dictum, "All knowledge is perspectival", is confused with its fallacious converse, "All perspective is knowledge." A proper investigation of the difference would require another forum, but there are at least a few earmarks. Perspective is usually unassailable. Knowledge is defeasible (falsifiable), and welcomes, even demands, rational challenges. Perspective is relative. It is its essence to be such. Knowledge, on the other hand, is relative only to its perspective.

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In all other respects it is absolute.

A closely related assumption reminds us that knowing, like believing, is an activity in which people engage. It is not generically human, as the Enlightenment had us believe. Nor is it inert and sterile, as modern science had us believe. Knowing is acting in pursuit of a goal, and as such, is to be understood in terms of the knower's precipitating desires and beliefs. Aristotle was right to insist on this interpretation of knowledge as action; but, he was wrong to restrict it to merely practical knowing. All knowing involves a pattern of action which must be practiced, perfected and habituated through a constant commitment to it. Perhaps Plato was right in describing learning as more like loving than like seeing.

## APPROACHES TO FAITH AND LEARNING

Over the centuries there have been many different ways of understanding the relationship between faith and learning (faith and reason). Ignoring for the moment subtle variations and a history of muddled terminology, the Christian tradition presents four main models: conflict, independence, dialogue and integration.

**Conflict**, in its early expression, assumed that faith, based on divine revelation, is a translational process defying justification and hostile to reason. "I believe because it is absurd." (Tertullian) In its modern expressions, conflict takes the form of assuming that both faith and reason (e.g. religion and natural science) are speaking of the same material world and speaking in the same positivist language. So scientific materialism and creation science, for example, square off assuming that both cannot be right. In the one case, natural science has been uncritically extended into natural philosophy and, in the other, biblical faith has been presented as natural science. Both extensions are confused because they assume there is only one project, only one perspective, and only one set of tools. This confusion involves both a philosophical category mistake and a failure to undertake the self-critical hermeneutical task.

**Independence** is clearly an advance over conflict for it acknowledges the integrity of both faith and reason and assumes that each has its own inviolate realm of discourse, subject matter and language. Faith involves divine revelation which is independent of human reason even if not contradicting it (Barth). Faith and reason pose no problems left alone to their proper spheres. Today this view is expressed in a strict separation of religious from scientific thought. One purports to deal with the objective material world and the other with the subjective, personal one. Science deals with facts and religion deals with

values. However this approach is also confused. There is no fact/value separation. All facts are theory laden and all theories involve value judgments. Knowledge is contextual and perspectival. The knower cannot be completely separated from that which is known. It is this awareness that leads to the final two ways of relating faith and learning, both of which presuppose that the relationship between faith and learning is a close and complementary one.

**Dialogue** assumes that each side has much to learn from the other. This becomes especially clear when certain types of fundamental questions or methodological parallels are considered. While disciplinary integrity must be maintained, there are questions of ultimate significance which both sides can approach from their respective analyses. Dialogue fosters the sort of interdisciplinary cooperation necessary for dealing with the complex issues of our emerging global society and the sort of self-critical examination necessary for intellectual honesty and humility. Such dialogue preserves disciplinary integrity while also accommodating the wider human condition in and through which it takes place.

This understanding of the relationship of faith and learning is particularly at home in the Lutheran tradition where faith is understood as trust in the justifying power of God's grace brought into critical relationship with the other realms of human experience and thought. The dialectical pursuit of truth in such a fashion is clearly a viable expression of a doxological vision.

While dialogue may be the most realistic goal in relating faith and learning, it is not the only one reflective of the Reformational heritage. There is a fourth option, that of **integration**. In this understanding of the intimate connection of faith to reason, the two are seen to function in intrinsic complementarity, each disclosing unique dimensions of reality and connecting them through a common metaphysical vision. Integrative relationships stimulate both faith and reason to reach out through the educative activity to a common confession of a universe seen as an integrated whole. Such wholeness is said to be the ultimate goal of education.

There is, however, little agreement on matters of method and practice even among those committed to such integrated education. As there is little to be gained, beyond endurance, by plowing through these well-tilled church/college taxonomies, and as these schemes appear to place the plow before the horse by restricting education before understanding it, our time might be better spent in speculating directly on the character of integrative education we seek.

## THE STRUCTURE OF VALUE AND FAITH

There is nothing philosophically perspicuous about saying one values something. The term 'value' is as vacuous as it is ubiquitous. Upon reflection, however, it is clear that values are beliefs, albeit beliefs of a special sort. It seems to me that values are assessment beliefs. That is to say, they are beliefs assessing

one "thing" to be better than another, and thus have the general form: 'x is better than y.' Of course values never display just this form, for values are never devoid of content and rarely absolute. Virtually anything can be the object of a value. People, events, physical objects, situations, ideas; all are objects of assessment beliefs. Consequently, any assessment will have to be relative to the nature of the thing being assessed and the purpose to which that thing is put. For example, one does not actually say that one values cats. Rather one says that cats are to be valued over dogs, or cats are better than parrots; or more properly, that cats are nicer pets than dogs or parrots. So also, values will be relative to the individual holding the belief. We may differ with regard to cats, or disagree about what makes a good pet. But all of this is well understood, so well understood that we rarely consider values to have a structure at all and presume all matters of valuing completely relative and beyond rational debate.

If the basic structure of a value (x is better than y with respect to some purpose for some person) is somewhat pedantic, the characteristics associated with values are anything but. Most of the world's great tragedies are constructed around the lives of individuals struggling with values. From Oedipus to Lady Macbeth to Willy Loman, the drama recurs. There are simple reasons for this to be found in the character of valuing. I will mention only two. Values are beliefs that people hold most dear to them. They are the beliefs we will least often give up; for they are the source of our identity, our community and are reflective of our sense of purpose.

Values are also protected from examination by elaborate psychological mechanisms designed to fool others, but as often, to fool ourselves. Yet, despite all the secrecy and subterfuge, the nature of our values is painfully obvious through our actions. Values are the guides for the living of our lives. They are the objects of our pursuits. There can be no such thing as a latent or inactive value. If something is valued, it is pursued. If it is not pursued, it is not valued in those circumstances or valued less than something else. Thus, our actions are inerrant records of our values. They, like the oracles of old, are not always easily interpreted, but they will never lie. Herein lies life's drama: What should we value? How do we responsibly pursue it? Why do we not pursue that which we believe we value? In short, the ultimate question of both life and learning is: How then should we live?

It seems to me that the answer to this question is itself the statement of a value and therein lies the connection of value to faith. We ought, of course, to live our lives responsibly and with integrity. All other values and the pursuits they occasion ought to be subservient to this higher value. But why value responsibility and integrity in one's life? There appears to be no further value to which one can appeal in answer. There appears no value demonstrably higher, no principle from which it can be deduced. This is no mere philosopher's dilemma, no idle logician's puzzle. There can be no more fundamental demand. But how can we answer it? By faith. By our faith we might answer that a life of responsibility and integrity is required of us as a response to God's

self-revelatory acts of creation and redemption. We have no higher value to justify that belief. It has no goal beyond itself, it is the paramount value.

It may seem unconventional, even odd, to speak of faith as a value. Faith is a relation between a believer and the object of that believing. The oddness attending the term 'faith' so used, is, I suspect, very much the same as that which attended the use of the term 'value' initially. Valuing, as we have seen is also a relation between a person and a thing. One speaks loosely when one calls something a value. That looseness is transferred to the claim that faith is a value. The only difference is that faith is an ultimate value. In all but this respect, it shares the structure of lesser values.

If what has been suggested here is correct, in other words, if faith is to be understood as ultimate value; then two implications follow for the investigation of faith and learning. Each is rooted in our prior assumptions and each will be treated briefly in the subsequent section. First of all, learning is action, and action, as Aristotle taught us is caused by desire. Knowledge and belief condition our actions making them feasible or useful. And the emotions help us to find the courage to act. But only desire causes us to act. We are motivated to act by our desire for the objects of our values. Thus, it would seem to follow that learning cannot be fully understood without first understanding the process of desire that moves it. Moreover, if faith constitutes an ultimate value, our ultimate object of desire, then faith must be intimately, perhaps causally, related to knowledge. But these are not new contentions. They have always been part of the claims of the church, though not couched in Aristotelian terms.

Secondly, the perspectival character of knowledge leads one to expect that faith will be the focal point of a believer's perspective. There would seem to be no reason why one's faith would function peripherally if it constitutes one's ultimate value. One need not be apologetic about the situation. Perspectives are to be expected. Perspectives are like interchangeable camera lenses. Each is designed to focus our attention on some aspects of the scene by eliminating other foci from our field of view. Telephoto lens enable us to make clearer and more precise images of distant things by eliminating any panoramic potential in the scene. We do not criticize the lens for doing so. That is simply how it works. So it is with epistemic perspectives. They are unavoidable. They are desirable.

### **AN ARISTOTELIAN APPROACH TO FAITH AND LEARNING**

The ultimate goal of all education should be the production of wholeness in the lives of human beings. Wholeness involves integrity--the integrity that accompanies a life wherein actions reflect professed values. Consequently, the nature of education, so constructed, is value-directed and action-directed, the nature of education, so construed, is value-directed and action-directed.

Good education, then will help students to understand their values, trace those values to their implications and effectively pursue them. Moreover, since the pursuit of goals alone, will not, no matter how effective, produce wholeness except that the pursuit is a responsible one, good education must be directed toward the responsible pursuit of values. Finally, since the activating force in all action is desire, the core of education should be education of the desire.

As desperate as the realms of value and action may seem, they have as their common element the unique human faculty of desire. Those things we call values are the patterns of desire we use as guides for our lives. Moreover, it is only by virtue of the power of desire that we act. We may plan our actions with the aid of practical reason. We may evaluate them with theoretical wisdom. We may encourage ourselves to act with emotion. But we only act from desire. Thus our actions are as well judged by our desires as our desires are surely evidenced by our actions. This relationship, not unlike the oracles of old, never lies but always stands in need of interpretation. Therein lies life's drama and education's mission. If we ask the timeless question "How then are we to live?", we are asking what is worth valuing and pursuing. To know the answer to this question is to know how to desire well. Education can help us to learn to live responsibly and with integrity but it can only do so if we are encouraged, challenged and guided to desire aright. If the ultimate goal of education is rightly described as wholeness, then its core must be the education of desire.

The nature of education, I would like to suggest, is to be seen as perspectival faith directed action. If learning has been properly characterized as a human action activated by desire then the core of education is the education of desire. If one's faith is the ultimate value or object of desire for the Christian (or for any person of faith), then the core of Christian education is the education of Christian desire. Such an education involves reflection on the life of faith understood as directing one's desire toward the realization of one's ultimate values. Such reflection will necessarily investigate the proper relationship between these ultimate values (including, but not restricted to, our confessional roots) and our proximate values (including, but not restricted, to our ethical concerns). These relationships are not obvious, but they are imperative, if we are to retain our identity in a changing culture. All the disciplines in a college must contribute to the education of desire. Some will contribute to the store of empirical knowledge necessary for effective and responsible action. Others will help us see the implications for our faith and life of the actions we contemplate. Others still will help us understand our natures, our failings and help us accept our limitations graciously. But all will be united in the common task of helping students and ourselves understand what it is to desire aright and live well. It must be emphasized that desire requires freedom and is individual. So also is the action resulting from such desire. Thus the enemy of this education is indoctrination and regimentation.

The situation is no different in the case of Christian education. If

one's faith is the ultimate value or object of desire, then the core of Christian education is the education of Christian desire. Such education requires both understanding and commitment, both reflection and cultivation. One must reflect on the life of faith and virtue for the demands are by no means obvious. How we are to live our lives is not made plain by the mere holding of admirable values. It demands difficult investigations into the character of that which we hold dear. Such reflection will necessarily investigate the proper relationship between our ultimate values (including those we call our confessional roots) and our proximate values (including our present ethical concerns and personal ambitions).

All the disciplines of the college contribute to this reflective task. Some will contribute to the store of empirical knowledge necessary for effective and responsible action. Others will help us see the implications for our faith and life of the actions we contemplate. Others will challenge us to see the world afresh and give us the power to exceed our egocentric ambitions. Others still will help us understand our natures, our failings, and help us to accept our limitations graciously. But all will be united in the common task of helping us to understand what it is to desire aright and live well. That not for our own sake alone but also in praise of the one that made us.

The education of Christian desire requires reflective activity but it also requires cultivating activity. If reflection tells us how to desire and act, cultivation helps us to desire and act. What we are cultivating in this aspect of the education is commitment. This is much more difficult and time consuming work. Again, all the disciplines will contribute to this task in their own way. Little is known about how this happens, but we have all seen it in the lives of students and faculty who possess such commitment and are not afraid to admit to their struggle with the life of faith. This situation may only be right, for one does not teach commitment. It has to be exemplified, nurtured and encouraged in the context of a community of those who take it seriously. It is important work even for its nebulosity. Reflection without commitment is otiose as surely as commitment without reflection is obtuse.

It is imperative to see that the task of educating students to Christian desire is a multifarious one. The sort of reflection described demands competencies no one sort of individual can possess. We need to understand the natural world thoroughly that better we can appreciate the magnitude of God's self-revelatory act of creation. So also, we need to understand the human world thoroughly that better we can appreciate the magnificence of God's redemptive act. No less multifarious is the task of cultivating commitment. We will need those who challenge "easy

faiths" and shallow commitment; and those who strengthen through doubt. We will need those who nurse "damaged faith," and those who encourage through devotion. As there is not one path to commitment, so there is no one guide.

By way of recapitulation and recommendation, it has been suggested that we need no longer apologize for the pursuit of knowledge in the context of faith. We cannot avoid the perspectival character of learning, and the perspective of faith is a perfectly legitimate one. It has also been suggested that we can begin to understand the perspective of faith seeking understanding -- the integration of faith and learning -- if we come to see faith as the ultimate object of desire. Correspondingly, since learning and living are activities, they are brought about by the interaction of desire and belief, it seems correct to see Christian education as the education of Christian desire. Finally, that this project consists of two distinct tasks in tension -- reflection and commitment -- is no accident. It mirrors the tension of trust and assent comprising faith, the tension of desire and belief precipitating action, and the tension of faith and learning essential to Christian life. When these tensions are utilized productively, they provide the climate in which education flourishes.

If the trip to this point has been tortured but safe for Lutherans; the recommendations it produces are straight-forward, but threatening. If wholeness is the goal of education, it does not seem to me that the traditional Lutheran understanding of education as dialogical is sufficient. As is obvious from the preceding, wholeness comes through commitment to integrated desire and action. Dialogue is involved in that process but it is no substitute for it. Thus, it is paramount for church-related higher education to find and nourish scholars who are devoted to the active integration of faith and learning. As Plato taught us, the enemy of true learning is hypocrisy. The integration model is the only one that safeguards it.

The other enemy of learning is narrow-minded provincialism. The education of desire follows no privileged pattern. It is the province of no culture and surely no denomination. In fact, the education of desire is facilitated by as many and varied a set of examples as possible. The examples must, however, be lived examples, since desiring aright is a practiced art not a theoretical one. What this means for church-related higher education is that we have an obligation to make our campuses, and especially our faculties more diverse. On the eve of the millennium, we can do no better for ourselves and our future, than to genuinely commit ourselves to integration and diversity.



## TWO POEMS

Gary Finke

### The Dark Angels

To the sidewalk in front of my father's  
Razed bakery I return. To the patch  
Of burdock where the stacked ovens deep-browned  
The crusts of a million loaves of rolls.  
To the cinderblock cracked like the soot-pocked  
Windows where I watched, in Etna, the dark  
Angels escape the coal smoke as if they  
Wanted to swoop back to chimers. To shards  
and splinters where I hated the sauerkraut  
In the cramped, next-door kitchen, the boiled  
Shank end of pork which clustered files against  
The latched screen door. To the steep, shale downslope  
Where the walls of the bakery are landfill,  
Where the first bulldozed soil coats wallboard  
And lumber as if coal were refueling  
Industry's return, covering the spot  
Where I was careless, once, with Saturday's  
Trash fire. Where it followed the easy weeds  
To the brittle boards of the bakery.  
Where that neighbor shook free the tiles and sprayed  
His hose and a set of obscenities  
Keyed to my foolish name. Where my father  
Thanked him and led me to the last eclair,  
Settled me on the work room's folding chair  
And said nothing except "think," and I thought  
That the neighbor was listening at the window  
While I held chocolate and custard until  
My father said, "You eat that," and I did.

### Decorative Cooking

My mother repeated the story  
of St. Julitta, whose shed blood  
spelled the name of God. My father  
insisted the name of God was work,  
half or more of each day but Sunday.  
There was time for food, God's bounty,  
reinforced, from the radio,  
by Betty Crocker, who explained  
The New Design for Happiness, meals  
that showed love for the families  
in America's homes by working  
canned soup and cake mixes into  
the miracles of ready-to-eat.  
In her cookbook, in full color,  
she probed the pictorial charm  
of food by stuffing pie shells  
and peppers, filling tomato halves  
and sculpted pastry, creating,  
on my father's favorite page,  
mock steak from ground beef and Wheaties,  
a strip of carrot for the bone.

So pretty, yet economical,  
and on our table, each Sunday,  
were decorative dinners prepared  
the night before: the shimmering,  
shaped Jellos; the rank and file  
of peeled and slivered apples.  
Yearly, the anise Magi cookies,

the browned crosses of holy rolls.  
Three times, the flag of celery  
and carrots, the field of coconut  
holding forty-eight walnut stars.  
And once, as God's duty, we hosted  
our former pastor, who had returned  
to Pittsburgh to declaim the death  
of God. He sat, so heavy, at our table,  
the pinwheels of sweet peppers seemed  
to churn on the cucumber cogs.  
He unrolled, while we passed bread,  
four slices of ham and beef,  
he unfolded, while we poured milk,  
three cheeses, and formed the stack  
of a child's simple sandwich.  
My father waited for him  
to swallow one bite, and then  
he gave thanks for the care with which  
our food was prepared, directing  
his message to the living God  
and his resurrected son while  
the pastor held his sandwich in both hands.  
An then we decorated our bread  
with arrangements of tomatoes  
and onions and lettuce before  
we added the roll-ups of meat  
and cheese, each of them arranged  
like the pipes of the church organ  
I listened to, this morning,  
for the first time in thirty years,  
that fat pastor and my mother dead  
ten of them, my father driving us  
to her grave near the unmarked site  
where the minister's ashes,  
according to my father  
were scattered like the hopeless.

Where God is working, my father  
lays wreathes. Where God is working,  
my father pulls weeds and hand-trims  
the topiary of heavenly hosts.  
All morning he wove pine boughs  
while I read, and then he called out  
the passing of each mile to thirteen,  
the right turn through the open gates  
to the plot in the Garden of Dreams.  
He laid those evergreen crosses  
by the headstone of my mother  
and the four nearest neighbors  
in a symmetry of remembrance,  
and then he removed what he'd left  
for last month's anniversary,  
adding those branches to the border  
of woven designs so they could extend  
the decorative work of God

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## DISCUSSION:

### MISSION AND HIRING POLICIES IN THE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

*Bruce R. Reichenbach*

The Christian or Church-related<sup>1</sup> college is a visible witness to the presence of God through the ministry of education. Here the Gospel is presented in diverse languages: of free and responsible academic investigation; of preparation of students for their vocations; of worship and witness to the acts of God; of love and caring, honesty and integrity in a community directed toward maturation; of the beauty and wonder of aesthetic appreciation; of service to others and outreach to the community.

If a college has any reason for existing and correspondingly any way to measure its accomplishments, it must be in terms of how successfully it educates its students. The buildings it erects, the curriculum it adopts, the requirements it institutes, the social and cultural events it sponsors, all are justified by this. Education sometimes is conceived very narrowly to apply only to the education of the mind. Thus, colleges typically and appropriately emphasize classroom experiences, teaching, texts, courses, libraries, and the like. In this arena faculty function most comfortably, for they have been trained to contribute through classroom, research and laboratory. Though this constitutes one facet of education, emphasis on this dimension to the neglect of other factors can lead colleges to cultivate intellectual giants and moral and social dwarfs. Much more goes on at college than the education of the mind. Indeed, were student education measured in increments of time, the business of formal education would not predominate. Learning occurs in the dorm, in the athletic center or on the field, in the music and drama presentations, in the work experience in the community.

Hence, if we are to speak about education as the raison d'être of the college, we must address educating the whole person. The mind should be trained to think critically, clearly, and creatively. Students should be introduced to new ideas and data bases, with which to both deepen their understanding of particular areas and broaden their horizons and perspectives. The intellectual skills involved in learning and research should be honed. Moral character should be shaped and strengthened. Students should be taught to think about virtue and encouraged and given opportunity to develop qualities of character that will serve them and society well during their lifetime. Students should be taught to use their physical attributes, to develop interests and skills that will lead them to patterns of action that

favor life-long fitness. They should be helped to develop social and emotional skills that will enable them to get along with others, and to satisfy their own emotional needs and those of others in ways that foster growth, maturity, and satisfaction.

In effect, in defining the purpose of the college as educating the whole person,<sup>2</sup> focus must be placed on every dimension of student life. Since education takes place in diverse campus settings, not only faculty but other members of the college staff function as "educators," though not everyone educates in all of the above dimensions, or in the same way. Hence the entire college community should be knowledgeably committed to the college's mission as the college attempts in its diverse educational roles to assist students in their education.

#### Implementation of Mission

If this assessment of education is correct, then the college's mission should inform all aspects of the college's educational endeavors. Its implementation should occur at all levels of college life, to create a particular kind of community. The mission will shape the way the administrators operate the college. It will inform the way the faculty educate, both in individual courses and in the overall college curriculum. It will govern the way staff interacts with students in counseling, residential life, job and career placement, and social and business activities. It will shape the extracurricular dimensions of the college and the way students work and serve in the community.

The same holds true for the Christian dimension of a Christian or Church-related college's mission statement. The Christian character of the college cannot be relegated to the chapel worship program, the religion department, required courses in religion, or the Church Relations office. Christian faith and values should permeate every aspect of the college. They should inform the ways the administration operates the college. They should shape the entire curriculum through their integration at relevant points with other subject matter. They should help determine the kinds of outcomes the college wants for its students when they graduate. They should be a lively topic for educated discussion and civil debate. They should govern how the community members relate to each other. In effect, they should pervade the campus's study, work, social life, worship, and spiritual life.

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## Hiring Faculty, Administrators, and Staff

Perhaps the most critical factor in the college's successful achievement of its mission is the composition of its faculty, administration, and staff. This group of individuals provides direction both to the college as a whole and to the students particularly. Faculty play a direct role in college governance and in students' education. They become role models for students, establish departmental and course curricula, and set the classroom agenda and context. The administration hires and oversees the development and direction of programs. Staff plays a critical role in setting the atmosphere for dorm life and the relationships of students to college offices. Their counseling of students reflects their own values and emphasizes what they think is important in students' own development.

Consequently, it is in the staffing of the institution, more than anywhere else, that the character of the institution and its ability to shape the educational experience of students will be felt and ultimately effective. Unless the administration, faculty and staff of the Christian college are knowledgeable about the Christian faith, have critically reflected on the integration of faith and learning, and are consciously committed to and affirm a role in implementing the Christian dimension of the college's mission, the Christian or Church-related college that takes seriously its Christian mission cannot succeed in achieving that stated mission.

This is analogous to what occurs within individual academic departments. Unless the individual members are committed to the departmental educational objectives, those objectives cannot be achieved. A department desires more than members who are merely comfortable with the departmental objectives. It wants members who intentionally work in their own teaching to carry out the department's mission.

Accordingly, the most critical decisions will involve the hiring of faculty, administrators, and staff who possess a thoughtful commitment to the mission of providing students an education shaped by Christian faith and values. Though written thirty years ago, the words of the Danforth Commission still ring true. "If a college intends to be a Christian community and to conduct its work within a Christian context, the appointment of faculty members who are sympathetic with this purpose and can make a contribution to such a community is an important factor in selection. From the point of view of academic integrity, it is essential to make the additional qualification explicit to everyone concerned."<sup>3</sup>

At the same time, the Commission noted the resulting difficulty. "In the staffing of Church college and universities, one of the difficult problems is that of appointing persons who have the requisite religious commitment... In general, we find that most Church institutions lack firm and well-formulated policies in

this respect. Institutions commonly seek some evidence of religious affiliation in prospective teachers, but too often nominal Church membership is regarded as sufficient. What is lacking is the expectation that the faculty member will be an informed, thoughtful Church[person] and relate his [or her] subject to the Judeo-Christian tradition.... This is one of the most basic problems of Church institutions today."<sup>4</sup>

Commitment to effectively implementing the mission statement means more than that those hired will be sympathetic to or comfortable working in an environment that makes such a Christian statement. Since these same faculty subsequently will be responsible for making hiring decisions, they significantly determine the direction of the institution. Hence, not only should the nature and mission of the institution be put up front in the hiring process, but prospective employees should be asked to address how they see the mission of the college, including the integration of Christian faith and values with learning and teaching. This should not be merely an academic exercise, but an opportunity to share how in the past they have integrated Christian faith and learning, and how in the future they would like to contribute to the Christian mission of the College. Since the past is often a harbinger of the future, the way prospective employees have integrated their Christian faith and values with their prior professional lives will provide evidence (though obviously no guarantee) that they will continue such patterns at the college.

Administrators, faculty, and staff who come to teach at a Christian college should choose to teach and work at such an institution. This choice expresses willingness to participate in a Christian community, fulfilling to the best of their ability a particular task centered around a mission that embodies, among other dimensions, a commitment to conducting education from the perspective of the Christian faith and values.

This being said, several caveats must be made. First, commitment to the Christian faith should not replace professional preparation and expertise or pedagogical ability. Sometimes the discussion of hiring qualifications is couched in terms of a radical disjunction: departments hire either persons with academic expertise or persons who manifest commitment to the Christian faith and are active, knowledgeable Churchpersons. The dichotomy is false. Faculty satisfying both academic and religious criteria generally can be found.

Second, should religious requirements apply to all persons hired to work in the community? A college that emphasizes intentional diversity as part of its mission statement thereby provides grounds for hiring persons who can not only be creative teachers and articulate spokespersons for various disciplinary and social views, but represent and present non-Christian perspectives in ways that provide an opportunity for serious, intentional dialogue on the important issues that face the college. When hired, they should be encouraged to effectively

and constructively raise the kinds of questions that both Christians and non-Christians should face. They can challenge the ethos of the institution, raise questions about its integrity and consistency, question its directions and programs, and provide constructive models for students who themselves are skeptical about the Christian faith.

How would this concern for diversity be implemented? George Marsden has introduced the notion of a critical mass. On his view, the Church-related or Christian college would be a place where there is a critical mass of faculty, administrators and staff who maintain strong Christian commitments, in consonance with the stated mission of the college.<sup>5</sup> Clearly the notion cannot be unpacked simply in terms of definite numbers, as if some given percentage would achieve such a goal. The notion of critical mass is less a matter of pure numbers than a matter of presence, power, and influence in creating a community with a particular identity. Thus, administrators and departments, in attempting to maintain a critical mass of those committed to implementing actively the college's mission statement, have to assess the intellectual and governmental milieu of the campus, so as to provide assurances of the continuing living identity of the college as a Christian or Church-related college.

The criterion of "critical mass" should apply not only college-wide, but to individual departments as well. The latter is especially important where hiring is initiated and completed at the department level, for the faculty hired today will conduct the hiring in the future, and thus directly or indirectly affect the direction of the department. Application of "critical mass" at the departmental level would insure that the Christian faith is in dialogue with every aspect of the educational curriculum.

To help accomplish this, those making hiring decisions could be broadened to include members of the larger college community, so that, in the case of the faculty, more than mere departmental concerns can be addressed. The questions of "campus fit" and "mission fostering" should play roles in the hiring process. I want to be careful here lest I be misunderstood. By "campus fit" I do not mean homogeneity in politics, gender, race, denomination, or outlook. What I do mean is that in addition to diversity issues, the question of how prospective administrators, faculty and staff see their respective roles in actively integrating faith and learning in the community should be an important consideration.

Third, diversity is not best served by simply ignoring religious commitment or perspectives when hiring administrators, faculty, or staff. Not benign neglect but intentionality rules. If the purpose of religious diversity is to provide a variety of carefully considered and articulate perspectives leading to fruitful and stimulating dialogue, the hiring should be done intentionally in that regard. The religious diversity appropriate to the academic enterprise is not achieved simply by hiring

persons who identify with Christianity, Islam, Judaism or atheism, but by hiring persons who are knowledgeable, thoughtful and articulate spokespersons of their positions.

Fourth, in a specifically Lutheran college the matter of intentional hiring might apply at times to being specifically Lutheran. Lutherans have a distinctive theological and social perspective within the Christian community. Hence, Lutheran perspectives should be well represented in the administration, faculty, and staff to provide informed dialogue within the academic community and with the college's church constituency.

At the same time, Lutherans affirm that Luther did not intend to separate from but reform the Catholic Church. As such, Lutheran institutions should manifest a clear ecumenical component, one that welcomes diverse Christian perspectives to the academic enterprise. Thus, what is sought among the Christian faculty is a balance between those who would help preserve the Lutheran tradition and theology and educate their colleagues about such, and those who would integrate faith and learning from a broader Christian perspective.

At this juncture being a Church-related college and being a Christian college can take on different roles. The first defines a more narrow theological/historical/cultural context; the second participates in the broad Christian community. In a Lutheran college, the ideal finds an intentional balance between the two, where Lutheran traditions are allowed to enrich the broader Christian community and its spirituality, while courting its own ecumenical spirit.

Finally, hiring decisions should be supplemented by on-going faculty and staff development programs that foster continued education and thought regarding the incorporation of Christian faith and values into the various dimensions of community life. This can begin for new faculty and staff with orientation programs that feature constructive and educational discussions about ways to integrate concerns about Christian faith and values into various aspects of service to the college's community. These can be tied into on-going programs that promote faculty development -- symposia, lectureships, informal conversations, convocations, seminars with faculty from other institutions -- here with the purpose of considering ways of integrating faith and learning.<sup>6</sup>

Marsden's warning about the centrality of intentional hiring is clear. "So far as the future is concerned, the most crucial area where these issues [of diversity] play themselves out is in faculty hiring. Once a church-related institution adopts the policy that it will hire simply 'the best qualified candidates,' it is simply a matter of time until its faculty will have an ideological profile essentially like that of the faculty at every other mainstream university. The first loyalties of faculty members will be to the national cultures of the professions

rather than to any local or ecclesiastical traditions. Faculty members become essentially interchangeable parts in a standardized national system. At first, when schools move in the direction of open hiring, they can count on some continuity with their traditions based on informal ties and self-selection of those congenial to their heritage. Within a generation, however, there is bound to be a shift to a majority for whom national professional loyalties are primary. Since departmental faculties typically have virtual autonomy in hiring, it becomes impossible to reverse the trend and the church tradition becomes vestigial. The Protestant experience suggests that once a school begins to move away from the religious heritage as a factor in hiring, the pressures become increasingly greater to continue to move in that direction."<sup>7</sup>

### Community with Diversity

Privileging qualified Christians in hiring so that the character and tradition of the college is maintained with integrity, yet maintaining a commitment to intentional diversity, raises two serious issues: how to create meaningful community and how to preserve academic freedom. In this section we will deal with the former, postponing the latter until the next section.

If one intentionally creates a college community with diversity, one faces several challenges. First, one confronts the danger that in making diversity a goal, the college becomes essentially indistinguishable from its secular counterparts. Though diversity plays a very important role in the college, it should not -- indeed cannot -- be directed toward representing every possible view in society. Neither should the goal be to create a mere smorgasbord curriculum that presents a diversity of unrelated individual menu items to students treated as consumers. Otherwise, the college will lack unity and a central core that is Christian and deliberately liberal arts. In short, the goal in hiring should not be diversity as an end in itself, but diversity as a means to further broaden the educational perspectives of students and provide opportunities for growth within the context of a particular community. What should result is a community with diversity, or perhaps better, an inclusive community.

Second, a Christian college that embraces an inclusive community faces the challenge of integrating the diverse members of the community in ways that avoid polarization of the community and treatment of either non-Christians or Christians as second-class citizens or resident aliens. One danger is that those who are not Christians might either see themselves or be viewed by Christian members of the community as less valuable or significant to the community, not contributing seriously to the on-going life and mission of the college. The correlative danger is that Christians become a defensive, embattled minority on the campus, cowed by political

correctness into silence. If either of these occurs, the college will fragment, and the dialogue between faith and learning that was integral to the institution will dissipate into silence or result in carping and suspicion between the two sides.

Rather, each person in the community -- Christian and non-Christian -- should be able to address how he or she relates to all aspects of the college's mission, including its Christian mission. Those who espouse the Christian emphasis as a matter of their own faith perspective should reflect on how it can impact their teaching, learning, and community life. Those who do not espouse it as a matter of personal faith perspective should reflect on how they can creatively function in dialogue with their colleagues and students, including with regard to Christian faith and learning.

The goal is not to create classes of college citizens, but to create a Christian community that incorporates integrally both Christians and non-Christians. In such a community there is no room for tokenism -- and likewise no room for those who would simply opt out of the dialogue. Engagement, disagreement, conversation, reflection should supplant apathy. The diversity should be incorporated into the community life, so that there is welcoming, open, creative dialogue between all present, without at the same time losing or compromising the Christian character of the institution.

In short, a college that espouses a mission that includes both being based on the Christian faith and diversity or inclusiveness, faces a situation fraught with tension. The task is to turn the tension into creative education, a situation providing potential for growth for both students and faculty, and a place where issues of faith are raised with renewed vibrancy, recognizing the legitimacy of diversity, while at the same time maintaining the integrity and Christian identity of the institution.

### Freedom and Commitment

It goes without saying that what we have suggested creates the possibility of tension between a particular commitment required of a critical mass of faculty and the academic freedom to think, say and do what one believes is true and right. "A carefully-defined institutional purpose is, in the very nature of things, a restriction on freedom. It molds the institution. In effect it precludes some courses of action. ...It demands that certain things be done."<sup>8</sup>

Academic freedom, the freedom to pursue ideas, is germane to a liberal arts college, which conceives as its task the liberation of students to encounter new or different ideas, methods, cultures and persons in the pursuit of truth. Not only must students be given that freedom, they must be empowered to use it. The faculty responsible for the empowering need that same

freedom to investigate for themselves and to open new doors for students.

The debate that rages concerning the tension between faith commitment and freedom often begins with some kind of absolute commitment to one or the other of these, at the expense of the other. An absolute commitment to some faith statement can preclude investigation and can lead to mere dogmatism. An absolute commitment to freedom denies the commitments of the institution and the responsibility one assumes when one joins a community that affirms a shared mission.

The key is not necessarily removing the tension, for tension is not always bad; it can provide the needed catalyst for growth. Rather, the key is realizing that freedom and commitment always are located within a context. Absolute freedom is a Sartrean myth; freedom to act is conditioned by the circumstances of the agent and the possibilities that exist.

One implication is that faculty, once appointed, should be free to explore ideas creatively and responsibly. This entails a risk on the part of the institution that those whom it hires will not continue to maintain that original sympathy with and commitment to the goals of the institution. It also entails a responsibility on the part of the faculty and staff to maintain their integrity and the integrity of the institution. At some point, it might even require faculty, administration, or staff persons of integrity to resign from the college because they can no longer conscientiously support the mission of the college. The point here is not to witch-hunt those who disagree with the Christian faith, but to have all at the college take seriously the mission statement. Some institutions ask persons to affirm the college's mission when they sign their contract. The signing should not be pro forma, but provide opportunity for personal reflection on how that mission, including its Christian dimension, affects one's teaching and campus life, and how one's teaching and campus life affects the on-going Christian mission of the college.

In the final analysis, a Christian institution should not be afraid of either truth or freedom. This is particularly appropriate within the Christian context, which has emphasized that all truth is God's truth. Those committed to Christianity need not fear the exploration of issues. Rather, within the Church-related college Christian faith and values should be in continual dialogue with all the disciplines, each enriching the other. "When a tradition is in good order it is partially constituted by an argument about the goods the pursuit of which gives the tradition its particular point and purpose. So when an institution -- a university, say ... -- is the bearer of a tradition of practice or practices, its common life will be partly, but in a centrally important way, constituted by a continuous argument as to what a university is and ought to be... A living tradition then is a historically extended socially embodied argument, and

an argument precisely in part about the goods which constitute that tradition."<sup>9</sup>

### **The Legality of Preferential Hiring**

One persistent worry is whether incorporating knowledgeable commitment to the religious mission of the college as a consideration in hiring is legal. Can a Christian or Church-related college legally give preference to candidates who espouse a particular religious perspective?

The 1964 Civil Rights act exempted religious organizations from its nondiscriminatory provisions regarding religious preference in hiring. "This title shall not apply to ... a religious corporation, association or society with respect to the employment of individuals of a particular religion to perform work connected with the carrying on by such corporation, association or society of its religious activities or to an educational institution with respect to the employment of individuals to perform work connected with the educational activities of such institution."<sup>10</sup> The original draft was strengthened by the inclusion in the act of the Purcell amendment, which allowed religious background as a bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ) in the hiring of administrators, faculty, and certain staff (Purcell gave as examples "the dean of students, director of a dormitory, or even the supervisor of library materials"<sup>11</sup>). Both the exemption provision and the BFOQ indicate that administrators, faculty and staff related to the educational enterprise are exempt from the civil rights legislation prohibiting religious discrimination. What was left unclear was the extent to which the nondiscriminatory provisions of the act applied to staff more tangentially connected to the educational enterprise -- groundskeepers, maintenance, secretaries, etc.

The 1964 Civil Rights Act was amended in 1972 to remove many of the loopholes that militated against ending the gender and racial discrimination that continued in educational institutions. However, while gender and racial discrimination was expressly forbidden in educational institutions by the 1972 act, religious institutions were not forbidden to use religious preference in hiring. "This title shall not apply to a religious corporation, association, educational institution, or society with respect to the employment of individuals of a particular religion to perform work connected with the carrying on by such corporation, association, educational institution, or society of its activities."<sup>12</sup>

To date, to my knowledge the United States Supreme Court has not taken or heard any case regarding religious preference with respect to hiring by an institution of higher learning. In three cases dealing with the relation between Church colleges and the government -- Tilton v. Richardson,<sup>13</sup> Hunt v. NcNair,<sup>14</sup> and

Roemer v. Board of Public Works in Maryland<sup>15</sup> -- the issue was whether the government could provide funds for facilities or give noncategorical grants to Church-related colleges. In all three cases the court sided with the institutions, authorizing federal aid to religiously affiliated colleges. The issue of preferential hiring was touched on only tangentially in these cases, in each case the emphasis being that religious mission did not hinder the "secular" functions of the institution. In the case of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State v. Blanton,<sup>16</sup> a case granted summary affirmance by the U.S. Supreme Court, a federal court held that students at sectarian colleges, even those "with religious requirements for students and faculty and admittedly permeated with the dogma of the sponsoring religious organization," could receive public funds for student aid. This was further affirmed in the 1980 Grove City College v. Bell, in which federal student financial aid was considered a loan to the student, and hence in no way was jeopardized by a college's failure to comply with governmental regulations (in this case Title IX). In their survey of the relevant cases, Moots and Gaffney conclude, "A policy of religious preference in the selection of administrators and faculty members which results in a preponderance of these employees belonging to the sponsoring religious body would endanger neither institutional assistance nor aid to students attending that institution. And what may safely be concluded from the Supreme Court's summary affirmance in Blanton is that a policy of 'religious requirements' for faculty members -- the court did not specify whether this meant some or all members of the faculty -- would not endanger the eligibility of students to participate in a generalized program of assistance."<sup>17</sup> Lower court decisions, Executive orders, and government regulation rulings on issues not directly related to hiring by Church-related colleges have tended to cloud the issue of the extent to which religious institutions are exempt from Title VII with respect to employment practices.<sup>18</sup> Whereas some circuit courts have interpreted the exemptions in the 1964 Civil Rights Act and 1972 amendment narrowly, others have interpreted it broadly.<sup>19</sup> The 3rd Circuit Court agreed that exemptions should "enable religious organizations to create and maintain communities composed solely of individuals faithful to their doctrinal practices, whether or not every individual plays a direct role in the organization's religious activities."<sup>20</sup> The 9th Circuit Court emphasized consistency with the overall mission when considering matters relating to the nondiscrimination clause of Title VII, while restricting exemptions to cases where governmental interference would conflict with the religious beliefs of the organization.<sup>21</sup> In a recent case regarding a Mormon Temple the Supreme Court held that the exemption for religious organizations in giving religious preference in

employment practices extended to employees performing nonreligious functions, in this case a janitor.<sup>22</sup> What is noteworthy in all these cases is that they have to do with employment practices subsequent to hiring, that is, with issues having to do with wage inequities or termination of employment.

In sum, the consensus position seems to be that Title VII of the Civil Rights Law and its amendments exempt religious organizations in such a way as to permit using considerations of religious preference in hiring administrators, faculty, and staff persons whose activities relate to the educational program and carrying out of the college's mission. Where there is significant unclarity is how far this exemption extends to issues such as the firing of employees (particularly as it impacts matters of gender and racial discrimination) and whether religious preference considerations apply to the hiring of all employees of the organization. Our emphasis in this article, however, has been on the hiring of individuals who play a more direct role in the educational life of the college community, and here the legal situation allowing discriminatory hiring based on religious preference seems clearly provided for by Title VII and the relevant court cases.

### **Mission Possible**

When I was a teenager I was an avid watcher of "Mission Impossible." By means of a tape that self-destructed in ten seconds, the group was given a seemingly impossible task. Through hard work, creativity, courage and not a little luck they always succeeded in their impossible but exciting mission. Lutheran colleges too have a mission that includes a commitment to conduct education, understood in the broadest sense, from the perspective of the Christian faith and Christian values, in the context of the liberal arts, which gives the freedom to explore the world as widely and deeply as possible. It is the mission to make God visible in a concrete, fallible, diverse, relational community. It is the mission to assist students to develop their own intellectual, moral and spiritual life. In our era, the mission often also incorporates intentional diversity, including integrally in the community those who would teach from non-Christian perspectives, but who welcome and contribute to the dialogue of faith and values. Possible? I hope so. But only if administrators, faculty and staff undertake the difficult challenge of constructing a community staffed by a critical mass of persons who by their own Christian faith, hard work, creativity, courage, sensitivity and joy work with the mercy and providence of God to change lives.<sup>23</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In what follows I will use "Christian" and "Church-related" interchangeably. Though I think one might distinguish between the two, as I will note later, delineating differences here will not further the overall discussion.

<sup>2</sup> "The mission of the LCA colleges is to develop through education all aspects of the human character -- e.g., the intellectual, the personal, the moral and the religious -- and to maintain through their concern with all human disciplines the wholeness of the human personality." "Statement of the Council on the Mission of LCA Colleges and Universities," The Mission of LCA Colleges and Universities (New York: Lutheran Church in American, 1969), 7.

<sup>3</sup> Pattillo, pp. 62-3.

<sup>4</sup> Pattillo, pp. 87-8.

<sup>5</sup> Though he has yet to spell out his notion of critical mass, in a forthcoming book [The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship (New York: Oxford, 1997)], Marsden writes, "Schools that have a Christian heritage must also take some concrete steps to counteract the pressures to conform to the secular standards of the dominant university culture. Historically, the crucial issue has been faculty hiring. Without at least some faculty committed to integrating faith and learning, no amount of administrative rhetoric can sustain the enterprise. Many church-related schools are so open in their hiring that they have little hope of retaining any aspect of their religious heritage. Once the mass of their faculty are attuned only to the standards of the national academic culture, they will continue to hire people like themselves, thus obliterating loyalties to any distinctive religious heritage. It is just a matter of time."

<sup>6</sup> "Soli Deo Gloria: Faith and Learning in the Concordia Community: A Report to the Faculty." (Moorhead, MN: Concordia College: 1995), 49-50.

<sup>7</sup> George Marsden, "What Can Catholic Universities Learn from Protestant Examples?" in The Challenge and Promise of a Catholic University, ed. by Theodore M. Hesburgh (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995).

<sup>8</sup> Pattillo, p. 71.

<sup>9</sup> Alasdair Macintyre, After Virtue (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), pp. 206-7.

<sup>10</sup> Section 702. Section 703(e)(2), which allows for discrimination based on religious preference, applies more narrowly to institutions that are "owned, supported, controlled, or managed by a particular religion or by a particular religious corporation," or that are "directed to the propagation

of a particular religion." Moots, pp. 57-60.

<sup>11</sup> 110 Congressional Record 2585 (Feb. 8, 1964).

<sup>12</sup> Pub. L. 88-352, 78 Stat. 255, as amended by Pub. L. 92-261, 86 Stat. 103, 42 U.S.C. 2000e-1. The 1972 Amendment did not remove the BFOQ. The Supreme Court and subsequent EEOC rulings have tended to interpret BFOQ exemptions quite narrowly. See Laura S. Underkuffler, "Discrimination' on the Basis of Religion: An Examination of Attempted Value Neutrality in Employment," William and Mary Law Review 30 (Spring, 1989), 593.

<sup>13</sup> Pub. L. 88-352, 78 Stat. 255, as amended by Pub. L. 92-261, 86 Stat. 103, 42 U.S.C. 2000e-1. The 1972 Amendment did not remove the BFOQ. The Supreme Court and subsequent EEOC rulings have tended to interpret BFOQ exemptions quite narrowly. See Laura S. Underkuffler, "Discrimination' on the Basis of Religion: An Examination of Attempted Value Neutrality in Employment," William and Mary Law Review 30 (Spring, 1989), 593.

<sup>14</sup> 402 U.S. 672 (1971).

<sup>15</sup> 413 U.S. 734 (1973).

<sup>16</sup> 426 U.S. 736 (1976).

<sup>17</sup> 433 F Supp. 97 (M.D. Tenn.), summarily affirmed, 434 U.S. 803 (1977).

<sup>18</sup> Philip R. Moots and Edward McGlynn Gaffney, Jr., Church and Campus: Legal Issues in Religiously Affiliated Higher Education (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), p. 39.

<sup>19</sup> See *King's Garden, Inc. v. FCC* (1974) and *Vigars v. Valley Christian Center* (1992).

<sup>20</sup> Treavor Hodson, "The Religious Exemption Under Title VII: Should a Church Define Its Own Activities?" Brigham Young University Law Review 1994, 571-99.

<sup>21</sup> *Little v. Wuerl*, 929 F.2d 944, 951 (3rd Cir. 1991). Also *EEOC v. Mississippi College* (5th Cir. 1980).

<sup>22</sup> *EEOC v. Pacific Press Publishing Ass'n*, 676 F.2d at 1279 (9th Cir., 1982).

<sup>23</sup> *Corporation of the Presiding bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints v. Amos*, 483, U.S. 327 (1987).

<sup>24</sup> I wish to thank John Benson, Jeanne Boeh, Brad Holt, Dale Pederson, Diane Pike, Sharon Reichenbach and Roman Soto for their helpful comments and suggestions, and Karen Mateer for her research assistance.



## A CALL FOR CREATIVE EDUCATION

Wendy J. McCredie

*An absolute commitment to some faith statement can preclude investigation and can lead to mere dogmatism. An absolute commitment to freedom denies the commitments of the institution and the responsibility one assumes when one joins a community that affirms a shared mission.*

We owe Bruce Reichenbach a debt of gratitude for so succinctly stating the radical extremes every Lutheran desiring to remain true to his/her tradition and community must guard against. These two absolutes, when they remain absolutes, stymie discussion and paralyze movement. When, however, informed faith and responsive individual freedom are in conversation with one another, the conditions for community building exist. These qualities of faith and freedom are the ones we should seek to foster in all members of our church-related college communities. Reichenbach's essay focuses on aspects of the hiring process at church-related colleges that might help us create or maintain mission-based communities of learning and faith.

Reichenbach's most important statements deal with the need to be intentional about hiring practices and with the need for ongoing development programs for faculty and staff. Each institution must decide, based on its own community and its relation to the church, what its hiring practices will be; however, as Reichenbach states, it is not in keeping with academic integrity, or with honesty, to hide the Lutheran character of the institution and the expectation for engagement with that character from a prospective employee. In order for such engagement to be as productive as possible, it may also be necessary to institutionalize "constructive and educational discussions about ways to integrate concerns about . . . faith values into various aspects of service to the college's community." These discussions should not be limited to particular constituencies of the college, but could function as means to foster discussion across sub-groups in the community. These discussions should help build community on campus. The ELCA's annual conference on "The Vocation of a Lutheran College" represents one way in which we currently foster such discussions. Individual colleges have instituted similar discussions on their campuses. It remains to be seen how effective we are in articulating for ourselves and others what we are all about. Can we reach others outside our community of believers or are we doomed to converse only with those whose conversational base resembles our own?

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It is perhaps a truism to say that Lutherans hide their light under a bushel. We remain embarrassed about "tooting our own horn." Such modesty, while admirable, does not serve us well. The ELCA-related colleges and universities have great gifts to share with the world. We are called to do so. We must, however, do a better job of educating not just our new hires, not just our students, not just our natural constituency, but all the public about the gifts the Lutheran education brings to the late twentieth century. Our mission should not be, therefore, to interrogate prospective employees about their own faith commitment and knowledge of our tradition, but to educate the world (and the church) more adequately about that tradition. Yes, we must expect all members of the community to be willing "to effectively and constructively raise the kinds of questions that both Christians and non-Christians should face:" about the institution, the church, education, and our actions in the world. We must also be willing to listen to such questions and to handle productively challenges to our own understandings.

Reichenbach states that "the entire college community should be knowledgeably committed to the college's mission." This statement contains four ideas without which colleges related to the church cannot describe themselves: community, knowledge, commitment, and mission. The questions resulting from our self descriptions go something like this: "How do we define community?" "What must we be knowledgeable about?" "What counts as commitment?" and, "How is our mission articulated and manifested every day?" Each institution must answer these questions for itself, which is perhaps one reason presentations, articles, and conference papers articulate only broad and ultimately dissatisfying generalities.

Reichenbach assumes that all members of the community should know what the mission of the college is and be able to either affirm it (if one is Christian) or to engage it productively (if one is non-Christian). Such an assumption means, first, that we must articulate our missions better and, second, that in our day-to-day business it is manifest. But, what about discussions about the mission? Can Christians also interrogate it? Can non-Christians also affirm that mission? In order for a community based in faith and learning to thrive such possibilities must not just exist, but be encouraged. If the question of mission is "off limits" for discussion, we cannot maintain the kind of free inquiry we value so deeply. If the mission is not off limits for discussion, then the community responsible for discussing it must be knowledgeable not only about the current situation of higher education, but also about its roots. It must be knowledgeable about the role of the university in the very genesis of the Lutheran church, the role of

disputation in the academic community, and the appeal of the free Renaissance human individual. Essentially, what it means is that our community must be interdisciplinary in spirit. We must look into other disciplines; we must not become perspectival in our approach, except insofar as perspectivalism serves as a heuristic measure, as a means to the end of understanding and respect.

The answer to our need for clearer definition is not to wall ourselves off from those who do not think like us, who do not belong to our conversational community. One of the strengths of the Lutheran tradition is its unwillingness to become separate from the world; we are in the world and are called to engage it. One of the ways in which the colleges have engaged the world is to respond positively and inclusively to cultural diversity. Such a response is in keeping with our mission to be communities of faith and learning. "The goal in hiring should be diversity as a means to further broaden the educational perspectives of students and provide opportunities for growth within the context of a particular community," let us add to the educational the *spiritual*, and let us hope we broaden the educational and spiritual perspectives of *all members* of the community, not just those of students.

One result of the colleges' varied responses to the culture is that we, along with other groups, struggle with our own identity politics. Intentional diversity within a community can, as it fosters discussion, provide a productive milieu in which to discover anew who and what we are and might become. Reichenbach suggests that "a college that emphasizes intentional diversity as part of its mission statement thereby provides grounds for hiring persons who can not only be creative teachers and articulate spokespersons for various disciplinary and social views, but represent and present non-Christian perspectives in ways that provide an opportunity for serious internal dialogue on the important issues that face the college." He is right. It is part of our double tradition grounded in faith and informed by the results of disputation within the academy that we should seek out and listen to people different from what we perceive ourselves to be. If we are to be true to our heritage, we must hear challenges both from within the walls of the academy and church and from the outside. Like all humans, we have difficult time with challenges that might result in change. We do however, have sustaining faith that should allow us to face challenges and take risks, not thoughtlessly, but with faith that by God's grace we participate well and for the good in God's creation.

Reichenbach makes some important statements, but we are left with little idea about precisely what mission, community, Christian values, knowledge, etc. are. "Christian faith and values should permeate every aspect of the college." Can we agree on what such values might be? Even among the different Protestant denominations we do not seem to have consensus

here. The merger of the predecessor church bodies into the ELCA was perhaps inspired by God, but it remains a human work. Within it we cannot agree on particular social, economic, sexual, ecclesiastical, liturgical, etc. values. Perhaps such agreement is fundamentally antithetical to the Lutheranness of our church. Would we say instead that critical *attention* to gospel and law, to God's all-encompassing love and our limited human roles, should be manifest in all our work?

If we cannot agree on what might constitute Christian values or how one appropriately manifests Christian faith, how can we determine precisely a "critical mass" of people manifesting such qualities? Must all members of this "critical mass" be Christians? Reichenbach seems to suggest so when he describes the "challenge of constructing a community staffed by a critical mass of persons who by their own Christian faith, hard work, creativity, courage, sensitivity and joy work with the mercy and providence of God to change lives." But his arguments for diversity within the community might suggest that it is not so much whether one is a Christian, or even a Lutheran, but whether one is informed about that tradition and willing and able to engage it well in order to build community that should be the primary criterion for inclusion in that "critical mass." Perhaps, as I suggested earlier, these qualities can only be defined within community and not in a part destined for multiple communities.

Is it true that "commitment to effectively implementing the mission statement means more than that those hired will be sympathetic working in an environment that makes such a Christian statement." It is also important that those who come to work at colleges such as ours should "choose to teach and work at such an institution." However, I do not believe all of us, even all of us committed to the kind of educational and spiritual environment the ELCA - related colleges can provide, did, in fact *choose* to teach or work at these institutions because of their church-relatedness. The church-relatedness may even have been a red flag to those members of our communities who had little or no knowledge about Lutheran education; for others an institution's Lutheranness may have provided a perceived level of comfort, a bit of the known along with the greater unknowns associated with joining a new community; many more of us, perhaps, came to these institutions assuming that the specific religious aspects of the institution were (and should be) taken care of in areas outside our own academic disciplines. I hope that we were/are all wrong in some degree. It is only after working in such an institution for considerable time and educating oneself about the mission of that institution that one comes to appreciate both the ways in which we fall short of our goals and the ways in which those goals matter enormously.

*In short, a college that espouses a mission that includes both being based on the Christian faith and diversity or inclusiveness, faces a situation fraught with tension. The task*

*is to turn the tension into creative education...*

Reichenbach's phrase "creative education" attempts to encapsulate the dialectical tension inherent in our mission of faith and learning in a diverse world. This tension is perhaps analogous to the tension between the two kingdoms of Lutheran

theology. As members of communities related to the Lutheran church, we have, therefore, a faith perspective that both motivates and facilitates participation in that tension. The tension is never resolved; it does not go away. Creative education inculcates the ability to live in this tension between and with God's love and our rules.

## HITTING A MOVING TARGET

*Harry Jebson*

Anytime we wish to define our institutions and their missions and hiring practices we have to remember that we are dealing with several moving targets, not just the role of the faculty. We frequently memorialize a past that may or may not have existed. Those of us who are graduates of sister institutions may have a relatively fixed memory of that institution and its nuances. We fix in our minds that institution's persons and ambiance as the "role model" by which we measure other Lutheran institutions as well as our current institutions. During my years as Dean and Provost, the Vice President of Resource Management and I were both Wartburg grads and I know that if Capital people heard, "when I was at Wartburg," one more time they would have had involuntary seizures.

We must be very careful in drawing such analogies across time. The last time I visited Wartburg was to have my youngest son visit. While much was familiar and recognizable, it wasn't "my" Wartburg. Roy's place was gone, the Pub House where I met my wife was gone. Change is the norm at all of our institutions.

Perhaps in contrast to our own personal fixed views are the phrases of current mission statements which are vague and open to a broad range of personal interpretations. One university states clearly that they are "related to the ELCA," and "encourages an environment of respect for all people and diverse beliefs." With perhaps a clearer focus, TLU states that "the College provides an education in the arts and sciences which is given perspective by the Christian faith." My own institution writes that it "promotes thinking, discussion, and debate that enhances ethical, moral and religious values essential to leadership in society and the church..." Each of these statements are certainly open to interpretation by the

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individual who reads them. They were written to be inclusive rather than exclusive.

This issue may be even more vital today than ever. This summer delegates to the ELCA convention in Philadelphia consider formalizing relationships with fellow Protestants from Presbyterian, Reformed, and Episcopal traditions. Some fear the blurring of distinctions. Most of our institutions would not be solvent if we depended upon a preponderance of Lutheran students and Lutheran faculty members. We have adapted to a less exclusive environment and become part of a larger society's educational program.

Most of our colleges were founded by immigrants to insulate their descendants of German or Scandinavian backgrounds from the "contamination" of the English-based nineteenth century American social system. Immigrants sought, with an enthusiastic energy, to preserve the culture of the homeland, to provide clergy and teachers for the now Scandinavian-American or German-America congregations, to maintain a bilingualism that allowed the second generation to appreciate both the mores of the homeland as well as that of the United States. Much like the Turnervereins and Saengerbunds, the Lutheran college was an oasis in which the moral, ethical, and theological norms from Europe could be taught to the offspring.

Our colleges were founded as purposeful institutions with a specific mission. And that was accomplished unapologetically, with pride and enthusiasm. One of our colleges proudly proclaimed that, "Having truth, we pass it on." While not seen in the mid-nineteenth century as a boastful statement, the assumption of truth as something we own certainly could not be the focal point of modern Lutheran higher education in the context of the ELCA. Our institutions today are proud of change as one of the hallmarks of our existence. Goal four at Capital University states that it "must change and grow in order to better serve changing student needs."

As one reads Professor Reichenbach's article, the motto referred to above, and the goal statement from Capital, one realizes how

open and inclusive our institutions have become heading toward a broader and less specific mission which has less concerns about the centrality of Lutheranism or even a broader Christian tradition.

Alvin Toffler in *Future Shock* warned us about the persistency of change. We see it in every aspect of our campus life, making it far more difficult to remain as centrally focused as Reichenbach would prefer. There is no doubt that what Reichenbach advocates is legal and in some religious traditions possible. We see it in modern America in the presence of the evangelical colleges. My youngest son is on the admissions staff at a Mennonite college. Attending a conference on admissions tactics at "Christian" colleges, he was amazed, as a Lutheran college graduate, of the fervency of the decidedly evangelical approach to admissions activity.

Defining the role of our campuses and therefore the role of the faculty on our campuses is clearly a moving target. Just as American society has changed, just as the Lutheran church and its expectations for higher education have changed, just as the students who seek an education at our institutions have changed, the colleges of the Lutheran tradition have evolved into different institutions.

Today I received one of our Lutheran college's magazines. It is beautiful, slick and filled with impressive approaches to improving education, obviously intended primarily for the consumption of alumni. Yet the magazine lacks any centrality to its Lutheran or for that matter Christian heritage. One reference is there to a \$50,000 grant from Lutheran Brotherhood for its chaplaincy program. But in a beautifully presented five page update on the institution's objectives for the future of the college the word Lutheran appears as a subscript in the sixth objective which focuses on the goal of encouraging service and leadership opportunities for students. No mention is made in connection with the typical academic functions.

Let's face the fact that we ourselves become somewhat ambivalent and that we focus on our specific Christian role when it is beneficial and elect not to focus on it when it may be controversial or have a negative economic effect.

Yet it is easy to see why such ambivalence dominates our institutions. The ELCA has been ambivalent about the role of the colleges. From the perspective of a former Provost now faculty member, my observation is that the colleges of the ELCA are viewed as tangential to the primary mission of the church rather than having a critical or central role.

Churches and pastors of the congregations which we serve are increasingly distant from the colleges. Pastors come into their ministries increasingly as second career persons who have been educated in public or non-Lutheran institutions and do not value the impact which Lutheran colleges have had or could have on

their parishioners. I am a prime example of a person encouraged by pastor and congregation to go to Wartburg. The previous pastor in my congregation had been a Capital graduate and somehow the college bound members of that congregation then found their way to Columbus, Ohio.

The ambivalence from the church body allows and encourages ambivalent attitudes on our campuses. It is quite difficult to achieve any consensus on what it means to be an institution which is Christian, let alone, Lutheran. This year at a dinner meeting arranged by the president to specifically discuss what it means to be a church related institution, I allowed as how I thought that it would be difficult since many faculty did not care about the centrality of that part of the mission. An award winning colleague, exclaimed how incorrect I was because Capital was different because of its close atmosphere, she proclaimed that "everybody is nice to each other."

Somehow we have drifted from the theological implications of what Lutheran or Christian higher education stands for to "niceness" as the hallmark. While that spirit of cooperation is a valued attribute of my colleagues, I doubt that it is the hallmark of a Christian institution of higher education. But a group of twenty handpicked faculty and administrators who have a real interest in the question wrestled in vain to come to a conclusion about what it did mean.

While Reichenbach and Marsden place central responsibility on the faculty, it needs to be noted that our institutions have evolved significantly in recent years, bringing to our campuses persons who have less natural affiliation with those institutions that existed in an earlier strong bond with church, congregation, and ethnic society. Even those colleges that pride themselves on having maintained the strong liberal arts focus have seen the demand for professional educations and career focused learning increasing in a rapacious manner. This has revised the focus of what we do at our institutions. Responding to the market place has been an economic necessity for many Lutheran colleges and universities.

Our campuses have evolved out of the desire to respond to the needs of our students. Most of our campuses have readily embraced multiculturalism and the impact of diversity has opened our institutions to include African-American and Hispanic-American groups. Which of our institutions has refused to discuss gender and sexual preference issues. And by the evolving nature of the world in which we live, our campuses house significant numbers of international students for whom the religious conviction of the campus carries little cultural affiliation.

Most of our campuses are no longer teaching to those who learned scripture in Sunday School, Catechism classes, and sang in the youth choir. In order to maintain academic quality, to maintain fiscal integrity, and to reach a broader audience, we

have to recruit a broader range of student. This includes many who could care less about the religious nature of the university. In a required "Cultural Pluralism" class this past semester, we surveyed the religious diversity on the Capital campus. Many of these first year students forthrightly claimed that they did not know or affirmed that they did not care that our campus had a Lutheran tradition. Even though the second sentence of most of our brochures and publications state that we are an institution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, it was bothersome to hear both their lack of knowledge and their disdain for religious education.

It is clear that in the 1990's that faculty at Lutheran and Christian institutions are no longer teaching to the congregation. The critical mass issue impacts not only the faculty but the student body as well. As students become increasingly those who care little about religion and spirituality, those who have little or no education in theology or scripture, including many from Lutheran congregations, and those who have some significant hostility toward theological education, has made the task of faculty in religion and philosophy departments as well as throughout the professorate to make a connection with students and their own spirituality much more difficult. One could argue that it calls upon the institutions to be more explicit about the religious nature of the college, others may find that dealing with the importance of academic, disciplinary issues is far more critical to improving the students who select our campuses as the place to reach toward their professional aspirations.

As Reichenbach has noted, faculty have similar characteristics. In the middle of the 1980's I gave a talk at the Lutheran Dean's Conference in which I talked about the changing nature of the faculty. I used a retired faculty member as a prime example of "Mr. Capital" University. It is alleged that he was so dedicated to Capital that before he became engaged to his wife, he let her know that Capital was, next to his faith, the number one priority in his life. But what these "Mr. Chips" types brought to the campus in the early and mid-twentieth century was a deep seated commitment to the mission of the institution, a TOTAL view of the campus, and a fervent agreement with the specific mission. Strong disciplinarians who were active and visible in the campus congregation, athletic events, committee after committee, and thoroughly imbued with the tradition and the trappings of the institution, they became the personification of what Dana and midland Lutheran stood for.

Each Dean who attended that session talked wistfully about similar persons and how sorely they were missed on the campuses. Each wondered how we would continue to maintain a "critical mass" given the dearth of candidates who were both solid academics and solidly representative of the traditions in which the institution was rooted.

I interviewed many potential faculty in fifteen years as Dean and Provost. It was indeed a minority who really wanted to hear much about the religious backgrounds and persuasion. Many

questions focus on the impact that the Lutheran tradition would have on their individual academic freedom. Indelibly etched in my mind is a conversation with a potential sociologist. We had had breakfast across from the campus and while walking across the campus we passed the religious life center which has a large cross in front of it. The candidate observed before we reached my office that she hoped that the cross really did not mean anything. And she hoped that we did not expect faculty to spend much time in their office since she did not look forward to one on one meetings with students. The candidate may as well not have been brought to campus.

A promotion review committee once asked candidates how their efforts promoted the mission of the institution. I was amazed that I as the Dean received complaints because some faculty believed that the question was irrelevant to what should be considered for promotion and tenure.

Many of our institutions are now universities, no longer liberal arts colleges. Many struggle to call themselves "liberal arts universities," "liberally educated universities," or some such euphemism. But a university by any other name is different from the liberal arts colleges that are intimate, sometimes isolated, and generally tightly focused. The modern Lutheran colleges and universities have extended their mission to include a broader range of educational programs.

Teacher education, nursing, athletic training may be related to the liberal arts and the process of free inquiry, but they all are professionally focused and not a part of the trivium and quadrivium. Business schools and conservatories prefer to be as separate as possible. The Lutheran tradition there seems irrelevant or certainly less relevant. The professional focus of both programs with an emphasis in the community for business and on playing "gigs" for the popular music programs, and very little with church music, allow little focus on the sacred traditions of the Lutheran college.

Post graduate education is equally common. Even the smallest schools are bent on masters programs in Education. MBA programs proliferate in order to keep up with the competing regional institutions. A few, like Capital and Valparaiso, have added legal education to the curriculum. Adult education programs fit into the mission but further cause the shift away from the original foci of the residential Lutheran campus.

The expansion of curriculum has necessitated bringing highly specialized faculty members to the campus. Whether they are committed to the distinctive mission of the university or whether their expertise in biochemistry meets acceptable standards remains a point of contention. I suspect that Reichenbach wrote the article because he sees the expertise winning out over the allegiance to the mission.

That indeed is at stake in the 1990's, and it may be a central

question. But my point is that all phases and constituencies related to the institution have also evolved and should be equally challenged. Pointing to the faculty as the standard bearer is a valuable reference point, but to focus attention on only one constituency, however, critical, is to dismiss what has been occurring among the other constituencies.

Mission must indeed be both academic and cocurricular, it must be seen in faculty, administrators, hourly persons, and athletic personnel. To insist that the critical mass is particularly the domain of the faculty misses the breadth of the modern campus. In an age of specialization both in academic departments as well as in the functioning of the modern campus, all facets of the

campus must be "critical" to maintaining the mission.

But first we need to make sure what it is that the mission is and with some specificity what it means in the day to day life of our campuses!!!! I sense that we are quite ambivalent about the mission on most of our campuses. The self assured days of having truth and passing it on are gone. We as faculty and staff have moved into less self-assured waters and are paddling fast to maintain some ties to the original and revised mission as we chart a new route which may or may not have close ties to the old ethnic, church focused standards upon which our institutions were founded.

## CONFESSIONS OF A COLLABORATOR

*Chuck Huff*

I sit here in my office alone (as I ought) writing my confession. The Deans and the faculty have asked me to write; expect me to confess. I confess that I am a collaborator.

I confess that I have always collaborated. In elementary school I talked with my friends and my parents about my report on dinosaurs. In junior high I read Cliff notes on William Faulkner. In my weakness, I sought help. I perverted my individuality. I failed. Collaborator. Cripple. Cheat.

In high school I showed my poems to others and asked for help on algebra. To teach me independence my teachers and friends gave me no help. They accused me (rightly, it is true, but I confess to hating them for it) of cheating.

In college I continued to fail the American ideal by working with a classmate on a project. My instructors showed me my error. They exclaimed that my work could not be judged, and that they would not know how to grade me, but I persisted.

I confess: I collaborate with my colleagues. I ask their opinion. I borrow their syllabi. The work I now publish in my own name I have done with help. No matter that some have given me this help freely. I stole it. The fault is mine. I should not have asked. No matter that I thanked them in acknowledgments. I sullied my work with the thoughts of others. I used their ideas. Miscreant. Malefactor. Miscegenist.

I confess that I collaborate in my classroom. I invite suggestions from my students. Yes, I confess to enticing my students to collaborate. I have required them to work in groups, though they

rightly despise it. They yearn to do their own work. To stand on their own. They are independent, but I have tempted, even compelled, them to go astray. I have lured my students into collaboration. Piper. Pusher. Pederast.

I confess that I have attempted, in the safety of my office, to collaborate with my students in tutorials. In their independent studies I have collaborated with them. They study selfhood, self-reliance, self-esteem, self-righteousness, self-fulfillment, self-flattery, self-employment, self-deception, self-assertion, self-adjusting-self-feeding-self-congratulation. But, I confess to helping them, even to forcing my opinions and help on them.

It is true. I fear to stand alone. My mother and my father, my classmates, my colleagues and my students influence me. But this is not their confession, it is mine. I cannot think alone. I circulate drafts. I ask for comments. I have even borrowed my bootstraps. Thief. Thespian. Fool.

And if all this were not shame enough, I confess that my colleagues and students have helped me to write this confession. I confess that I hoped for their praise and their criticism. I confess I changed my words and writing because of their help. I could not even confess alone, but collaborated in my confession. And, I confess; I enjoyed it.

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## ELCA COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

**Augsburg College**  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Augustana College**  
Rock Island, Illinois

**Augustana College**  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

**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**  
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

**Grandview College**  
Des Moines, Iowa

**Gustavus Adolphus College**  
St. Peter, Minnesota

**Lenoir-Rhyne College**  
Hickory, North Carolina

**Luther College**  
Decorah, Iowa

**Midland Lutheran College**  
Fremont, Nebraska

**Muhlenberg College**  
Allentown, Pennsylvania

**Newberry College**  
Newberry, South Carolina

**Pacific Lutheran University**  
Tacoma, Washington

**Roanoke College**  
Salem, Virginia

**St. Olaf College**  
Northfield, Minnesota

**Suomi College**  
Hancock, Michigan

**Susquehanna University**  
Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania

**Texas Lutheran University**  
Seguin, Texas

**Thiel College**  
Greenville, Pennsylvania

**Wagner College**  
Staten Island, New York

**Waldorf College**  
Forest City, Iowa

**Wartburg College**  
Waverly, Iowa

**Wittenberg University**  
Springfield, Ohio