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

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INTERSECTIONS

faith + life + learning

NUMBER FIFTEEN

WINTER 2002

The endless cycle of idea and action,
Endless invention, endless experiment,
Brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness;
Knowledge of speech, but not of silence;
Knowledge of words, and ignorance of the Word.
All our knowledge brings us nearer to ignorance,
All our ignorance brings us nearer to death,
But nearness to death no nearer to GOD.
Where is the life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?
The cycles of heaven in twenty centuries,
Bring us farther from GOD and nearer to the Dust.

T.S. Eliot — From *Choruses from "The Rock"*

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INTERSECTIONS

WINTER 2002

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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.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has begun the process of developing a **social statement on education**. This is a big deal, because social statements are formal expressions of the official views of the church body, developed with input from a whole range of participants, subjected to widespread hearings and discussions, and finally approved by the highest decision making body of the ELCA, the Churchwide Assembly. By requesting such a social statement, the 2001 Churchwide Assembly set education alongside the economy, the environment, abortion, sexuality, health, peace and a selected few other topics that it wanted all members and agencies of the church to think deeply about and discuss intensely; and then make the church take a public stand about.

The process will take several years, but at this time it is crucial that the church hears **which topics** within the field of education that the statement should address. What are the most important issues, on which the congregations or the church need to take a stand? Is there, or should there be, a Lutheran view of access to education, financing of education, prayer in the schools, student financial aid, the curriculum in colleges and universities, scientific literacy, assessment, accountability, the role of private schools and colleges, lifelong learning, class sizes, teacher preparation, teacher salaries, college governance, parental involvement, or any other educational topic?

Can the church speak with authority about these issues? Are they addressed in the bible, or in the writings of Luther? Can we say that a Lutheran view of these issues is based on Christian principles, Lutheran theology, traditions of long standing, recent research, or the clear needs of the society?

This social statement will address the intersections of faith, life and learning, just like this journal. You, the readers, are interested in these topics, even experts on several of them. The Lutheran church needs to hear

from you. Please help define this social statement by submitting input now. You can send it to us at ELCA-DHES, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631, and we will share it with the people who are planning the social statement on education.

Arne Selbyg
Director, ELCA Colleges and Universities

FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of **Intersections** once again has a variety of voices to hear. I wouldn't say "something for everybody" because there are lots of expressions we don't include at all. We do, however, include bishops and university presidents, philosophers and poets, students and their teachers, and even a theologian. Stanley Olsen talks about Lutheran colleges and universities from the church's point of view, pointing out that our work may be more important than we, and the church, have realized. Gregg Muilenburg addresses the issue of welcoming "outsiders" to our institutional conversation and in the process brings his reading of Nikos Kazantzakis to bear on a new vision of faith. Mary Theresa Hall and Cora Lazor further demonstrate the value of synthetic thinking, seeing one thing in terms of another, by seeing their own institution in the light of the writings of Francis Bacon and Cardinal Newman. They also demonstrate the fruitfulness of faculty / student collaboration. Don Braxton writes both about the teaching of science and the teaching of religion and the Socratic approaches that both require. Kevin Griffith offers two poems that dissolve the categories we bring to thinking about the religious, the irreverent, with his own wry humor. Baird Tipson offers us much more than a review of a collection of papers (a hard enough thing to do). He sketches an argument for a different model of the faith-related college / university, one that unapologetically embraces many of the legacies of the enlightenment and secular models of higher education.

When the selection from Eliot was proposed for the cover of this issue someone who saw it in my office commented that it was too depressing. But Ida's response is worth communicating: "What would you prefer, lines from *Jolly Old Saint Nicholas*? Lutherans are realists when it comes to the worth of human accomplishments. And we must remember, there is a huge difference between optimism and hope." The selection raises for all learners and teachers the uncomfortable question, "Does our knowledge move in the direction of information or in the direction of wisdom?" Or is that latter concept already too much an anachronism to believe in?

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THE MARKS OF AN ELCA COLLEGE: ONE BISHOP'S REFLECTIONS

Stanley N. Olson

INTRODUCTION

Last January Arne Selbyg invited me to make a presentation at this event and I jumped at the chance. You know the old Latin motto dear to most professors and preachers— *carpe podium*, seize the podium. I have a passionate commitment to Lutheran higher education. It has been interesting and challenging to put some thoughts in order for today's presentation.

Arne invited me to offer my perspectives as a bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Since many of you are not Lutheran and you who are probably have not had much reason to pay attention to ecclesiastical functions, let me do some explaining. The Greek word *episcopos* means overseer and is translated "bishop" when it occurs in the New Testament. The title and office have persisted for two thousand years but functions, understandings and incumbencies have varied widely. One of the constants from the first century until now, has been that bishops have been expected to know the church's principles, doctrines and beliefs and help put those to work serving and guiding ordinary people in their everyday lives. The ELCA expects its bishops to be servant leaders, attending to Word of God for the sake of the life and work of our institutional part of the whole Church. Most often I nurture the connectedness of the church—the connectedness of people to the Bible and Lutheran teaching, of congregation to congregation, of congregation to larger church, of congregations to service and educational institutions, of those institutions to each other, of people called to serve with people in need, and so on. I call myself, "Harness Boy," because it's my job as bishop to help keep the connections in good working order, for the sake of the church's central purposes. "Network Administrator" would be a more modern nickname for one who does this work.

I'll talk today from that perspective—as a servant leader who is expected to nurture the connections that help the church do the work to which it's called. It's my job to be interested in results, the bottom line, where the rubber hits the road—or whatever cliché you prefer. As a bishop, I want to know how the colleges of the ELCA do and can serve the mission of this church.

I must insert a couple oral footnotes. My thinking on church colleges has been shaped by many experiences and by the ideas of many others. The shaping started early. My parents graduated from two of our colleges and we visited those campuses often when I was young. Dad's several terms on a board of regents gave us other contacts. I graduated from Waldorf and St. Olaf. Our two daughters are graduates of a Lutheran college. Christa was way over on the humanities end of things and Maren on the science end—and both speak highly of their education—and we are grateful. I've served now for eight years on the board of Gustavus Adolphus and had the concomitant challenge and privilege of preaching each year for the celebration of newly tenured faculty. And, of course, in my work with pastors, lay leaders and three hundred congregations I meet graduates of our colleges, I see needs and occasionally I hear complaints.

My reflections have been guided by many people, most recently two thinkers have been especially helpful to me: Prof. Darrell Jodock now at Gustavus and long at Muhlenberg, and Mark Edwards, till recently president of St. Olaf. Along with many others they have done excellent practical and theoretical work on the strong foundation in Lutheran tradition for liberal arts education. I strongly commend to you the insights of Mark and Darrell. In the printed copy of this talk I give the bibliographic reference for one good essay by each.¹ Mark also has a book forthcoming.

MY PREMATURE TITLE

Have you ever had to submit a title for a talk or paper before you had time to work much on the project? You know how it goes. The mail brings the second or third pointed reminder from the conference organizer. You realize something must be sent. Of course, you had some ideas when you accepted the invitation, and you have been mulling things over while traveling and during boring presentations at other conferences. So, you venture a title, e-mail it as requested—and then proceed to write a talk that takes a different direction!

Just so, your printed schedule offers a title for a talk I might have given, but won't. Those four snazzy nouns –*fealty*, *insouciance*, *ingenuity* and *focus* were supposed to outline the paper, instead they will serve as an introduction to my convictions on the subject.

Fealty: *Fealty* is a word with medieval flavor, but it simply means faithfulness. If I'd just written "faithfulness," you would have recognized it as a churchy word and would have assumed you already knew my point. I do want to keep you listening—so, *fealty*. I believe that each college of this church should demonstrate *fealty* to that college's stated mission. And, I believe that mission should reflect and be compatible with Christian understandings of life and learning. More on mission, mission statements and marketing later.

Ingenuity: *Ingenuity* points to my conviction that Lutheran colleges should be seeking creative and effective ways to take what is and link it to the needs of people. Our colleges should be places where the treasures of truth are opened and shared in fresh and productive ways, ways that liberate people. I have in mind not only those programs which fit under a traditional understanding of the liberal arts but also all other things our colleges and universities may decide to do. They should be characterized by ingenuity, creatively helping people do good.

Insouciance: "Freedom" might have been a better quality to name here, but it has the same disadvantage as "faithfulness." It's too familiar. Further, *insouciance* implies an element of grace, gaiety, humor, lightness. Think of it as the incredible lightness of being Lutheran. We'll talk about gravity too, but every college works at that. I expect Lutheran colleges to reflect the joy of the gospel, an open future. Do you have sacred cows? Make hamburgers. It's a Lutheran thing to do.

Focus: This one is simple. The work of a Lutheran college is to prepare students for service in the world, to prepare them for their vocations. Students are the point, students for the world.

Take that as an overview. I want to make some more complex points and I need eight categories to do it.

MARKS OF A LUTHERAN COLLEGE—WHAT SHOULD WE BE ABLE TO OBSERVE?

What are the marks of a Lutheran college? What should I, as a churchman, be able to observe in our colleges if I take the time to know them well? I do not use the following elements as *distinguishing* marks because most or all would be found, *mutatis mutandis*, in other liberal arts colleges. Here are the eight:

intentional Lutheran identity
significant Lutheran presence
Christian faith at the table
freedom of inquiry
coaching toward vocation
gravity and grace
nurtured community
excellence by its own standards

Though the first two include the word Lutheran and are different from the six that follow, I do not intend this list to be in any priority order. Rather, I will argue, that our colleges should deserve a bold checkmark for each item on this list.

MARK ONE: INTENTIONAL LUTHERAN IDENTITY

This first mark gets the mission questions on the table and keeps them there. Our colleges should publically identify themselves as Lutheran. This can be done in a variety of ways. Pacific Lutheran, Texas Lutheran and California Lutheran Universities and Midland Lutheran College have the term right out front—in their names. Luther College does the same—though one might worry whether people know the difference between Martin Luther and Martin Luther King. The names

of St. Olaf, Gustavus Adolphus, Muhlenberg, Wartburg, Wittenberg and Augsburg require even more sophisticated historical knowledge to get the connection. (I am not optimistic. In my high school years I once road the train through Northfield. A young woman across from me pointed to the buildings of Carleton College and told her seat mate, "That's St. Olaf's, it's a Catholic girls school." I figured she was wrong on so many points I didn't even try to correct her.) And then there are the two Augustana's and Concordia. I fear that relatively few insiders and hardly any outsiders would hear those names and quickly think "Lutheran."

To establish clear Lutheran identity, mission statements play a critical role. How does the college intentionally fit together its academic mission and its Lutheran connections? I examined the mission statements of our twenty-eight colleges. Colleges apparently have widely varying ideas of what a mission statement is and how long it should be. Some bear the rough marks of committee work and need polishing. Nevertheless, the survey was revealing. I paid attention to whether and how the church was mentioned in each mission statement. Here is a summary (Table One):

TABLE ONE: RELIGIOUS TERMS USED IN ELCA COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENTS
(Each college is listed according to the most specific term in its statement)

"Evangelical Lutheran Church in America"	8
"Lutheran"	9
"Christian," or "church"	5
"Judeo-Christian"	1
"faith," "spiritual," or "religious"	4
no reference	1

The mission statements have equally diverse ways to explain (or obscure) the nature of the connection between the college and the church. I tabulated the formulations in the seventeen that used the term Lutheran alone or in the phrase Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. (Table Two)

TABLE TWO: NATURE OF LINK IN THOSE THAT INCLUDE "LUTHERAN" OR "ELCA"
(Citing only the most specific language in each)

"college of the ELCA," etc	4
"related to," "affiliated with," "partnership with," etc	4
"education shall be in harmony with the Christian faith as taught by the ELCA." "intends to model...the Lutheran understanding of life," "Lutheran heritage of free inquiry"	3
"rooted in," "heritage," etc	4
"Lutheran institution," use of "Lutheran" only in the school name	2

To summarize: almost half the mission statements do not include either "Lutheran" or "Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.." Of the seventeen that do, six leave the term "Lutheran" un-explicated or use it as a reference to the past, with or without implications for the present. Eight mission statements use affiliation terms without further definition. Three make some kind of explicit connection between the mission of the college and Lutheran faith. In my opinion, only the eleven mission statements that fall into the latter two categories are adequate to establish an intentional, working Lutheran identity.

I serve on a college board and am not naive about the political challenge of altering a college mission statement. (I think I'll skip the faculty meeting that discusses this matter.) However, I think the effort would be worth making for most of our colleges. My reason is simple, if the Lutheran connection is not an explicit part of the mission statement, then I suspect it will not be taken seriously, will not be widely discussed and debated, and will not be a significant factor in hiring administrators and faculty or in tenure and promotion decisions. I do not think a mission statement needs to spell out the nature of the relationship between the college and Lutheranism. Of the models we have, I incline toward those that simply assert potential by using the preposition "of" or such terms as "affiliation" or "partnership." Such terms, I think will encourage discussion and reflection and to allow change and growth.

Mission statements are vital for internal identity. Marketing is similarly important for making the Lutheran link a matter of public importance. I checked a few of our college web sites. As are mission statements, web sites are diverse. Some have the Lutheran connection front and center on the home page. On others, it is virtually impossible (excuse the pun) to find any reference to the college's church connection. I wonder about the glitzy printed material that is sent out to prospective students. Is the Lutheran connection prominently mentioned? Have some colleges, or their marketing people, concluded that the Lutheran connection is a disadvantage to be kept a secret? Others seem to treat it as an asset. Why the difference? I argue that the connection is real, ought to be evident, and can be an asset. I contend that those who work with the college's public identity should aim to make it so.

Other interesting places to check on public identity are the notices of faculty positions and presidential searches. I argue for explicit assertion of the Lutheran affiliation in both places. The assertion should be followed directly with some of the arguments that make the affiliation an asset—a commitment to free inquiry, attention to vocation, concern for community discourse, etc—and by a welcome to all applicants who can embrace the college's mission.

What would an internal and external communication audit show about your college's intentional Lutheran identity? I think the ELCA expects it to be clear. This identity will be most beneficial when it is wrestled with and given concrete shape. That will not happen if the Lutheran link is kept secret.

MARK TWO: SIGNIFICANT LUTHERAN PRESENCE

Lutheranism understands itself to be a reforming movement within the whole church. Though key insights and normative teachings are seen as essential, Lutherans do not define church by doctrines or allegiances. The church is present where God is allowed to speak in human words and through the church's ritual meal and washing, Holy Communion and Baptism, which unite the community. Lutherans understand the church to be about relationships, about people. A Lutheran college will demonstrate a mission and ideas which could be called Lutheran, but there must also be a human presence to Lutheranism. Thus, in addition to having a public Lutheran identity, the ELCA expects to find a significant Lutheran presence on its college campuses. Several things are part of that presence:

Worship and witness that fit within (and stretch) the broad Lutheran tradition -- We do not want our colleges to see themselves fundamentally as agents of conversion or indoctrination, but our colleges must be places where members of the college community can count on hearing Lutheran proclamation of the gospel and where they can readily join gatherings to express faith through worship in Lutheran modes. Proclamation and worship should be well done by Lutheran standards. Those standards include the conviction that worship and proclamation should be open and welcoming.

Academic study of religion, including Lutheranism -- The academic curriculum should direct all students to consideration of religion, including Lutheran theology and history. Some understanding of the Christian tradition is an expectation for graduates. No student should graduate without encountering discussions of the Lutheran reasons for sponsoring liberal arts colleges and universities.

Campus presentations and dialogs that often include, but not in a privileged role, ELCA members who are in servant leadership roles outside the college.

Lutheran chaplain(s) or campus pastor(s) – These pastors should be members of the clergy or lay rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and reflect its statement of faith. It may often be appropriate to have chaplains of other denominations and faiths as well.

Administrators, faculty, students, and board members who self-consciously identify as Lutherans and hold a Lutheran view of higher education

Administrators, faculty, students, and board members who, though not Lutheran and perhaps not Christian, hold or come to hold a view of higher education closely compatible with Lutheran views and emphases

These last two expectations are complicated and difficult to define and put into practice, of course. I would not argue for Lutheran quotas, but I do think that each facet of the college community needs a significant number of Lutherans—not for logical or theological reasons but for practical ones—to help keep going the human conversation that the church expects.

Specifically, I think our colleges should regularly seek Lutheran presidents. The academic dean should fit into one of these two categories—be a Lutheran or hold compatible views. Such advocates for Lutheran understandings should be present in most if not all departments. (Were I wealthy, I would endow a few chairs for Lutherans in the sciences and economics.) Boards should have a preponderance of Lutherans in numbers and in influence. The conversation requires such personally invested participants.

Eschewing quotas, how would one achieve a significant Lutheran presence among administrators, faculty and students? Key factors, I think, are mission clarity, public identity, the assumption that mission will shape criteria for admission and for hiring, the assumption that mission will shape planning and strategies. Endowed professorships, research grants, targeted scholarships, and care in the selection of student admissions hosts can also be helpful.

I believe that the church expects each of its colleges to work continually at the questions of maintaining a strong Lutheran presence.

The first mark I cited was about intentional identity—mission. The second mark was about the presence of people with particular kinds of concerns and commitments. The six marks are qualities and activities this church expects to find at its colleges.

MARK THREE: CHRISTIAN FAITH AT EVERY TABLE

This mark can be stated much more briefly than the previous two, but it is broad and complex enough to stand as one way to summarize the task of a Lutheran college. Christian faith must always have a place at the table, every table. It should be an assumption at an ELCA college that insights and questions spawned by Christian faith can be welcomed in all discussions and forums.

Lutherans assert that all reality is within God's concern. However, Luther made an important distinction between two spheres of that concern. These are often called the two kingdoms, the two realms, or the left and right hand of God. The realm of the right is the religious, humanity's individual and collective trusting relationship with God. Here Scripture and Christian teaching are normative and have direct impact. The realm of the left includes the structures of governance and morals but also knowledge of people and the world in which we live. Here Christians can claim no special insight or privileged access to knowledge. Nor do Lutherans claim that they have any unique right to determine answers and outcomes on the basis of their faith. Even the institutional shape of the church is a matter of the left for Lutherans.

According to Luther's insights, all areas of academic study are matters of the left hand realm. Faith does not dictate content, method or conclusions for the academic life of Lutheran colleges. Lutherans do not believe that there is such a thing as Lutheran biology, Lutheran economics or Lutheran history. There is history of Lutherans and Lutheran theology, of course,

but Lutherans do not claim there is one particular way to do history--or theology or philosophy or chemistry or any other subject. Substitute "Christian" in each of those statements, and we still hold them true. There is no unique Christian content or method for physics, or business, or Russian literature.

Thus, this third mark of a Lutheran college is not an assertion about subject matter or approach. Rather, the church expects the questions and concerns of faith to be welcome in the college conversations about all matters. These questions and concerns will fit into the conversation in ways appropriate to the topic at hand.

MARK FOUR: FREEDOM OF INQUIRY

This mark is the necessary partner of the previous one, even its corollary. The two-realms approach means also that Lutheran colleges will value the liberal arts, the liberating arts. All matters are within the concern of God. Therefore our colleges will encourage active pursuit of any question or area of useful knowledge. Our colleges should be characterized by freedom of inquiry and its particular form, academic freedom. Martin Luther taught that the human has no freedom to create a relationship with God, but he taught with equal conviction that each person has full freedom and responsibility to make decisions for daily life, including communal decisions. Our colleges will seek faculty, curricula and programs to enable their students to think and learn free from constraining use of doctrine, history, group identity or other matters.

Freedom of inquiry is not merely freedom from various constraints. A moment ago I said that our colleges, "...encourage active pursuit of any question or area of useful knowledge." The usefulness of knowledge is determined by its impact on others. Consider Luther's oft-quoted words, "A Christian is perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all." Note, this expectation is not a prior constraint on study, but it is an expectation that the outcome of the whole endeavor will be the good of all. It is freedom for service.

The freedom sought and offered is not a disconnected autonomy. A Lutheran college community has many aspects but the central one will always be the endeavor of learning together, learning that truth is a shared reality. This means learning to discuss, to challenge, to change, to accept differences.

Lutherans understand that the world is a great gift and that it cannot be fully comprehended by any of us, nor is anyone wise enough to determine some questions or areas of study to be out of bounds. Our colleges should celebrate questions and teach people to think. This can only happen when community members are allowed freedom of inquiry and are urged to wrestle with the challenges of such freedom and the possibility of beneficial results.

MARK FIVE: COACHING TOWARD VOCATION

A commitment to vocation could have been included with the prior discussion of freedom from and freedom for, but it has more prominence in a Lutheran approach to higher education and deserves to be treated separately. Nearly all the ELCA colleges speak of service in their mission statements. There is a commendable consistency in this focus. Often the language is explicitly about service and references to service in the world are frequent. Surprisingly and regrettably, the traditional Lutheran term of *vocation* or *calling* is rarely used. I suspect that these terms will become more common in our college vocabulary, thanks to the generosity of the Lilly Endowment in handing out millions of dollars to support attention to vocation. The specific term is helpful because it implies service and direction but also places the summons outside the self. For the church, of course, the call comes from God. I am happy to defend and encourage that traditional Lutheran use on our campuses. However, I also think the concept of vocation translates well into non-religious categories. Even if our students do not have or want religious faith as a centering element in their lives, our colleges should intend that they be drawn out of themselves and toward the world. The language of vocation is useful here.

Let me tell you a story that is part of my family history and thus of my identity. When my dad was a senior at Augustana, Sioux Falls, he went to see his advisor, Professor Stanley Olsen of the philosophy and religion department. Dad told Professor Olsen he wanted to talk about going to seminary after college, as his older brother had done. At some point in the conversation, Dr. Olsen suspected that Dad had reservations about seminary and asked, "What would you really like to do?"

Dad said, "I'd like to go back and farm with my dad." Olsen's wise response was, "God needs Christian farmers too." I grew up with that story. It shaped my thinking about work. Not until I got to seminary did I discover that the story had a Lutheran name—vocation.

Our colleges need to be engaged in helping students discern where their gifts and joys meet the world's needs. We should promise college applicants that this will be part of the conversation in their years on campus. We need to encourage faculty, staff and administration to reflect on the callings of their own lives and do so openly.

Under this heading of vocational coaching, I would include and encourage the programs by which our colleges send students into inner cities, onto reservations, and around the world. We should not be surprised that Lutheran colleges rank disproportionately high in percentage studying abroad. Exposure to the world one doesn't know is vital for vocational clarity. I would advocate for strong requirements in foreign language and culture study also.

MARK SIX: GRAVITY AND GRACE

I find this mark hard to label and describe, but think it no less important for being elusive. I used "insouciance" to make the point originally. There must be freedom at a Lutheran college to look hard at the weighty questions of human existence. Students must be invited to passionate involvement in ideas and actions. And, on the other hand, the freedom must also allow people to laugh at their own pretensions, to rise from their falls, and to realize that learning is far too important to be taken as a somber matter. Community members need to experience the grace and joy of being accepted without condition.

Our colleges should nurture wonder and awe at what is, convictions about the value and worth of learning, and humility before the complexity and mystery of reality. The realities we call sin and saintliness must be faced and studied. Both evil and redemption are fit objects for study at a Lutheran college.

MARK SEVEN: NURTURED COMMUNITY

Lutheran colleges will conspicuously care about the quality of human community on campus. (I think they will also care about the community that links graduates back to the campus, and not only to make alumni feel good and generous. But, my point here is about campus community.) It is no coincidence that our colleges are mostly residential. We want to give students a full-spectrum experience of life together. Our colleges work hard to offer the same to any non-resident students. The colleges will nurture and insist on mutual respect. They will cultivate diversity and its appreciation. Shared involvement in academics, sports, the arts, religion, work, service and leisure is basic to Lutheran higher education.

Our colleges will make deliberate efforts to involve faculty, administrators and staff with students in community. Professors will be expected to know and value their students. Students will be expected to respect and appreciate faculty and to know and value those who serve them as custodians and other support staff. Character formation is a college goal, pursued though the college and larger communities

The boundaries of the college community will be porous. Links will be forged intentionally with the local community and the global community. Attention to the whole person and the whole world will not be cliches.

MARK EIGHT: EXCELLENCE BY ITS OWN STANDARDS

The final mark the ELCA seeks in its colleges is an appropriate excellence. The church looks for excellence according to the criteria above, criteria based on the college's mission. When evaluating or setting goals, it is easy to forget the mission and borrow standards from elsewhere. For example, for a Lutheran college, competitive admissions data, *per se*, are not a criterion for excellence. For a Lutheran college, faculty publications and levels of student research, *per se*, are not criteria for excellence. Any of these may be important secondary criteria, but the church expects its colleges to measure according to stated mission and, as I have already said, it expects that mission to reflect and be compatible with Christian convictions.

Those eight marks seem to me to be essential for a college of this church.

THE ELCA'S EXPECTATIONS OF ITSELF AS A CHURCH WITH COLLEGES

Fair is fair. Having talked long about the church's expectations of its colleges. I will conclude with brief comments about the reverse—what should the colleges expect from the ELCA?

First, I think the ELCA should be seen as a *commissioner* of colleges. We send our colleges into the world with a mission, a purpose congruent with the church's own mission. The church sees the mission of the colleges as part of its own mission. Thus an ELCA college should expect the church to fulfill its own mission. The church should expect mutual conversation with each college about that college's mission. When mission statements are formulated, the college should expect the ELCA to participate in the conversation, following whatever constitutional covenants each college has established for such matters.

Second, the ELCA should function in ways that allow each of its commissioned colleges to be both independent and closely related. The college is not the church. I think of the image of the parent who nurtures children in order that they may become independent adults and who yet hopes and intends that parent and mature child will remain bound together in ways that are important and beneficial for both parties.

Third, an ELCA college should expect the church to allow it freedom to adventure in learning. To push the family imagery, the church should expect that its colleges will be something like perpetual teenagers—adventurous, pushing the edges, always having some contingency in their respect for the commissioning church. The church should welcome such testing, even as it holds its collective breath about particular uses of freedom.

Fourth, the ELCA should expect to be a supporter and advocate for its colleges in many ways. Budgeted funds from the church should grow and not continue their decline. The church should likely do more to help the colleges encourage special gifts from individual members and congregations. We need to sustain our partnership for student recruitment. Since the ELCA wants to facilitate the presence of Lutherans on our faculties, it should offer support for talented Lutheran grads who could seek terminal degrees and strengthen the pool of faculty candidates. The ELCA should defend its colleges when they are criticized for things which are integral to their mission. For example, the church should defend academic freedom, even when the content of such freedom is troubling to church leaders or members.

Fifth, the ELCA should seek to exercise good stewardship of the graduates of our colleges and those who work there. The church is a beneficiary and ought to use those benefits wisely. Faculty contribute ideas and passion in many areas that concern the church. Graduates take on servant leader roles in congregations and the larger church. Colleges and their graduates critique and challenge the church and help keep it on track. These gifts should be acknowledged and put to work.

Sixth and finally, the colleges should expect the church to be true to its own mission, to adhere to its convictions, to be engaged in internal and external conversation about those convictions, and to be able to change convictions and practices when mission requires change. In that sense, the colleges should expect the church to be Lutheran.

I believe that the ELCA colleges and the ELCA as a whole have had and will have a mutually beneficial relationship. The work and image of the ELCA are enhanced when its colleges do their work well. The colleges will be more attractive and effective when their church demonstrates its love of learning and respect for education.

1. Pamela Schwandt, ed., *Called to Serve: St. Olaf and the Vocation of a Church College*, Northfield: St. Olaf College, 1999. This volume contains many excellent pieces of general interest for those who care about Lutheran colleges. I commend particularly Darrel Jodock's essay "The Lutheran Tradition and the Liberal Arts College: How Are They Related?" 13-36, and Mark Edward's essay "Called to Serve," 215-230.

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WELCOME STRANGERS

Gregg Muilenburg

THREE PRAYERS FOR THREE SOULS

I am a bow in your hands, Lord. Draw me lest I rot.
Do not overdraw me, Lord. I shall break.
Over draw me, Lord, and who cares if I break.

Nikos Kazantzakis
Report to Greco

INTRODUCTION

The topic of this discussion is well introduced by the question, "How can we make non-Lutherans more welcome at Lutheran colleges and universities? This topic was offered to me with the proviso that it was only a suggestion and I was free to alter it any way I desired. In point of fact I had every intention of abandoning it as soon as I could come up with a good reason for doing so. After all, my expertise in the area is exhausted by the fact that I am a non-Lutheran at a Lutheran institution. Still, I never came up with that good reason. In fact I found that once one gets beneath the public relations and human resources surface, this question presents a formidable challenge to institutional identity. That may not be immediately apparent. We need to take the question apart.

First of all, the question intimates, not very subtly I might add, that non-Lutherans are not welcome enough at Lutheran colleges. I am in no position to speak for any institution other than my own, but I have a strong suspicion that the intimation is correct. A great deal, of course, hangs on the meaning one attaches to the notion of being welcome. Care must be used in defining this term to ensure that one neither trivializes nor mystifies the question it poses. I shall be arguing for a particular way of understanding and defining the term, a way that I believe avoids these pitfalls; but it is by no means the only way to do so.

Secondly, I should like to restrict my remarks to the issues surrounding faculty members' sense of being welcomed. Obviously no less significant issues surround the sense of welcome felt by staff and students. Students are probably the most important and complicated of the three groups, as the well being of tuition dependent colleges is directly tied to such things as enrollment growth and retention rates. Welcomed students are a given in any successful educational experience. Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to argue so, I strongly suspect that the results for the case of faculty could be generalized, *mutatis mutandis* to the cases of staff and students as well.

Finally, my concern is not with all Lutheran colleges and universities but with those that are intent for whatever reason to maintain their Lutheran "character." I will be the first to admit that I have no criteria necessary and sufficient for distinguishing this subset of Lutheran institutions. There are, however, several traits and policies that mark something like a family resemblance that they share. These institutions tend to have closer relationships with their supporting synods. They tend to be led by people of the clergy. They tend to assess the composition of their faculty in terms of some notion of a "critical mass" of professed Lutherans. They tend to favor Lutheran candidates in hiring, though not necessarily in tenure and promotion decisions. They conduct worship services with varying degrees of regularity. And they will occasionally, either formally or informally, refer to themselves as either "a college of the church" or "church-related." This latter trait is often used to mark fine-grained distinctions within Lutheran higher education. Such distinctions are often based on historical roots and denominational mergers rapidly fading from memory. So also the distinctions are rapidly losing their usefulness to all but church historians.

It is not particularly important to my case that this impressionistic picture of Lutheran self-conscious institutions is perfectly accurate. A family resemblance will do. What is important is that we ask our initial question with these sorts of institutions

in mind. Without some significant degree of commitment to Lutheran character, an institution's responsibility to be welcoming does not extend very far beyond civility and helpfulness. It is straightforward and comparatively easy, as it involves no significant relationship to the identity of the institution. But when an institution is overt about its Lutheran character and covetous of its traditions, the question becomes an interesting and challenging one.

FACULTY IDENTITY AND INSTITUTIONAL FIT

It is a daunting task to even imagine what makes a non-Lutheran faculty member feel welcome and comfortable in the context of a Lutheran college of the church. After all, comfort would seem to be among the most personal and relative of human values. Very often one of the most surprising responses we encounter in our concourse with colleagues and family is the objection that someone is not comfortable with a statement we have made or practice we have followed. Sources of discomfort are apparently deeply held and rarely disclosed. Consequently, they are difficult to analyze. The restrictions posed in the preceding section, however, offer some hope. Comfort, as we are considering it here, is not a matter of civility or helpfulness—it is not a smile or a dinner invitation. It is more subtle and basic than that. It has to do with being outside of an important institutional commitment and wanting to be a part of it, or at the very least, to be related to it in a meaningful way. In addition, it is imperative that this relationship be structured in a way that preserves integrity and honors personal principles. But how are we to have both institutional commitment and personal integrity in the case of those who do not share the institutions central values. Moreover, this ostensibly dilemmatic situation is not incidental to the identity of self-consciously Lutheran colleges but integral to it. The need to be more welcoming to non-Lutherans issues from the nature of these colleges. It will come as no surprise, therefore, that the proper response to this challenge and need is an invitation—a surprising invitation, it would seem. What is needed to make non-Lutheran faculty feel welcome at Lutheran institutions is an invitation to actively participate in the **central religious project** of the college.

Aristotle taught us that the goal of an organism cannot be understood apart from its function. And its function cannot be understood apart from its nature. Basic lessons perhaps, but lessons often neglected. Faculty members are highly educated, aggressive, ambitious intellectuals. They can be conventional or radical, creative or plodding, reclusive or gregarious; but they are rarely avaricious and almost always dutiful. They take responsibilities seriously and often see responsibilities where others do not. Without these qualities they would not have PhD's and would not hold professorships. Consequently when a faculty member assumes a new post, it is with a complicated mix of hopes, and responsibilities that she or he does so. We feel a responsibility to our disciplines and hope to make significant contributions to their scholarly activity. We feel a responsibility to our departments and hope to be good colleagues and dedicated teachers. We also feel a responsibility to our institutions and hope to further their missions in whatever way we can. All of this is well and good when the institutional missions are vaguely coincidental with our own ambitions and expertise. It is problematic, however, when the mission of the institution draws upon a tradition and a set of commitments that are not shared by the faculty member. These situations arise predominantly in church related colleges and universities, so the issues predictably involve religious belief at best and church dogma at worst. Dutiful faculty will see their obligation to the religious mission of the college while at the same time they will feel the acute need to be one thing—to preserve their integrity.

On the other end of the spectrum, the self-conscious Lutheran institution is concerned to further its mission as a college of the church. That mission is diverse, too diverse by some lights. It includes educating students in the most accomplished way possible; relating effectively and faithfully to a constituency of donors and supporters; contributing to the growth of knowledge through research and development; and maintaining a robust Lutheran identity. Not much digging is required to appreciate the potential for conflict that lies close by the surface of this landscape. A provincial understanding of Lutheran identity may qualify and downsize research projects making them "safe for Lutherans," as the saying goes. An extensive and energetic research program may very well cause ill ease among the constituency who have found comfort in easy dichotomies such as the sacred and the secular. So also, an accomplished education will require that students question their traditions and open themselves up to the possibility of adopting the traditions of others. This goal is often pursued by welcoming the most diverse body of students possible, establishing educational missions in other cultures and encouraging study abroad. All these can be threats to an institution's identity if they are not pursued in a proper fashion. The threat is "temporary and remediable" to some extent in the case of students and programs. The situation is more difficult in the case of faculty. An institution's commitment to a faculty member is for a considerably longer period of time, very often for the length of a career.

It is also the product of a logically heroic prediction that faculty attitude and behavior will, thirty years hence, mirror attitude and behavior evidenced during the first six years at the institution. Consequently, institutions that are self-conscious about their Lutheran identity are cautious in hiring new faculty. Such caution may be justified by the landscape just described; but it may also be seen as alienating, meddling and suspicious. Allow me an example from my own institution.

At Concordia the process of hiring is referred to as finding "the Concordia fit." All that is involved in "the fit" is not clear to me, even after 25 years. But in a genuine attempt to be forthright, every candidate is asked to respond to a boilerplate consisting of three questions. The third question gets to the heart of the issue and reads as follows:

One criterion for teaching at Concordia is sympathy with the mission of the college. To be in sympathy with the basic character and aims of the college means to demonstrate active rather than passive support of its purposes and to uphold and nurture the Christian values and beliefs on which the college is founded. From your perspective, how do you believe you would contribute to the college's mission?

Now, even if one is philosophically inclined, and even if one believes there is a difference between active and passive sympathy, and even if one believes one can make a contribution to the college's mission, what is abundantly clear is that you will not be able to contribute *from your perspective*. The whole point of the exercise, the cynic might argue, is to divine the perspective of the college and speak energetically from it. In other words, the name of the game is *Get the Fit*. Whether one gets it or not, the essay is not very welcoming and makes it very clear that you must be altered in order to fit.

I seriously doubt that Concordia is alone in this rather clumsy attempt to preserve its identity. The end is not so much the problem as the means. One might quibble over verb choice and suggest that sustaining or fostering the identity of the church-related college are more appropriate notions than preserving, but it seems right that colleges of the church attempt to do this. The real question is whether or not this "fitting" relation is sufficient for the task. I believe it is not. Here the verb choice makes a difference. If the goal of a Lutheran institution is to preserve an identity somewhat like the preserving of a pickle, then looking for institutional fits is fine. That will not, however, readily sustain an identity in a rapidly changing culture. Nor will it serve to encourage the development of a vibrant new Lutheran identity from the roots of a valued tradition. I really do not think that there is very much choice in this matter, as I have little confidence that the notion of preserving an identity is even conceptually cogent. An identity must be sustained and developed and the notion of an institutional fit is ill fitted to that task.

So the situation is roughly this: Faculty will most often feel welcome in a church related institution by being able to participate in a significant but non-hypocritical way in the religious identity and mission of the college. Self-conscious religious colleges want their institutions to be welcome to all but do not want to sacrifice their identity to do so. Lacking any more manageable notion of identity than preservation, they envisioned no more creative notion of welcoming than institutional fit. With the adoption of the more dynamic notions of developing identities comes the need for an insightful notion of what it is to belong and participate in the religious identity and mission of the college. I think there is such a notion, but since it comes from a rather unlikely source, it will take a little explaining.

WELCOMED FACULTY: BELONGING TO THE PROJECT

A debate about the relationship of faith and reason is a natural focal point of institutional identity and central to the mission any self-conscious college of the church. Any non-Lutheran faculty member that is genuinely welcomed to such an institution will be utilized as a valuable part of the debate. Other roles will also be important to a robust sense of welcome, but none more important than this. In my experience, however, these discussions are often very provincial and non-inclusive, employing a language and argument pattern available only to the initiates. Clearly such institutionalized discussions will not provide ease of entry for the non-Lutheran. There is, however, a more welcoming model of the relationship of faith and reason to be found in the writings of the Cretan novelist Nikos Kazantzakis.

A careful reading of Kazantzakis' works will impress even the tyro with the depth of his religiosity. He may have been heterodox but he was never indifferent. He was heterodoxical because he could not be indifferent to religion. Kazantzakis

denied that he was a religious man but hoped he was a *profoundly religious* one. Religion is about comfort and reward. Profound religion is about struggle. It is following “the bloody trail”, “the thin red line of ascent”, as he so often described it. The roots of the struggle are everywhere but nowhere more evidently placed than in the lives of profoundly religious people.

The profoundly religious person, God’s struggler, is marked by three traits.¹ First of all, such a person is committed to the truth—the truth about the world, about ourselves, and the truth about God. This truth is uncomfortable and it cannot be made more palatable by fashioning accommodating lies or self-satisfying idols. Knowing the truth is dangerous and it produces wounds, the wounds of doubt, as Kazantzakis calls them. In his own case these wounds were suffered in adolescence upon discovering that the earth is not the center of the universe and that humans are not the crowns of creation, the darlings of God.

The first secret, the truly terrible one, was that the earth, contrary to our belief, is not the center of the universe. Our planet is nothing but a small and insignificant star indifferently tossed into the galaxy, and it slavishly circles the sun....The royal crown had tumbled from the head of the Earth, our mother.

I was overcome with bitterness and indignation. Together with our mother, we too had fallen from our place of precedence in heaven.... In short, what was this fairy tale our teachers had shamelessly prated about until now—that God supposedly created the sun and the moon as ornaments for the earth, and hung the starry heavens above as a chandelier to give us light.

This was the first wound. The second was that man is not God’s darling, his privileged creature. The Lord God did not breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, did not give him an immortal soul. ...If you scratch our hide a little, if you scratch our soul a little, beneath it you will find our grandmother the monkey.²

The truth may ultimately set you free but first it produces conflict in your life. This conflict is genuine and clearly the result of taking seriously one’s commitment to the truth. These wounds are intellectual in character but they are all the more grievous for that fact. They are never healed, they always fester yet they must be ignored in order to continue the struggle. They remain and they constantly draw our attention, but they cannot divert our will.

Secondly, the profoundly religious person is committed to the power of the spirit. This commitment is evident in the struggle to put faith into knowledge. Faith put into knowledge does not heal the wounds. That would replace knowledge with easy religion, an all too common mistake. Faith is rather the will to struggle despite the wounds and to believe in the power of the spiritual to transform knowledge into understanding, which might be characterized as the wedding of knowledge to proper action. This relationship of struggling is difficult to describe in the language of knowledge and it is trivialized in the ossified language of religion. Consequently, one must employ art. Only art, the creation of images, metaphors and myths can point to the struggle and inspire us to fight on. This then is the third mark of the profoundly religious person. Such a person understands the necessity of myth or systems of metaphors, in bringing faith into reason, or in transforming flesh into spirit by the process Kazantzakis called *metousiosis* or transubstantiation. We need to recognize this process, I would suggest, as a very different, even profoundly model of the relationship of faith and reason.

That the relationship between faith and reason is properly seen as a struggle may at first blush appear commonplace. Of course it is a struggle, that is why we are still discussing it and differentiating ourselves by the positions we take in it and the results we bring from it. But that commonplace is directly antithetical to Kazantzakis’ position. The relationship between faith and reason is not a struggle that is resolved by a theory triumphant—no matter which denominational ly sanctioned theory one extols. Championing the virtues of the systematic integration of faith and learning, or the dynamic tension between the two kingdoms of God, or the doxastic character of the life of faith, is like preaching to a bloodless choir. Living the life of faithful reason is not a matter of mastering a creed, adopting a contentious simplification or sleep stumbling through a series of “Jesus-encounters.” Kazantzakis believes it is a battle; a battle that we hope, but cannot know that we will win; a battle wherein winning amounts to reporting that one has fought the good fight, never flagging despite many

wounds.

Now Kazantzakis' language of battles and wounds may be rather too idiosyncratically Cretan for those of us who have not experienced centuries of occupation and oppression. But it would be wrong to miss the message for the messenger. The relationship between faith and reason and the debate about its understanding have become rigidly fixed in our traditions and codified by our institutions. We have replaced an organism with a fossil and mistaken a process for a product. Our efforts have gone into marketing and validating the premature and shabby products of a cursory investigation while they should have been directed toward invigorating the investigation. We may want to understand the struggle in different images than those of wounds and battles, but the contention that it is a process, a constant struggle is ultimately liberating.

Kazantzakis insisted that a struggle is only so noble as its participants. A cheap Tertullian-like victory for faith is no victory worth having. Consequently, the debate over the relationship between faith and reason, which is central to the religious identity of a college is ennobled by strengthening our commitment to the truth, by our renewing our commitment to the power of the spirit to transubstantiate knowledge into understanding and by improving our ability to animate our beliefs in myths and images. All of the marks of the profoundly religious need our attention. It seems to me that we do not strengthen and renew for the battle unless we are made to deeply feel the wounds of truth and genuinely trust the power of faith. But the more grievous the wounds are the more important the struggle will be. Those who conduct the struggle differently from us can help us. Non-Lutherans are essential to continuing the struggle. They help us see with our eyes and hear with our ears the truth about the world and ourselves—truths that may have been comfortably avoided or institutionally domesticated. They help us see the transubstantiating power of spirit where we may only see ritualized activity. And clearly they play a great role in showing Lutherans that there are many ways to utilize myths, metaphors and images in the pursuit of *metousiosis*.

To briefly recapitulate: It seems to me, therefore, that if the proper understanding of the relationship of faith and reason is most perspicuously expressed as a struggle, and if that struggle is central to the Lutheran identity of educational institutions, then non-Lutherans will feel welcomed in Lutheran institutions in direct proportion to their being encouraged to join the struggle as valuable and active participants. It is important to remember that Kazantzakis perceived the struggle as having no preconceived end, no winning or losing, only struggling. In the closing pages of *Report to Greco*, he reports on his own life.

All wood is from the true cross because all wood can be made into a cross. Similarly, all bodies are sacred because all bodies can be made into a bow. My entire life I was a bow in merciless, insatiable hands. How often those invisible hands drew and overdrew the bow until I heard a creak at the breaking point! "Let it break," I cried each time. After all you had commanded me to choose [which prayer I would make] grandfather, and I chose.

I chose. Now the twilight casts its haze upon the hilltops. The shadows have lengthened, the air has filled with the dead. The battle is drawing to a close. Did I win or lose? The only thing I know is this: I am filled of wounds and still standing on my feet.

Full of wounds, all in the breast. I did what I could, just as you directed. I did not want you to feel ashamed of me. Now that the battle is over I come to rest at your side....³

His report is given, but there is no intimation that the process of spiritualizing matter is complete; correspondingly there is no point when we can say we have successfully related faith to reason. We often speak as if Luther or Calvin or St. Thomas solved the problem leaving only the task of indoctrinating the workers. If the argument presented here is correct the task is impossible to complete. The path, which it will follow, is not known. All who are willing to engage in the struggle, to toil on the project are welcome. Even strangers. Especially strangers. These strangers can help all of us stay committed to the truth about the world, stay open to the many ways of spiritualizing matter (of "driving" faith into reason) and expressing our hopes and fears in motivating myths and metaphors. What better welcome could there be than participating as a prized member of a group working at something so central to the identity of the college. This should be the end of the story. We have found a significant welcome for non-Lutherans. But it isn't the end of the story for two reasons.

WELCOMED FACULTY: SAFEGUARDING THE STRUGGLE

If non-Lutheran faculty are to feel welcome in self-consciously Lutheran colleges and universities, welcome to perform the essential function of generating authentic inquiry and debate from a perspective outside of the tradition, there must be an institutional commitment to the faith and reason struggle. That means that institutions must acknowledge the recurrent and indeterminate nature of the struggle. That can be a very intimidating step for even the most confident institution. I have tried to present an initial set of arguments for the benefits of such a commitment, but there is a great deal more to be done. Kazantzakis' model of the life of struggle needs to be made more pointed by being particularized to individual colleges and traditions. If the model is worthwhile, the particularization will be rewarding work.

The second reason is closely related to the first but much more extensively documented. If it is intimidating for institutions to make this commitment, it is even more intimidating for a faculty member to perform this role in the context of a tradition that is not shared with the institution. The only way the struggle can be safeguarded is with the strongest possible affirmation of academic freedom. There has been a disturbing and relatively widespread trend in religious institutions to label academic freedom a secular value and therefore subsumable under a higher set of sacred values. This situation is inimical to all that has been proposed here. Not only does it make the struggle impossible, since it does not encourage the strong commitment to the truth essential to the model of faith and reason, there is ample evidence that it has disastrous effect in religious institutions of higher education. It is, in the last analysis, a matter of respect for the intellectual life. Martha Nussbaum in *Cultivating Humanity* sums up her study of Notre Dame and Brigham Young:

The examples of Notre Dame and BYU challenge the claim that religious institutions of higher education are in peril *because* they have followed the norms of academic freedom and merit-based promotion that are current in the secular academy. In fact they are in peril to the extent that they *do not do so*. ...Notre Dame is vital, and able to attract fine young Catholic scholars away from secular universities, precisely because it respects their minds and gives them freedom, following both Jesus and Socrates. ...The Mormon commitment to education and to the arts, long a great strength of the Latter-Day Saints is in jeopardy—*precisely because* standards of freedom that are derided in some quarters as “liberal” and “secular” have not been taken seriously enough as essential elements of human respect in a democratic society.⁴

I do not believe that the situation Nussbaum describes is particular to research institutions. The same peril exists in liberal arts colleges. The most important task of an institution intent on fostering a vibrant identity with an engaged and loyal faculty is an unswerving devotion to academic freedom. Hospitality and survival both depend upon it.

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¹ A similar point is to be found in Darren J. N. Middleton and Peter Bien “Spiritual Levendia: Kazantzakis’s Theology of Struggle,” in *God’s Struggler: Religion in the Writings of Nikos Kazantzakis*, Middleton and Bien (eds.) (Macon: Mercer University Press), 8.

² Nikos Kazantzakis, *Report to Greco* trans. P.A. Bein (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), 115.

³ *Ibid.*, 512.

⁴ Martha C. Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in the Liberal Education* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 291.

DRUNKS IN A MIDNIGHT CHOIR

Kevin Griffith

The flasks clink under our red silk robes.
Oh God, forgive us for the off-key notes,
the harmonies so far from kilter they punch holes
in the midnight sky, your endless dark coat.

Oh, God, forgive us for the off-key notes.
It's hard to fight the shakes, the bitter cold
in the midnight sky, your endless dark coat.
We should be sent packing, truth be told,

but it's hard to fight the shakes, the bitter cold.
We mangle the words: *mudder* and *chile*.
We should be sent packing, truth be told,
But it's the season to forgive what's vile.

We mangle the words: *mudder* and *chile*.
The whisky dulls us. A grindstone gone bad.
But it's the season to forgive what's vile.
Even wise men praise the humble and make glad.

And so, in spite of our breath, our trembling hands,
the harmonies so far from kilter they punch holes
in the night, we offer our songs. Our music stands.
And the flasks clink under our red silk robes.

THE ETIOLOGY OF ESCHATOLOGY

Kevin Griffith

Or vice-versa. What comes around goes around
and so it goes. Everyone knows that when
the last night's bright trumpet sounds for the final time,

such great darkness is only a prelude to the longest
dawn, a clock strike that begets a new round of blinding light,
of oceans stretching beyond the scope of the mind's iris,

gardens rich with trees so heavy with burst fruit
that all the newly handmade animals will grow fat
waiting for caretakers to slap a name on them.

And then, when one lousy mistake gets made, as they
always do in their own passive-voiced way, the world
will begin its great downhill slide once again, and all

the dark-robed cryptologists who haven't yet gone mad
with trying, will fret over the end of everything once again,
decoding the frail pages of books heavy with nothing more

than what they intended. Yes, once everyone has solved
the great conundrum of the world's possible last song
and dance, time will have already smacked them

with its grand goodnight kiss, the stars will have given
their last call, the universe will have locked
the door on its way out, and the big man will hit rewind.

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THE IDENTITY, MISSION, VISION, AND GOALS OF A LUTHERAN COLLEGE VIS À VIS BACON'S "OF STUDIES" AND NEWMAN'S *THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY*

Mary Theresa Hall
Cora Lazor

Thiel College, established in western Pennsylvania in 1866 as a co-educational institution, is located at the crossroads of the nation's mid-Atlantic and mid-Western regions. This particular geographical placement underscores the principle of intersection that is quite prevalent at Thiel College, from the intersecting of the general education requirements to form "integrative requirements" to the cross-disciplinary philosophy that permeates its course of studies.

Teaching and studying at an institution of higher education that values such intersections and integrations and that is oftentimes at a crossroads as it responds to the needs of our fluid times are vocations that are both challenging and gratifying. How does a liberal arts college in the Lutheran tradition maintain a strong foothold in its academic heritage while it simultaneously provides for its students "an education with relevance for a lifetime" as it educates them in the liberal arts and professional studies "for service to society"?

The co-authors of this article—one an Associate Professor of English and the other a student of junior status with a dual major in English and Religious Studies who worked as a Summer Intern (2002) at the Division for Higher Education and Schools of the ELCA in Chicago, Illinois—thought it would be challenging to pose this question by considering the intersection of two classical literary pieces—Sir Francis Bacon's essay "Of Studies" and John Henry Cardinal Newman's *The Idea of a University*—with the statements of Identity, Mission, Vision, and Goals of Thiel College.

This article was inspired by discussion generated in two English survey courses taught by Dr. Hall: British Literature to Romanticism, and British Literature from 1798 to the present. In an attempt to make relevant and pertinent the literary selections to the students' personal lives, career goals, and the mission of their College, she asked the students to do a comparative study of the Identity, Mission, Vision, and Goals Statements found in the academic catalogue and Bacon's essay "Of Studies" in the fall 2001 semester and Newman's *Idea of a University* in the spring 2002 semester. The results of this "assignment" and the students' insightful treatment of this intertextual analysis form the basis of this article. While this is, admittedly, an ambitious undertaking, we wish to share with the academic communities of the ELCA how select passages of these two literary works, written in the 17th and 19th centuries, respectively, underscore the relevance of our College's mission and perhaps invite our readers to consider such intersections in their own institutions.

THIEL COLLEGE'S STATEMENT OF MISSION

Informed by its historic tradition, Thiel College's mission is to develop through exemplary education all aspects of the human character—the intellectual, the personal, the moral, and the religious—so that lives inspired by truth and freedom may be committed to service in the world.

(All quotes from the Thiel College's Statements of Identity, Mission, Vision, and Goals are excerpted from the *Thiel College Academic Catalog 2001-2002*; all quotes from Bacon's "Of Studies" and Newman's *The Idea of a University* are excerpted from *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vols. 1 and 2, 7th eds., 2000.)

Seventeenth-century England saw writers and scientists who developed new models of expression and experimentation that focused on real people and their actual contemporary world, and that analyzed both of these subjects. Not unlike writers of our own time, the 17th-century writers sought methods to express the diverse ways by which people were appropriating responses to events in their own personal and public lives. Prose writing rivaled poetry as the dominant form of literary

expression. Regarded as the primary philosopher of inductive and deductive reasoning and empiricism, Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626) wrote in the essay genre; unlike the French essayist Montaigne, however, Bacon wrote essays that were not intimate or personal confessions but were treatises that provided methods for and insights into a radical reform of knowledge.

When considered in conjunction with Thiel College's Mission Statement, Bacon's 1625 version of his essay "Of Studies" provides the *modus operandi* of an education that seeks to develop "all aspects of the human character" by grounding this education in reading and study habits. Bacon provides a "how-to" methodology for reading and studying: "Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and then discourse, but to weigh and consider"(1542). For an age such as ours—not totally unlike the 17th century—where people tend to argue for the sake of arguing and confronting, Bacon proffers weighing and considering the matter placed in front of us in a manner that "stimulate[s] students' critical thinking" ("Statement of Vision of Thiel College," 9). As educators, we often expect quick, immediate responses to our questions and assignments and equate such immediacy with student preparedness and intellectual acumen. By reorienting our pedagogical expectations to encouraging responses that are more carefully and critically considered, we instill in students the value of cogent and thoughtful deliberation.

The May 2002 issue of the *PMLA* (*Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*) contained an article by Azade Seyhan, the Fairbank Professor in the Humanities, professor of German and comparative literature and adjunct professor in philosophy at Bryn Mawr College, titled "Why Major in Literature—What Do We Tell Our Students?" Therein, Professor Seyhan convincingly argues that it is the responsibility of English and language professors to be cognizant of the ramifications and import of cultural history on the educational system and to communicate that to our students. She states:

[I]n an age marked by profound skepticism about the value of the humanities and by the rapid corporatization of universities, where only departments offering majors that guarantee profitable careers are generously funded, our efforts to promote literature as a legitimate field of inquiry ring inevitably apologetic. Universities are not immune to the cultural climate in which they exist. Historically, they have resisted the forces of repression, ignorance, and greed and profit. But they have now become a part of the corporate culture that does not consider promoting critical thought and intellectual awareness its first priority. We are enamored with the Internet, which has rendered the need for reflective reading and research obsolete and collapsed all temporal and analytic categories of knowledge into an unedited mass of simultaneous images. In this culture, students are likely to consider the time and effort necessary for reading serious books onerous and unnecessary. (*PMLA* 117:3; 511)

Our integrative and major/minor courses at Thiel are rooted in fashioning students to become well equipped for the vagaries of the current culture. The focus of our mission --our *raison d'être*--is a commitment "to service in the world." A life of service equates with discernment, a critical appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses, pros and cons of each circumstance and argument. A student who is equipped with such skills of weighing and balancing is considered by today's standards to be innovative and entrepreneurial. A spirit of contradiction, naiveté, vulnerability, fallacious argumentation, and empty discourse is antithetical to professional and academic advantage and inhibits development of social considerations. Since our Vision and Goal statements address our commitment "to celebrate personal and professional achievement," one of the greatest values our students can acquire during their course of studies is that of discernment, of "reviewing and evaluating," of "perceiv[ing] and choos[ing] among those things which are of value" ("The Goals of Thiel College," 10). In Bacon's apprehension, "Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them, for they teach not their own use; but that [the knowledge of how to use them] is a wisdom...won by observation" ("Of Studies," 1541-42). Bacon laid the foundation for developmental psychology's thesis that a college community learns sequentially—how to study, how to interact, and how to become "knowledgeable and responsible citizens for dedicated service to humanity and enlightened care for the environment" ("Statement of Vision of Thiel College," 9).

Bacon's claim that studies "perfect nature and are perfected by experience" ("Of Studies," 1541) is underwritten in our study abroad, internships, and student-teaching experiences whereby students incorporate and intersect academic training and classroom diligence with professional competence and personal potential. Even for students whose course of studies may not directly lend themselves to such off-campus experiences, our Integrative (or General Studies) Requirements, strongly situated in the liberal arts tradition, "seek to foster in students an integrative world view" ("The Goals of Thiel College," 10)

that includes studies in both Western and non-Western civilizations and that aims to provide experiences that give direction to studies themselves. Bacon believed that “natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience” (“Of Studies,” 1541). Grounded in the Judeo-Christian tradition and inculcating in students a purposive and meaningful values system, Thiel College gives students the tools to build the intersection between the “already” and “not yet.” Its holistic curriculum highlights ten institutional objectives, each of which “expresses an intended result of the student’s participation in the Thiel College community, to be achieved through systematic training and disciplined study.” They include: a.) intellectual rigor; b.) problem-solving; c.) imaginative sensitivity; d.) socio-cultural awareness; e.) historical perspective; f.) environmental responsibility; g.) individual and social maturation; h.) a humane commitment to life; i.) physical development; and j.) religious awareness and growth (“The Objectives of Thiel College,” 10-11). Courses in each discipline at Thiel—the humanities, natural sciences, social sciences, fine and performing arts, and business—address at varying levels of intensity and skill expectation these categories of focus in an attempt “to educate the whole person.” Correspondingly, Bacon states, “There is no stond or impediment in the wit but may be wrought out by fit studies, like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises.... Histories make men wise; poets, witty [clever]; the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy [science], deep; moral philosophy, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend. *Abeunt studia in mores*” (“Studies culminate in manners”) (“Of Studies,” 1542; quoted from Ovid’s *Heroides*), or, as the curriculum at Thiel College translates:

Through liberal arts education, Thiel College seeks to develop in students the skills, social awareness, and intellectual capabilities necessary to succeed in a variety of occupational fields.... Such values and skills equip individuals to re-examine and adapt their values as changes in the world and in themselves demand. (“The Goals of Thiel College,” 10)

Our faculty recently approved for implementation in the 2003-2004 academic year a Writing-Intensive Course requirement that will integrate and strengthen the reading, writing, and oral communication skills of students in a cross-disciplinary way. Rather than limiting the acquisition and refinement of such skills to English or Communication courses, the faculty acted upon a need, made relevant by our global age, to demonstrate the intersection of these skills. Once again, we are reminded of Bacon’s words in “Of Studies”: “Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man” (1542). (In order to maintain the integrity of the original text, the co-authors of this article maintain the use of “man” in citing from these classical pieces.) In order to fulfill the graduation requirements, students meet competency requirements in the English language, a foreign language, mathematics and an Integrative Requirement that consists of courses from five Groups: Commitment in the Global Arena; Commitment to a Humanistic Vision; Citizenship in a Scientific Age; Choosing Depth and Diversity; and Concern for Physical Well-Being (“General Requirements,” 47-49). By taking designated courses within each Group, students will now also be able to meet the Writing-Intensive Curriculum requirement and demonstrate to potential employers one of the primary requisites for success: an ability to see the interrelatedness of life, a skill with which the liberal arts college readily equips its students.

As a student at Thiel College, I find the Identity, Mission, Vision, and Goals to correspond with the educational experience necessary to serve any of my vocational pursuits. Moreover, I discovered this past semester that reading, critiquing, and discussing Cardinal Newman’s *Idea of a University* enabled my classmates and me to find a practical and reasonable explanation for the value of a liberal arts education.

As stated in “The Goals of Thiel College,” one of the institution’s main purposes is to produce students who are able to “succeed in a variety of occupational fields” (10). My experiences as a lifelong Lutheran, currently working as the summer intern for the ELCA’s Division for Higher Education and Schools, allow me to recognize that the idea of vocation replaces any pursuit for a “career” or “job.” And through my studies at an ELCA institution and internship at the churchwide office, I have witnessed how Lutheran higher education permeates the vocational intent of its students. Similarly, in *The Idea of a University*, Cardinal Newman disagrees with the benefit of specific career training alone.

John Henry Cardinal Newman (1801-1890) wrote powerfully and prolifically on behalf of academic freedom, especially the value of a liberal arts education at a time when science and industrialism were questioning the usefulness of the humanist education established by the Renaissance. His essays, lectures, and book *The Idea of a University* are classic statements of

the value of a liberal education rather than technical training.

The purpose of *The Idea of a University* is to reveal “how a liberal education is truly and fully a useful” education (1124). Therefore, Newman continues this literary work to establish that “useful” refers to “not what is simply good, but what *tends* to good, or is the *instrument* of good” (1124). Cardinal Newman reinforces this with his argument against the pedagogical theory that education should be “confined to some particular and narrow end, and should issue in some definite work, which can be weighed and measured” (1124). After all, “good” has a variety of means and ends.

In a generation that has the potential to make a plethora of career changes and fulfill a variety of employment needs, specific skills and professions can limit prospective vocations. While writing this article, I find myself in the midst of a project that corresponds with Cardinal Newman’s ideas. During my internship, one of my tasks is to compile all of the majors, programs, and degrees offered at the 28 ELCA colleges and universities, as well as the campus ministry services and varsity athletics. After hours of searching college web sites, my research has revealed that an abundance of vocational opportunities are available to students of Lutheran higher education. However, the vocational preparation at ELCA colleges does not stop with classroom education. The extracurricular organizations and activities offered at ELCA institutions provide a variety of ways to be an “instrument of good.”

While my research revealed an abundance of majors, it revealed just as many campus ministry and athletic opportunities. During my two years at Thiel, I have participated in a variety of organizations. My involvement in Lutheran Student Movement, both on campus and at a regional level, has allowed me to meet a diverse group of people who share a similar faith, and has provided opportunity to better understand my own faith and value system, or as “The Objectives of Thiel College” state, “be encouraged and supported in developing an informed religious faith” (11). By serving as a student representative on the All-Campus Faith and Life Committee, I have a voice in the decisions regarding the faith life of the Thiel community, and the recently started pre-seminary group has provided more discernment opportunities than any religion class could offer. “The Goals of Thiel College” correspondingly acknowledge that “Thiel College believes that the formulation of a meaningful value-system presupposes the ability to perceive and choose among those things which are of value” (9), or as Newman states, “gives a man a clear conscious view of his own opinions” (1127).

Combined with an integrated core curriculum and a surplus of available extracurricular opportunities, a specific major, degree, or concentration does not limit a student of liberal arts education to one field. Through my course work in English and Religious Studies, my fulfillment of the core curriculum, and my leadership roles in campus ministry and Sigma Tau Delta, the English international honorary society, I “acquire a firsthand knowledge of the sources of specific information in the chosen field and familiarity with the sources of general information in the widest possible range of other fields” as stated in “The Objectives of Thiel College” (10). This integrated education reaffirms Cardinal Newman’s definition that “This process of training, by which the intellect, instead of being formed or sacrificed to some particular or accidental purpose, some specific trade of profession, or study or science, is disciplined for its own sake, for the perception of its own proper object, and for its own highest culture, is called Liberal Education” (*The Idea of a University*, 1123).

In fact, Thiel’s “Statement of Identity” reaffirms the college’s intention to provide both particular instruction and desired education. The statement proclaims that the college “educates students in the liberal arts and professional studies for service to society” (9). The liberal arts aspect provides philosophical education, and the professional studies supply the mechanical knowledge necessary for a certain career. This intersection of knowledge truly does enable the students of Thiel College to better serve society.

One of the Objectives of Thiel College is Imaginative Sensitivity. The institution’s intention is for a student to “learn the technical skills necessary for the highest possible degree of imaginative self-expression” (10). Specific professional studies are vital to an education. However, more is needed if the educated student is going to, as Thiel’s Objectives state, “consider beauty and creativity as indispensable features in the preparation for life” (10). Cardinal Newman underscores this objective: “What indeed can it teach at all, if it does not teach something particular? It teaches *all* knowledge by teaching *all branches* of knowledge” (*The Idea of a University*, 1126). For in an institution like Thiel College, if a student has “taken a survey of all knowledge, he is kept from extravagance by the very rivalry of other studies, he has gained from them a special

illumination and largeness of mind and freedom and self-possession, and he treats his own in consequence with a philosophy and a resource, which belongs not to the study itself, but to his liberal education" (1126).

As a contemporary student, I totally support the realistic intention that Cardinal Newman in his *Idea of a University* assigns to a liberal arts education. Newman states, "If then a practical end must be assigned to a University course, I say it is that of training good members of society" (1126). In fact, I would say this purpose completely corresponds to Thiel's Statement of Identity. Cardinal Newman recognized that "a University training is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end" (1127). A liberal arts education is a valuable yet easily accessible benefit for both its students and "for service to society." Newman continues to say, "a University is not a birthplace of poets or of immortal authors, of founders of schools, leaders of colonies, or conquerors of nations. It does not promise a generation of Aristotles or Newtons, of Napoleons or Washingtons, or Raphaels or Shakespeares, though such miracles of nature it has before now contained within its precincts" (1126-27). Therefore, my degree from Thiel College, a liberal arts institution founded in the Lutheran tradition, not only equips me for any of my vocational pursuits but also offers me a list of opportunities as long as the inventory of majors I compiled during my summer at the churchwide office.

The creation of this article is proof positive of the principles embedded in the three documents considered herein: Bacon's "Of Studies," Newman's *The Idea of a University*, and Thiel College's *Academic Catalogue 2001-2002*. The lives of a faculty member and a student intersected, initially in the classroom of a British Literature survey course and then continued over the summer via the contemporary classroom of electronic mail and the Internet to provide a new perspective on the value of a liberal arts education in the Lutheran tradition. We allowed ourselves to be "placed in that state of intellect in which [we could] take up any one of the sciences or callings...for which [we had] a taste or special talent, with an ease, a grace, a versatility, and a success, to which another is a stranger. In this sense, then, ...mental culture is emphatically *useful*" (*The Idea of a University*," 1125).

As a result of reviewing the Identity, Mission, Vision, and Goals Statements as well as the General Education and major/minor course requirements that undergird Thiel College, we reaffirm our commitment to "promoting value choices consistent with the Judeo-Christian tradition developed as a response to God's action in human history" and to our relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We invite our readers to do the same.

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HONESTY OF MIND: ON THE USES AND ABUSES OF SOCRATIC IGNORANCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES, RELIGION, AND THE CLASSROOM

Don Braxton

Consider too how Holy Scriptures attribute honesty of mind also to the fool, while the wise man believes that no one is his equal. (In Praise of Folly, Desiderius Erasmus, 1509)

GOING FISHING

Recently, I was reading an essay by David James Duncan, the author of *The River Why*, and a widely revered activist for “the church without walls” but with lots of rivers, mountains, and forests. Caught in the various pleasures of the essay, I suddenly stumbled across several lines which set my wheels spinning. As all people who have fallen in love with the ethos of the liberal arts tradition, I am constantly thinking about thinking. What is good thinking? What constitutes a decent argument on behalf of a position? How do we reflect, profess, or display perplexity? What makes for a good learning experience? These questions which serve as fodder for those of us who spend our times as teachers in the liberal arts came into perspective for me. Here’s how it happened.

Duncan is exploring his motivations for spurning river guides when he is out fly fishing. He contends that river excursions are at their best when they are “unmediated, one-on-one music played by a body of flesh and blood upon a body of water: it is a satisfying duet until a fish makes it an even more satisfying trio.” The trouble with guides, Duncan suggests, is that they often invade the music, like a popcorn munching movie critic who sits behind you and has lost the capacity for internal dialogue.

What jumped out from the page for me, however, was his conclusion. For he launches into an encomium for ignorance as his most important tool. He writes:

Fly-fishing guides accept payment in order to help clients circumvent their ignorance. *But ignorance is one of the most crucial pieces of equipment any fly fisher will ever own.* Ignorance is a fertile but unplanted interior field. Solitary fly fishing isolates us in this field, and leaves us no choice but to try to cultivate and plant and grow things in it. A guide, on the other hand, is like a hired farmer who, for a price, drives his tractor into your interior and plants your field for you...Fly-fishing guides turn clients into the absentee landlords of their own interiors.¹

I blurt an unsolicited “yes!” but then I immediately wonder why. Somewhere in the recesses of my teaching brain, I know it has something to do with the dispositions we seek to cultivate in our students. But how does learning, the classroom structures of the learning process, and our enduring awareness of our own unknowing fit together?

The product of my reflections leads me to believe that I am defending a version of what is often called the doctrine of “Socratic Ignorance.”² The classic location of this idea is at the end of the *Theaetetus* where, after what appears to have been a seemingly fruitless inquiry, Socrates declares:

Then supposing you should ever henceforth try to conceive afresh, Theaetetus, if you succeed, your embryo thoughts will be better as a consequence of today’s scrutiny, and if you remain barren, you will be gentler and more agreeable to your companions, having the good sense not to fancy you know what you do not know. For that, and no more, is all that my art can effect; nor have I any of that knowledge possessed by all the great and admirable men of our own day or of the past. But this midwife’s art is a gift from heaven...³

In the dialogue’s context, the point of Socrates’ declaration is that in spite of the supposed “fruitlessness” of their inquiry, although it has clearly been far from fruitless, the dialogue participants are still better off than they were before, since at the

least knowing what we don't know is still progress.

In what follows, I want to defend a modified version of this Socratic Ignorance which I will call "honesty of mind." I suggest that "honesty of mind" can be understood through four premises. I will give a brief outline of these four relatively uncontroversial premises, then I will talk about their application to three areas of special concern to me: environmental ethics, the academic study of religion, and finally the liberal arts classroom. Other applications are quite possible, and I do not intend to claim any special privilege for these topics. Perhaps the third topic - the liberal arts classroom - stands out, since it addresses the ethos of learning that circumscribes the qualities of spirit with which I believe all learning ought to take place. Therefore, it is a bit broader than either environmental ethics or religion. Nevertheless, I believe I could apply the same rubric to the teaching of English literature, the social sciences, music, or athletics. In this way, honesty of mind functions and can be employed as a gauge of the successes of liberal arts education.

My four premises are:

- 1.) Human knowledge is constructed.
- 2.) Judgments are always wagered in the midst of imperfect knowledge.
- 3.) Expertise can disable our own learning processes.
- 4.) We are encumbered by other ways of knowing.

The order in which I present these considerations implies a certain conceptual movement. Consideration one is the lynchpin, for the goal of liberal arts education is to assist students in self-critical reflection on the assumptions of their knowledge, the viability of alternative assumptions, and the impact on ways of knowing such assumptions make. From that insight follow considerations two through four, although not in any particular order. Even this distinction should not be overstated, however. In practice, I believe we become aware of the entirety of these ideas in no neat fashion. Rather, they seem to me to be mutually reinforcing conceptual judgments which surface and resurface as we undergo our learning processes in cyclical fashion. We learn to sense the ramifications of the constructedness of knowledge (consideration one) as we wager tough judgments about action (two) or we evaluate the influence of expertise (three) in our own thinking. Likewise, awareness of the constructedness of knowledge influences how we relate to expertise or the encumbrances of alien ways of knowing (four).

At the same time, it should be made clear that these same qualities of the liberal arts ethos are open to abuse if they are not circumscribed by various caveats. To put it rather bluntly, to defend Socratic Ignorance is not to defend ignorance. In what follows it will be important to distinguish between employing unknowing as a basis to legitimate claims, what I consider foul play, and as a basis to circumscribe the relative "reach" of constructive claims, what I consider its appropriate employment. Mindfulness of the relativity of the reach of any claim is the mark of liberally educated students. Making the leap from the constructedness of knowledge to no claim being any more warranted than any other is not.

FIELD TEST ONE: ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

The history of physics is the history of giving up cherished ideas. (Andrew Strominger)

For any of us who have ventured into the world of environmental ethics, the first impression we have is of interdisciplinarity.⁴ To engage deeply in the issues of environmental ethics, we need to have some knowledge of basic issues like the biological and physical processes which govern the envioning conditions under which life unfolds. Being informed about basic natural processes like hydrological cycles, biological diversity, topsoil formation, climatology, stellar evolution and planetary evolution, and molecular biology is the *sine qua non* of environmental ethics. Moreover, being informed is more complicated than simply knowing facts. It requires an awareness of the histories of these fields of inquiry as well as the current social conditions under which such knowing unfolds. While all of these fields of knowing are "science," they diverge significantly in terms of their methodologies. For example, molecular biology looks different, although the differences should not be overemphasized, if studied within the context of chemistry than if taught within the field of biology. Likewise, genetics research looks different depending on who pays the bills for the research. And the matter can be more complex still, if we ask questions about gender and scientific method. Does science have a gender, as some suggest, and what would a feminist epistemology look like in scientific research? Just being scientifically literate is a challenging task in and of itself.

But mastery of information is not enough when doing environmental ethics. Specialization is the death of environmental ethics if it does not make the transition to the synthetic experiences of ecological reflection. In ecology, we seek to understand the interactions of these various domains in the open-ended systems of ecological networks. Geology influences hydrology, which in turn influences biodiversity which influences carrying capacities, and so on. In many ways, ecology cannot tolerate specialization. It forces the cross-discipline work that the liberal arts tradition commends.

Even here, however, we are not adequately versed to engage in "the doing of environmental ethics," since it leaves out various considerations entailed by the human variable in the equation. Enter the social or human sciences. We need to investigate basic questions of the social sciences ranging from the nature and function of markets, the politics (both domestic and global) of environmental policy, and the psychology of environmental decision-making. For example, how to respond to mass extinctions in South America requires not only a knowledge of the various natural processes at work, but also studies of human population growth, the cultural forces which might support or impede family planning efforts, the economic forces that generate the need for human invasions of natural habitats, the politics of environmental decision-making, and psychological processes of risk-perception in individuals and groups.

If our heads begin to spin already with our growing awareness of the disciplines which we must take up, there is no rest for the weary. We also need to engage the religious and philosophical implications of the convictions, worldviews, and communities of faith to which various voices in the environmental debate owe loyalty. Add all of these considerations together, and we begin to glimmer the complexity of environmental issues, and perhaps an explanation for the glacial pace with which society often responds.

What might a typical citizen, or American college student, conclude from such an overview? One reaction might be despair and a dogged solipsism. In the midst of all this information, I am just going to declare my opinion and stick with it. I cannot hope to engage such diverse ways of knowing and will pursue my life in disregard for such considerations. Here, awareness of our ignorance seems disempowering. A second strategy might be simply to trust in "the experts." We can follow through with our daily lives, resting confident that our leadership has access to the necessary expertise to tackle these issues. Here, awareness of ignorance seems to condone quiescence. A third strategy might be to seek insights that only confirm the assumptions we bring to the learning process. We look for information that confirms our lifestyles and do not raise any red flags environmentally. Here, awareness of ignorance generates the need to be informed simply to preserve our assumptions and the world we erect upon them. As I work in the field of environmental ethics, I see all three of these strategies all the time.

The model of learning I have outlined grounded in Socratic Ignorance (or Honesty of Mind) demands something different. It suggests to us, first, that our knowing is incomplete and that our ways of knowing are the product of specific historical, social, and environmental conditions. Our first duty is to investigate what these forces are and how they help and hinder us in coming to terms with various features of environmental debate. Once we begin to see our insights and limitations more clearly, we are driven to explore other ways of knowing. For example, the American experience of a plentitude of natural resources may imply that we seriously underestimate the difficulty of the choices faced by, say, poor farmers in Brazil driven to deforestation. Moreover, once we see our limitations we need to confront the question of how and when action is justified in light of our lack of perfect knowledge. For example, given the complexity of climatology, when is action warranted in curtailing greenhouse gas emissions even at the expense of many modern conveniences. Finally, it seems no one can be adequately informed about all the relevant issues associated with such complex issues, so we need to depend on the insights offered us by experts. Yet experts do not exist in a vacuum. They are influenced by social, economic, and political influences like anyone else. Moreover, like others, they can become so invested in a particular agenda that they cannot always see, and adequately address, divergent views. Expertise needs to be regarded with scrutiny like all other sources of information.

But the model of learning associated with Socratic Ignorance is open to abuse as well. The acknowledgment that our knowing is a human construction can be exploited for very questionable purposes. Take the idea of "theory" in the popular imagination. Given the fact that most science is a process of tacking back and forth between the creative construction of theory and its empirical testing against data, alternative theories sometimes can be proposed as science without holding themselves accountable to the same standards. We see this phenomenon, for example, in debates surrounding the greenhouse

effect⁵ or the teaching of creationism in public schools.⁶ Because there are internal discussions within the scientific community about the exact consequences of global climatic change and various features of evolution, the attempt is made to discredit the science that does exist as “merely a theory” or “not proven” as “certainty.” As K. C. Cole writes:

One of the most common misconceptions about science (frequently fostered, I’m sorry to say, by science writers) is that scientific truth can’t be trusted because it is continually being revised. *Au contraire*. It can be trusted precisely *because* it is continually being revised.

Science is always “unfinished business.” Honesty of mind requires this insight. But we cannot derive from its openness a lack of insight. To do so is to betray a fundamental flaw in our understanding of what science is and how it operates. In cases such as global climate change and creationism, it appears that science’s openness to the fallibility premise is being exploited to advance rival theories as “equally valid” simply because they are theories too. In American pluralistic culture, we seem especially prone to the seduction of the argument that everyone is “entitled to their opinion” regardless of warrants, even in matters of science. That deduction, however, exploits honesty of mind for dishonest purposes.

The climate change debate affords us a good example of another abuse of science’s honesty of mind. Since global warming is a complex phenomenon involving extremely intricate work in computer modeling of multi-variable scenarios, scientists interpret their data in terms of probabilities. This approach is an example of “being honest” about prediction under such circumstances. Opponents of changes in energy consumption, however, exploit this openness by contending that “further study” is required before enough information exists for action.⁷ Aside from overstating the degree of disagreement inherent in climate change modeling, opponents demand a higher degree of accuracy than is demanded under similar circumstances in other fields. In reality, the vast majority agree on the nature of the threat implied by global warming. In addition, hesitation can lead to run-away effects in climate change that no amount of later change could reverse. Thus, even in the absence of absolute certainty, caution and action seem warranted. By setting the bar so high as to impose unreasonable expectations on what science can do, opponents simply try to forestall action. That tactic, while understandable, is an abuse of science’s “honesty of mind.”

A third misuse is undue deference given to experts. Since considerations of scientific questions are notoriously complex, it is possible to decide that only experts have the requisite knowledge base to wager judgments. Complexity implies an immensity that “normal people” cannot hope to fathom, therefore experts, by the very nature of their expertise, ought to be given credibility. Aside from this conclusion being a recipe for passivity in our mental operations, it seriously underestimates the value-laden assumptions in the midst of which all scientific investigation occurs. Whatever scientists are, they are also people with a basic grounding in value assumptions about reality. Those value assumptions dictate what appears as relevant to their studies and what does not qualify as relevant. As consideration one points out, science is a social construction no less than any other way of knowing, organized around socially legitimated canons of evidence.⁸ It does not exist in a vacuum but rather is subject to the influences of its environment. In this day and age of the expanding costs of higher education and the potential market value of significant new scientific discoveries, it is never enough to know *if* an expert conducted the study. If we are savvy we also ask *who financed the research*, what was the method, and has this finding been replicated by other groups of scientists. A recent debate which well illustrates this point is discussion surrounding oil exploration in the National Arctic Wildlife Refuge.⁹ Each side in the debate has its resident panel of experts who can look at the same data and draw quite different conclusions about the relative risks to this national asset and the relative pay-offs for society.¹⁰ How much fuel efficiency can we expect from Detroit? Experts for Detroit tend to have lower estimates than experts from environmental groups. How much oil is available for “reasonable extraction” purposes in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge? Oil industry experts estimate this figure as very high. Environmental groups estimate it as very low. In the midst of such divergent views, honesty of mind demands of us that we inform ourselves, assess the motivations and credibility of various experts, and draw our own conclusions.

Thus, in many respects, science is better to the extent that it internalizes the considerations implied by this disposition of “honesty of mind,” but it must also be weary of the potential abuses of such openness. Indeed, I suspect “honesty of mind” itself is the best medicine against its own potential abuse.

FIELD TEST TWO: RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Being religious means asking passionately the question of the meaning of our existence and being willing to receive answers, even if the answers hurt. (Paul Tillich)

We are blessed to live in interesting times in religious studies. A recent *Atlantic Monthly* essay brings home the state of our growing sensitivity to religious diversity.¹¹ Religion, and the our awareness of the enduring vitality of religion, is bursting onto the national and international scene. In the wake of September 11th, contemporary studies of the social and political behavior of people can no longer ignore the central role religion plays in motivating, informing, transforming, and destroying large and small scale relations. In religious studies, the relatively new field of NRM (New Religious Movements) studies is our current high growth industry. This branch of religious studies investigates the ways in which religions evolve, how new religious movements burst onto the scene, how they mix with other better established religions, and how they devolve and disband. Religious change is occurring at a pace unparalleled in human history. We need only to type religion into any search engine for the Internet to discover how the information revolution has put everything up for grabs. Whereas fifty years ago, it was standard to speak of the increasingly secular nature of modern civilization and to refer to new religious movements pejoratively as aberrations, cults, or sects, today we see an influx into our consciousness of massive numbers of religious options, all of which exist not just as theoretical possibilities, exotic oddities "out there," but as real possibilities living next door to us, available to us with a simple click on the computer key pad.¹²

The sheer enormity of the change is astounding. For example, in the last century we have watched an amazing shift of the centers of Christianity from the Northern to the Southern hemisphere. Africa and South America are now demographically the true powerhouses of Christianity. In 1900, there were 10 million Christians in Africa. By 2000, that number swelled to 360 million.¹³ Another example is the rapidity of change in the global religious landscape. In order not to be blind to the world as it is now shaping up, religious studies teachers must now think about their discipline and its subject matter as never before. We need to work into our mental maps somewhere, somehow, the Ahmadis, a messianic Muslim sect based in Pakistan with eight million members, the curious blending of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism called the Cao Dai with some half a million members, or the Umbanda of Brazil, a twenty million member movement that blends spirit worship and healing from African indigenous religions and Catholicism. Add to this proliferation the growing numbers of cyber-religions,¹⁴ religions based on the Internet and which American college students are finding increasingly attractive in their information driven world, and the colors of our world begin to come into focus. Complexity upon complexity. How are we in religious studies to cope?

But even this is not enough. We need also to consider the element of a students' yearning to find meaning in their lives. Students not only ask "what's out there?" but also "which one offers satisfactions?" and "how am I to choose?" How can I be a more authentic human being? What am I to make of the promises of so many religious options? What intellectual stance can I adopt that is suited both to my need for existential fulfillment and the diverse claims to religious insight? If religious studies is not to degrade into a kind of academic tourism which exposes students to exotic religious sights just because it can, but is also genuinely interested in assisting students in their spiritual journeys, then we must seek ways to both explore the religious landscape and teach students to sort out their own existential yearnings. The difficulty of this balance between exploration and religious commitment finds its clearest expression when we seek both to encourage students to take their religious inheritance and experiences seriously while also prompting openness to the new and viable religious alternatives offered by the global religious menu. It would be tantamount to academic malpractice simply to discount religious diversity and pursue our various and familiar religious terrains as a mostly Christian society, if that is even true in this day and age. To be Christian these days, for example, seems to require us to make some effort to grasp what that means within the larger context of the complexity of the religious landscape.

This problem was taken up in a recent interview in the New York Times.¹⁵ The President of Union Theological Seminary in New York, Joseph Hough, has gone public with his dissatisfaction of the handling of religious diversity by Christians in light of the September 11th bombings. He argues that even the most liberal of Christian groups who have called for religious tolerance still descend into a paternalistic attitude toward non-Christians unsuited to our situation. He notes that liberal Christians have called for a mutual regard toward Muslims, and the recognition that all Islam cannot be held responsible for

the terrorist attack. This stance is an important contribution, to be sure. But even with this attitude, another problem still vexes the prospects of peaceful resolution, namely, a subtle superiority assumption on the part of the various religious communities involved in the conversation. He contends that "toleration alone, while desirable, is not sufficient in a world of religious pluralism." He argues instead for a theology that recognizes the authenticity, indeed salvific capacity of non-Christian religions. To say that we come to know the divine mediated through the Christian tradition need not imply that others cannot know the divine authentically as it is mediated through their tradition. This is a demanding claim, for it will require Christianity to engage the world's religions not merely as a host would entertain a guest with all its implicit power differentiations, but to encounter various religions as mutually enriching experiences of the divine. Any claim to exclusivity would, therefore, be eliminated.¹⁶ But can a Christian accept salvation via other religious traditions, and still be a Christian?¹⁷ It is interesting that Hough must repeatedly differentiate his views as an individual and a scholar of religion from his official capacity as the president of a Christian seminary. It signals the fine line he is walking these days.

Hough's views seem to me to be better in keeping with the standards I articulated above as "honesty of mind." Since all knowledge is culturally and linguistically constructed, Christians must recognize that their exclusivity claims cannot be justified. Moreover, this admission does not obviate the possibility that what Christians know relatively, they nevertheless know truly. But it also implies that they are not guaranteed insight either. Knowledge is constantly negotiated, renewed by fresh questioning, and in the field of religion that means that insight must test itself constantly, really put itself at risk, in the realm of mutual dialogue. The Christian, or any other adherent of a religious tradition, must accept the prospect of fallibility and attempt to see through the eyes of another religious community. Just a student cannot dismiss a book as insignificant without first having seriously engaged its claims, so also a religious believer cannot dismiss other religious options without first having seriously engaged these insights. Here we see consideration four from above making its appearance, namely, that we as Christians are encumbered by the claims of non-Christians. Honesty of mind requires not only that we make room for people with whom we disagree, but that we dare to experience, to the best of our ability with all its inherent limitations, what non-Christians say is true. We test it empirically (experientially or "on ourselves," so to speak) to see how it might enrich us and bring us closer to insight. If we value the claims of our own religious heritage, we can do no less. That hallmark is the difference between faith and blind faith, between ethnocentrism and being centered. Finally, then, we cannot accept the claims of religious experts passively simply because of their expertise, although we ought to listen to them. Religious experts such as theologians, priesthoods, gurus, scriptural claims, and yes, even religion professors, may offer invitations to the salvific domain of their religious experience, but they cannot substitute their expertise for personal spiritual cultivation.

Let us take a very concrete example: the teaching of the Bible to undergraduates in the liberal arts curriculum. What do the four considerations of "honesty of mind" imply for the process? The first consideration is the constructedness of knowledge, even insights regarded as divinely inspired. To make good on that insight, we need to see the human interpretive processes that give rise to sacred texts. In a widely used textbook for introductory classes in the Bible, Hauer and Young teach students a "three-world approach" to the study of the Bible.¹⁸ Deciding what a text means, any text for that matter, but in this case the religious texts of the Bible, is a complex process of triangulating between three worlds: the world behind the text, the world created by the text, and the world in front of the text. First, the world behind the text signifies the complex processes behind the completed set of documents we inherit as scripture. Arduous historical investigations are required to discover the historical settings, the editorial processes, and the social and cultural forces which gave rise to the construction of the documents that later become known as sacred texts.¹⁹ In many ways this is the most challenging for students, for it requires them to understand that sacred scripture has a history, that it displays the marks of human construction. For many, the Bible's status as "revealed word of God" implies that it cannot have such a history and still be normative.²⁰ Second, the world of the text signifies the complex of memories and experiences evoked by the text in its integrity as a completed opus.²¹ Here we ask ourselves what is the nature of the world displayed inside the pages of the documents themselves without reference to the world from which it originates. We learn to think of the text as artifact, as a work of art that supercedes its authors' intentions. Finally, we need to explore the world in front of the text, that is, the world into which it is received.²² This is "our world" with all its assumptions, complexities, and questions. For example, we read scripture as scientifically informed people and this vision shapes the way in which we see the text and its potential meanings. We need to ask ourselves how the Biblical narratives of creation, resurrection, and end-times make sense in the context of a scientifically informed worldview.²³ The decision about meaning emerges, therefore, from the complicated process of drawing all three of these worlds into

conversation, observing the ways in which these multiple vectors interact to construct significance. Not only do we see the constructional dimensions of the text, but also we grow to appreciate the building process inherent in how we read. This implies to the student, among other things, that our religious insights are incomplete processes of negotiation between history, religious artifact, and contemporary needs. Finally, it suggests that religious ways of knowing need to be constantly renewed in this multivectored manner.

As in our discussion of science, the other three consequences of honesty of mind follow and have their impact. Given the fact that meaning is accomplished only relative to particular times and places, any judgment about religious affiliation or moral stance must be tentative, open to revisability, and dependent on the limited ranges of information we have before us. If new information surfaces about historical background or new insights emerge in our modern world, our judgments need to reflect these additional data.²⁴ The emergence of religious diversity as live options in our pluralistic consciousness is one such piece of data. In the example above, Hough was simply trying to respond with honesty to this new context of reading the Christian historical witness.

Perhaps nowhere does the question of expertise press upon us more than in the domain of religious studies. Expertise appears in religious studies in the form of those who claim special insight into divine matters. Priests, gurus, prophets, and holy women articulate religious insights and claim special status for these insights on the basis of unique religious disclosures. Moreover, they link their insights to matters of human well-being and salvation such that our failure to follow their insights risks judgment by divine authorities, thereby raising the stakes of mistakes. While any and all such claims need to be treated with respect, we cannot with honesty of mind succumb to scare tactics either. We must analyze such claims with the same rigor we would research various types of medical advice or political views. In the end, experts cannot decide our religious questions for us. In an old Zen saying, if my face is dirty, it doesn't help if others wash their faces. In the context of the Bible, the last court of appeal for its meaning and interpretation must be the individual who stands in this world, here and now, and must sort out life in the midst of this universe. That sorting out process requires the engagement of the multiplicity of diverse religious claims under conditions of publicly or generally available criteria of reasonableness.

Finally, as Hough so ably demonstrated, to be Christian, or Jewish, with our Bibles before us, we must engage and be willing to risk Biblical insights in the midst of other religious traditions. The scriptural traditions of other religious communities bear the same marks and burdens of inquiry that the Bible does.²⁵ What do the stories of Muhammad tell us, then? What are we to make of the claims associated with the Buddha's Enlightenment? Can we embrace their insights and still be Christian? Are there ways in which they converge? And if they diverge can we envision conversion in light of the evidence? Honesty of mind requires this possibility of us from the outset. To say that encumbrance by other traditions is necessary is not to say that it is easy, or ever thoroughly complete. It is an on-going process no less than is science's investigations of the universe. The criterion of validity cannot be simply the sincerity of the persons who hold a set of beliefs passionately. Nor can it be the inherent coherency of a religious community's belief structure. This recognition lies at the heart of many religious traditions when they point to religious membership not as an arrival, but as the initiation of a journey, a way of being, a path.²⁶ I believe that the liberal arts ethos is especially sensitive to these dimensions of religious life and stands students in good stead as they enter the world we see before us.

Yet abuse of the disposition to honesty of mind is just as relevant to religious studies as it was to science above. In other words, the embrace of this disposition needs to be surrounded by various caveats to protect against its abuse. For example, the constructedness of knowledge does not mean that any and all religious claims are equally valid. The right to an opinion as justified insight requires its redemption as insight through discursive elaboration among a community of open-minded religious seekers. This criterion is the most difficult to achieve in light of everyone's seemingly universal willingness to admit fallibility. The difficulty results, it seems to me, in the belief that we are more open-minded than we actually are. To embrace fallibility in principle does not always translate into a practice of genuine listening. Engagement in listening is a fragile possibility that requires constant willingness to take note of our potential emotional, social, and cultural inhibitions. It is not an exaggeration to say that the willingness to conceive afresh, to return to the origins of what we think we know is a rare commodity, especially in the existentially charged and psychologically challenging atmosphere of people's cherished religious views. Honesty of mind in the classroom, and in life, requires the fine balance that Reinhold Niebuhr enunciated in this manner: first,

Religious toleration through religiously inspired humility and charity is always a difficult achievement. It requires that religious convictions be sincerely and devoutly held while yet the sinful and finite corruptions of these convictions be humbly acknowledged; and the actual fruits of these faiths be generously estimated.²⁷

And second:

The Christian position of contrition in regard to "our truth," the humble recognition that it contains some egoistic corruption, degenerates into irresponsibility as soon as we disavow the obligation to purge the truth we hold of egoistic corruption. The irresponsibility degenerates into complete skepticism if we come to the conclusion, that since history contains nothing but partial perspectives and fragmentary viewpoints, there is no possibility of discerning truth from falsehood.²⁸

FIELD THREE: THE ACADEMY

I am often struck by the fact that many of my best students declare to me that they came to college wanting to discover answers, but that the deeper they have ventured in their own learning process, the less they feel they know. In our current academic world where so much emphasis is placed on "outcome assessment" I ask myself what this "confession" implies. It is certainly not something that will show up on any of the standard quantitative outcome assessment instruments that I have been encouraged to adopt. It seems to me as good an argument as any not to put too much emphasis on the limited types of information we as educators can expect to glean from such instruments. So what does it mean if our "success stories" are experiencing confusion after their four years at college?

If I enquire why these students think they are more confused than before, they suggest that they are less certain of what they think is true. Many factors seem to be at work in this experience, but my conclusion is that they are confessing an intellectual conversion to the liberal arts ethos. It seems to me simply that they are embracing a level of honesty of mind that they lacked before they underwent a liberal arts training. And that liberal arts ethos is identified - at least in part - by the four considerations of honesty of mind.

The more I know, the less I seem to know. This statement implies first of all that students have become aware of the complexity of insight. They have begun to see that human insight is always contextual, risky, and open to revision. It is certainly true that students are better informed about the various ways of knowing than when they came to college. They command a far greater range of information than before. So it isn't that they know less information than before. Rather, their mastery of information is now situated against a backdrop of how much more they might come to know. Moreover, they now seem to comprehend that the possession of information is not the same thing as a grasp of its significance. So students are also dealing with the difficulties and risks associated with wagering a judgment about how what they now seem to know fits together in a larger existential context. Put differently, they are not quite sure what it all means. It does not mean, for example, that they do not have various ways of bringing a diversity of things into coherence (worldviews), for they have certainly been exposed to a variety of ways to assemble insights into coherent systems. No, they seem struck by the weaknesses implicit in their very best attempts at coherence. They see the strengths and weaknesses of their various options. Instead of the cognitive world of black and white with which they entered the community of inquiry, they are now more nuanced thinkers with a refined set of cognitive tools to discern various shades of grey. In the end, their confession implies a greater appreciation for the responsibility they must take for their own thoughts, a responsibility grounded in a greater responsiveness to their own culturally and linguistically complex world. They are beginning to take ownership of their own learning process. No longer can they permit themselves to rest confident in their insights, for they see the ways in which others now encumber their ways of knowing. They have become democrats of the mind, citizens in the human intellectual enterprise. And, it seems to me, the world will be a better place for their willingness to accept the insights they have and the confusion that remains. In the words of Plato, they will try henceforth "to conceive afresh." They will be the midwife, in Plato's language, of their own life-long learning challenges. Metaphorically speaking, it is perhaps not too much to declare this orientation of mind a "gift from heaven," as Plato suggests. This accomplishment of the liberal arts will not show up on many of the outcome devices we employ, but it is a quality that ought not to be dismissed as important. It seems to me that it ought to be to be celebrated as one of the more important contributions we can make.

There is a lot that we can do as teachers to model a willingness to receive this “gift from heaven.” We can admit the constructedness of our knowledge by seeking answers and then posing before our answers the most serious questions we can muster. We can allow our various disciplinary methods and insights to be tested - wagered, if you will - in interdisciplinary dialogue and teaching experiences. The scientist can ask questions about the religious consequences of scientific discoveries, even as religious inquirers can be invited to scrutinize their arguments and claims through scientific investigation. We can wear our expertise lightly, not hiding behind our authority, but demonstrating the curiosity that made us want to be experts when we began our journeys. We can structure our classrooms so that students can see ways in which their experiences and learning can be successful contributions to the insights of the class, encouraging student research and scholarship as valued aspects of the our community’s learning. We can encourage students to learn how to learn for themselves and from each other in ways that far exceed what any professor might help to accomplish. In the imagery of Duncan from the introduction, we can empower them to toss out a line and see if a fish will rise.

Socratic Ignorance encourages an ownership of, and a set of responsibilities toward, our own learning processes. It is an extremely important dimension of the ethos of the liberal arts. It is a mark of character. It is not the only mark of character, to be sure, but it is a crucial one. In some ways, it is more noticeable by its absence in people than by its presence. It distinguishes those people who are willing to risk the unknown from those who only wager the known and secure. It separates those who aren’t willing to look at their own assumptions from those who are. It indicates people who have made mistakes and learned from them in contrast to people who have made mistakes and failed to learn from them. Honesty of mind suggests that we are all projects under construction both as teachers and as students. This will impact not only how students take up their own learning processes, but how we teach. We all have “interior fields” to cultivate, and the best teachers, it seems to me, lead their students by their willingness to cultivate their own “interior fields.”

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1. “In Praise of No Guide” in *My Story as Told By Water* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2001), pp 234-235.
2. McPherran, Mark L. *Wisdom, Ignorance, and Virtue: Essays in Socratic Studies* (Edmonton: Academic Print. and Pub., 1997).
3. *Plato: The Collected Dialogues*, edited by Hamilton, Edith, and Huntingdon Cairns (Princeton: Bollingen, 1961), [210 b-c] p. 919.
4. On the capacity to think and work within an interdisciplinary educational setting where the environmental crisis calls for a consilience of knowing, see Orr, David W. *Ecological Literacy* (New York: SUNY Press, 1992), pp. 85-95.
5. Rosenbaum, Walter A., *Environmental Politics and Policy* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 1991), pp. 66 ff. See also Davis, David Howard, *Energy Politics* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993) pp. 57-61.
6. For a book that argues for creationism, now more frequently referred to as “intelligent design theory,” see Moreland, J. P., ed. *The Creation Hypothesis: Scientific Evidence for Intelligent Design* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1994). It is worth noting that Intervarsity is a religious, not a scientific press. For a scientific investigation into the primary pillars of creationism, see Godfrey, Laurie E., ed. *Scientists Confront Creationism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1983). And for a more overtly polemical treatment of creationism consult McKown, Delos B., *The Mythmaker’s Magic* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1993).
7. A good example of this maneuver is Dixie Lee Ray’s *Environmental Overkill* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1993). She writes (p. 14): “First, whenever there is so clear a difference of opinion among experts, the conclusion must be: No one really knows. And when no one knows, it is best to withhold judgment and avoid precipitous action.”
8. Adrian Desmond and James Moore make the relation between doing science and the social-cultural matrix in which doing science occurs explicit in the fascinating example of Darwin’s work on *The Descent of Man*. See *Darwin: The Life of a Tortured Evolutionist* (New York: Warner Books, 1991, pp. 550-621.)
9. Torry, Jack, “Fuel Efficiency, Arctic Oil at the Crux of Energy Debate,” *Columbus Dispatch*, March 3, 2002.

11. Lester, Toby, "Oh, Gods!" *Atlantic Monthly*, February, 2002, pp. 37-45.
12. As I wrote this essay, I experimented with a "google" search for religion of the Internet. It came back to me with 11, 900,000 possible entries.
13. Ibid, p. 44.
14. For anyone interested in this topic, I suggest a "Yahoo.com" search under counterculture and religions. Among the options that pop up, I would especially recommend the web site "www.self-improvement-personal-development.com" as a valuable resource.
15. "Acknowledging That God Is Not Limited To Christians," *New York Times*, January 12, 2001.
16. The consequences for this attitude of mind for conflict resolution are immense. Indeed, in the ethics of dialogue, the demand that we make our best efforts to see through the eyes of the other is the crucial component. Few people are gifted with this skill naturally. Peace advocates all emphasize the difficult work it requires to maintain such openness of mind. See Patti, Janet, and Linda Lantieri, "Waging Peace in Our Schools: Social and emotional Learning Through Conflict Resolution" in *Educating Minds and Hearts*, edited by Jonathan Cohen (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1999), pp. 126-136.
17. Martin Cook explores this question in his book *The Open Circle: Confessional Method in Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991). He proposes an "open confessional method" built upon the model of the natural sciences.
18. Hauer, Christian E., and William A. Young, *And Introduction to the Bible: A Journey Into Three Worlds* (Fifth Edition) (Upper Saddle River, NJ, 2001).
19. For a concise overview of historical-critical methods in Biblical studies, see Barton, James, *Reading the Old testament: Methods in Biblical Studies* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984.), pp. 30-60.
20. Barr, James, *The Bible In the Modern World* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 13-22.
21. For a concise survey of "literary criticism" which is the principal method of this genre, see McKenzie, S.L. and R. Haynes, *To Each Its Own Meaning* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1993).
22. This field is called reader response theory. For an overview, see "Contemporary Theories of Biblical Interpretation" in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, vol 1 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), pp. 107-124.
23. In my "Religion and Science" class, the main burden of our inquiry is this process of adjudicating between insights derived from religious communities and scientific communities. Excellent resources exist in this field. I would suggest Ian Barbour's *Religion and Science* (San Francisco: HarperSan Francisco, 1997) as a general survey text. Ursula Goodenough's *The Sacred Depths of Nature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998) is an excellent study from the perspective of a cellular biologist. John Dewey's classic *A Common Faith* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934) still works well as a pragmatist's approach to the religion and science dialogue.
24. The fervor over the recent "historical Jesus" research is a case in point. This new round of "the quest for the historical Jesus" was initiated by John Dominic Crossan in his important book *The Historical Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperSan Francisco, 1991.)
25. Many of the newer survey texts in Bible reflect this growing consciousness that effective Bible analysis can only take place within the context of crosscultural studies of the emergence of sacred texts and traditions. A good recent example of this is *Exploring Religious Meaning*, Monk, Robert C, et al, (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998)
26. I explore this imagery and its consequences in my book *Staying With the Questions* (unpublished manuscript).
27. Niebuhr, Reinhold, *Children of Light and Children of Darkness* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), pp. 137-138.
28. Niebuhr, Reinhold, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, vol 2, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941), p. 239.

REVIEW ESSAY

Baird Tipson

Paul Dove, ed., *The Future of Religious Colleges: The Proceedings of the Harvard Conference on the Future of Religious Colleges October 6-7, 2000* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2002)

As its title page suggests, this book contains texts of the papers and formal responses delivered at a conference organized by Paul Dove, funded by the John M. Olin Foundation, and held at Harvard in the Fall of 2000. The conference (and so the essays) was designed to address five questions:

- 1) What will be the place of religiously informed scholarship in the academy of tomorrow?
- 2) Is the trend toward disengagement from a distinctive religious identity and mission inevitable?
- 3) Can churches that have lost their-college relatedness be transformed? Can colleges that have lost their church-relatedness be transformed?
- 4) Are the diverse educational missions of religious colleges viable in an intellectual sense? In a social sense? How can such viability be encouraged and secured?
- 5) Will public policy and the interpretation thereof be an ally or an enemy of religious colleges?" ("Introduction," p. xi)

Undergirding and provoking these questions lies some influential recent scholarship, in particular James Burtchaell's, *The Dying of the Light: The Disengagement of Colleges and Universities from Their Christian Churches* (1998), George Marsden's *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief* (1994) and *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (1997), Douglas Sloan, *Faith and Knowledge: Mainstream Protestantism and American Higher Education* (1994), and Mark Schwehn, *Exiles from Eden: Religion and the Academic Vocation* (1993); with the exception of Burtchaell, all of these scholars are contributors to this volume.

I take my assignment in these comments to be threefold: first, to give readers of *Intersections* some sense of which contributions are likely to be of most interest to them and what those contributors had to say; second, to identify the most significant issues raised explicitly or implicitly by the conference, and third, to offer my own reflections, not as a scholarly contributor to the discussion but as a practicing faculty member turned administrator, on those issues.

The book begins with a most provocative essay by Sloan which draws out some of the implications of *Faith and Knowledge*. He argues that the leading intellectuals of post World War II mainstream Protestantism, Paul Tillich and the two Niebuhrs, tried but failed to provide a persuasive response to a fundamental epistemological question: how could the truth claims of religion compete with truth that resulted from rigorous application of the scientific ways of knowing which dominated the modern university? On what basis besides sheer faith assertion, in other words, could a religious claim be defended in the academy? Ultimately these theologians were forced back on a "two-realm theory of truth" that preserved the possibility of religion's providing "meaning and interpretation and affective mood," but ceded examination of ethics, science, and the sensible world in general to purely naturalistic ways of knowing. At roughly the same time, the mainstream churches were making a similar effort to engage the university through groups like the National Student Christian Federation and the Faculty Christian Fellowship. Bereft of epistemological grounding and seduced by the lure of social action, these organizations collapsed in the late 1960s. Without a coherent way to explain and defend religious knowing, Sloan believes, religious thinkers will have no alternative to the two-realm theory, and any challenge to the pervasive secularism of the modern university will remain problematic. The essay concludes with some suggestions as to how a qualitative epistemology, more adequate to religious knowledge, might be developed.

George Marsden's essay attempts to clarify, with reference to his own work, how an individual scholar's religious commitment might shape scholarship without diminishing its credibility in the larger academy. To each of five questions --

“(1) What do I think important enough to study? (2) What questions do I ask about it? (3) What currently fashionable interpretive strategies are compatible with my religious outlook? (4) How do I, implicitly or explicitly, evaluate various developments as positive, negative, or something in between? (5) How do these evaluations shape my narrative?” (p. 45) – Marsden finds his responses different from those of most secular historians. “I practice the craft within the rules of the guild,” he argues, “yet my theological perspectives provide a basis for an outlook critical of some widely accepted assumptions.” (p. 49)

Speaking from her Lutheran perspective, DeAne Lagerquist claims she is used to living with the tension of being two or even three things at once. Rather than forcing faith and knowledge together, she wonders “if we might do better to allow that faith and knowledge both contribute to some other thing, some better thing [i.e. the love of God] that requires both” (p. 58).

Turning to the issue of whether religious colleges are doomed to slow death by secularization, Father David O’Connell, President of The Catholic University of America, contends that a college can usefully be termed “religious” only if it meets two conditions: the sponsoring religious group must have *direct* influence upon the institution, and there must be an *institutional* imperative to remain “religious.” Within the diversity of institutions that constitute American higher education, he asserts against Burtchaell, there will always be room – and presumably demand -- for such colleges.

My own academic field is the history of Christianity; perhaps for that reason I found Mark Noll’s essay, which suggests that some important lessons can be learned from the past, especially fine. Like Burtchaell, Noll questions how explicitly and robustly many religiously-founded colleges (he is particularly knowledgeable about Princeton) were ever grounded in their sponsoring institutions. He draws attention to the enormous success of Roman Catholic higher education in America during the first 2/3 of the 20th century as an example worth more consideration. Much like Marsden, he sees new possibility for faith-based scholarship in the post-enlightenment university, but he is more sanguine than Marsden about the realization of those possibilities: “more and better self-consciously Christian learning is taking place than at any previous period in American higher education since the seventeenth century” (p. 87). And he is more cautious than O’Connell about the future of religious colleges: “commitments to preserve religion must be structural, systemic, and courageous if such institutions are to avoid the secularizing fate of America’s first religious colleges.... The slippery slope, if it is not the only possibility, is certainly still one of the possibilities” (p.90).

Robert Benne’s response (do we detect unconscious bias on our good editor’s part in assigning the last word on these two important topics to Lutherans?) draws out several issues implicit in O’Connell and Noll. First, religious colleges depend upon the vitality of the sponsoring religious body, and in particular the willingness of its members to send their children to their denominational colleges. Mainline denominations, certainly including the ELCA, do not stack up well: the “Reclaiming Lutheran Students” study found fewer than 5% of Lutheran youth attending Lutheran colleges. Second, if so much good Christian scholarship is being carried out at secular colleges, do we need religious colleges at all? Third, what about the majority (75%?) of church-related colleges, his and mine included, whose church-relationship is less than robust? Are they simply fated to become religiously comatose? I will return to the first and third question later.

I pass over the section on Catholic, Baptist, and Nazarene models of church-relatedness not because the essays lack substance but because they address the issues in Dovre’s third question almost entirely from within their own specific traditions and thus seem less germane to a specifically Lutheran plight. The opposite is true of the essays by Mark Roche, Joel Carpenter, and Mark Schwehn in the fourth section (I will also pass over essays in this section on evangelical Christian, historically black United Methodist, and Anabaptist-Mennonite colleges). Roche, Dean of the College of Arts and Letters at the University of Notre Dame, offers what he terms “an idealized portrait of Notre Dame, focusing on what the university can and should become” (p. 165) [For the warts, he refers readers to a 1997 Christmas address to the arts & sciences faculty available on the Notre Dame website.] Deans and presidents tend to learn this genre of address quickly for use on those occasions when alumni and other potential donors can be energized by a vision of what – with the proper financial support – a university can become. But Roche’s essay is particularly successful at drawing attention to what makes Notre Dame distinctively Catholic. Not only is Notre Dame’s culture recognizably Catholic, but its curriculum also unmistakably reflects its Catholic commitments. Every student takes two courses in theology, and interdisciplinary minors are available in religious subjects such as Catholic social traditions. So far, so good; most church-related colleges would not drastically differ. But

Notre Dame also tends to define its areas of disciplinary strength in the light of its Catholicism. Philosophy, theology, medieval studies, Irish studies (do we have to ask why this is Catholic?), and Latin American studies are particularly strong. Within other departments, distinctive sub-disciplines are held up: Irish literature, medieval literature, literature and religion in the English Department, American religious and intellectual history in the History Department (including the Calvinist Professor Marsden), sacred music in the Music Department, social justice issues such as poverty and development in the Economics Department.

Roche goes on to argue that, given their sacramental vision of the natural world, Catholics are less susceptible than Protestants to the temptation to retreat to what Sloan would call the "two-realm theory of truth." Correctly understood, natural science and the arts point the learner to God. Lutherans have much to learn, and to envy, in Roche's vision for a Catholic university.

Carpenter's vision, no less convincingly presented, is of the neo-Calvinist university shaped by the vision of Abraham Kuyper. Teaching and scholarship are intentionally conducted from Christian principles; one pursues *Christian* literature, *Christian* sociology, even *Christian* medical science. Carpenter quotes James Braat approvingly that what makes higher education Christian is

not required chapel or Bible courses, not opportunities for extracurricular "service," not the cultivation of "character" or "citizenship," not the baptism of middle-class decency with Christian rhetoric or the frosting of Christian conviction with cultural refinement, not the promotion of piety alongside of scholarship or professional preparation; but the classroom as a chapel, scholarship as devotion, Christianity as the base of the curriculum and suffusing all studies.. (p. 203).

What might a Lutheran college look like? Mark Schwehn urges us to recognize our minority status and marginal standing within the academy. "Heavily residential, often emphasizing liberal education, relatively small in size, relatively homogenous in racial and ethnic composition, overwhelmingly undergraduate, and mainly Midwestern" (p. 210) we differ in almost every respect from the places where most Americans seek higher education. He echoes Lagerquist in celebrating "the Lutheran conviction that one must always operate with one eye on the God who loves the world and the other on the world that God loves. The more firmly for the Lutheran that the eye of faith rests upon God, the more fervently the eye of reason can acknowledge, celebrate, and seek to advance the best of secular learning and the best of university life" (*ibid.*). I would add that this vision separates us no less from Kuyper's neo-Calvinist program than from the secular academy.

Schwehn also tackles Benne's question of the vitality of the supporting institution. Recognizing that neither individual parishes nor the national Lutheran church bodies have been "especially generous with financial support for Lutheran colleges..." he calls upon us "to discover and to some extent form a college- and university-related church" consisting "of Lutheran laypeople who long for theological substance and spiritual wisdom that is commensurate with the advanced knowledge that informs other aspects of their lives; of Lutheran parents of prospective students who want to provide their children with an excellent education but who are almost completely unaware of the present quality of their own colleges; and of prosperous Lutherans who can be persuaded to support some of the pan-Lutheran endeavors that are necessary to transmit and enrich the best of the Lutheran tradition" (p. 215). I will return to this challenge as well.

Schwehn proposes that Lutheran colleges distinguish themselves by a more explicit focus on the centrality of vocation. Arguing much as he did in *Exiles from Eden*, he proposes that one is called "at the moment when desire and duty become one, when the source of one's deepest longing is at the same time something to which one is obedient." For a Christian academic, that is to understand the truth she seeks "as that through which and by which the Truth draws the academic ever unto Himself" (p. 218). A deeper and more self-conscious understanding of the concept of vocation "might well lead to a complete reformulation of such fundamental educational matters as the nature of human excellence and the relationship between the active and the contemplative life" (p. 219).

The final section, on issues likely to arise with the courts on federal, state, and local funding and with the AAUP on academic freedom, is definitely worth the attention of anyone concerned with those issues, but is less germane to our purposes here.

What appear to me to be the most significant issues raised by these essays and the scholarship to which they refer?

First, there is confusion about the very term "religious college." Although most of the authors were well aware that there are vast differences in the degree of affiliation among denominationally affiliated colleges, the essays on the whole seem to presume that these differences were – or at least ought to be -- outweighed by commonness of purpose. There are also strong suggestions that for the good of the churches as well as American higher education, the stronger the affiliation, the better. Although I detected no enthusiasm for institutions like Bob Jones University, none of the essayists suggested that more distance between a church and its colleges might be a healthy development rather than a sign of decay. Even Professor Benne, who was at least willing to question how well the model of church-relatedness endorsed by most presenters actually fit the majority of church-related colleges, plainly subscribes to the school of more is better. But is stronger church-affiliation, more church control, movement toward the kind of ideal type represented here by Notre Dame, Calvin, or Baylor, always the optimal direction for a college?

Second, are the fortunes of religious colleges, however defined, sufficiently independent from their constituencies and from the larger culture that they can reasonably be said to control their own destinies? Several contributors recognize the importance of a strong denominational constituency, but anyone who has raised money or recruited students recognizes that the wishes of donors and potential students and parents enter very quickly into the conversation. It appears to be no accident that many of the model institutions – Calvin, Baylor, St. Olaf, Brigham Young, Yeshiva – rely on a strong ethnic/geographic base for students and support. If, as is frequently the case with more settled and acculturated constituencies, the passing years bring less and less interest in denominational exclusiveness, will the colleges not be forced, even against their will, to (in Noll's words) "broaden their appeal"? To use an ELCA example, to what extent might the difference in robustness of church affiliation between a Gettysburg College and a Luther College be largely a function of the level of acculturation of Gettysburg's constituency relative to that of Luther's? All the ELCA colleges would like to recruit more Lutheran students, as the very title of the "Reclaiming Lutheran Students" study suggests. It is our constituencies – students, parents, pastors and bishops – who appear to lack knowledge of, enthusiasm for, or even interest in the demonstrably better education we provide for Lutheran students, and – without the enormous endowments enjoyed by a Princeton or a Williams -- we depend upon those constituencies for our survival.

Third, none of the authors questions the assumption that the cost of the "secularization" of formerly denominational institutes has been too high. Yet even within this rarified scholarly company, I suspect that no one would seriously argue that the United States would be better off today if Harvard had remained committed to its Puritan roots. Might it be that there were reasons other than the cowardice and venality of college administrators for colleges to be drawn to the secular Enlightenment model? Despite the many legitimate criticisms that can be directed at American higher education at the beginning of the twenty-first century, might we be overstating the gains and minimizing the deficits of education at religious colleges? Many of our colleges were distinctly more religious fifty years ago, but were they not also more rigid, more parochial, more dogmatic, more moralistic, less academically rigorous? To state the point in a completely unfair manner, were our colleges half a century ago entirely free of the characteristics that caused such well-known novelists as Mary McCarthy and Peter DeVries to reject their faith communities? Would our colleges as they were then have resisted the kind of evangelical Christian pressure brought on the University of North Carolina to remove a book on the Q'uran from its summer reading list? Might we at least wish to engage more directly critiques of Marsden's "secularization" argument by scholars like David Hollinger?

I will close with some of my own reflections on these issues.

First, I am much more comfortable than any of the contributors in endorsing the notion that there can be many viable models of church relationship. Wittenberg's relationship to the church, to take the example I know best, has never in its almost 160-year history been Lutheran enough to satisfy Professor Benne's expectations for robustness. Our ELCA Director for Higher Education, Arne Selbyg, explained at last summer's Vocation of a Lutheran College Conference that during the conversations that led to the creation of the ELCA, colleges like Wittenberg, Gettysburg, and Roanoke were originally assigned to a category of "church-related colleges" rather than the more robust, and presumably more deserving, "colleges of the church." Yet there is no doubt in my mind that much would be lost if we -- or the ELCA -- severed our relationship. Wittenberg is

the better, and the church is the better, because we are connected. We do not want to move in the direction of Baylor, but we find the Ohio State model equally unattractive. The “Reclaiming Lutheran Students” study shows clearly that our graduates find us unusually successful in the very ways most prized by Lutheran parents and opinion leaders. Never one to shy from the logic of his arguments, Professor Benne recognizes that if we insist on his most robust model for Lutheran colleges, “in the future we may be able to sustain only two or three” (p. 98). I fail to see how this represents a gain for the church or for higher education.

Perhaps I am overly suspicious, but I also detect in the argument for more direct church influence an underlying concern that laypeople may be a little out of control, or at least may be taking things in a direction that clergy (and in this instance I would lump many of our most informed and committed faculty with the clergy) would prefer they not go. In the Catholic case my discomfort is more than a suspicion. Lay and clerical, Catholic administrators nationwide are feeling the effects of largely unwanted ecclesiastical interference stemming from the pope’s encyclical *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. I fear no such interference from Bishop Hanson and his colleagues, but it is undoubtedly the case that the predominantly lay Boards of Trustees and presidents that operate most of the ELCA colleges are far less dominated by theological concerns than most clergy (and than the contributors to this volume). Do not many of the less robust colleges, in other words, reflect rather well what most laypeople are looking for in a church-related college, an institution that finds ways to express values that combine the same religiosity that motivates their churchgoing with a broader commitment to take their places in American society? And is it a surprise that this strikes the highly committed as lukewarm, lackadaisical, almost worse than no church-relationship at all?

I am inescapably reminded of the period I study, early seventeenth century England, when a group of highly-educated, theologically-driven clergy succeeded in converting prominent laypeople to their cause and then attempted to impose their version of Christianity on the population of England. The ultimate result was a bloody civil war and a Church of England ever afterwards hostile to their cause. Had these Puritans (the same ones who founded Harvard, by the way) taken a little more seriously the concerns of those who respected religion but whose lives were not dominated by it – had they been willing to settle for a less theologically pure but more comprehensive church – the bloodshed might have been avoided and the final outcome more positive for themselves.

I agree with Professor Benne that some – perhaps many – students will not want to be conformed to this world and will seek out the Lutheran, or Reformed, or Catholic ghetto. I have the greatest respect for the colleges that exist to satisfy their needs. But I am unwilling to cede the honor of being a “religious college” entirely to those colleges.

My reflections on the second issue piggyback on those of the first. Let me return to Professor Benne’s conjecture that “in the future we may be able to sustain only two or three” authentically Lutheran colleges. [I come back to Benne not to beat up on him – I know he gives better than he gets – but because I respect his willingness to state the implications of his positions forthrightly.] Who is “we” in this sentence, I would ask, and what is the meaning of “sustain”? Are “we” the ELCA as a whole, Lutheran students and parents, concerned clergy and faculty, significant donors? If we understand “sustain” in economic terms to mean tuition, room and board, annual giving, and capital campaign gifts, the ELCA all but disappears from the picture, and congregations and synods, welcome as their support is, are not far behind. In Wittenberg’s case, and I must believe in Roanoke’s as well, even Lutheran parents, clergy, and donors contribute significantly less than half our total operating budget. I admit to being stunned by the extent of mainstream Protestant withdrawal from higher education documented by Sloan – fortunately for us, the Division of Higher Education and Schools labors faithfully to remind the ELCA of the importance of its colleges. But even the most faithful advocates for higher education within the ELCA would hardly argue that support for the colleges – material or moral – looms large at synod assemblies or in the day-to-day concerns of pastors and bishops. Even the Lutheran fraternal associations – now combined as *Thrivent* – have been moving away from direct support to colleges toward matching gifts from policyholders. Apart from students and parents, and alumni, our most significant support probably comes from the members of our faculty and staff, who work for less – often far less – than they could earn at secular institutions because they are living out a vocation at our colleges.

Mark Schwehn recognizes the challenge of Benne’s “we”; he would like to see the formation of a “college-related church” of Lutheran laypeople, Lutheran parents, and prosperous Lutherans prepared to support pan-Lutheran endeavors. Include our faculties and staffs in this support group, and I suspect most ELCA college presidents would welcome such a “church” even more than Schwehn. In fact, the college presidents and their development and admissions staffs have long been laboring

to create it. But as I suggested above, we will need to be realistic about what these constituencies, not least the faculty, want from us. Noll's recognition that many ethnic Americans want nothing more than to assimilate, the loyalty of faculty members to their academic discipline (so effectively described and critiqued by Schwehn in *Exiles from Eden*), the importance of the most academically rigorous preparation for jobs and graduate school, demands for ever more sophisticated access to electronic information technology, the importance to this generation of students of residence hall and recreational facilities beyond the wildest dreams of those of us who attended college in the 1960s – these are only a few of “extra-Lutheran” constituency expectations that a Lutheran college must today fulfill. None of these demands need conflict with a firm commitment to manifest Lutheran values, but it is fruitless to imagine that we can give them short shrift in our desire to make our church relationship more robust. As they loom larger in student/parent expectation – and our research would indicate that for most prospective Wittenberg students and parents they loom larger than our Lutheranness – they will shape our institutions in ways that we can manage but hardly control.

As is often the case, Benne is right on the money here. Because we cannot rely entirely on Lutheran “sustaining,” most of us have had to broaden our support base, and that in turn has led us to be less Lutheran. Rather than fault our twentieth-century predecessors for this fact, perhaps we should praise them for maintaining as much Lutheran presence as our colleges have. We may taste unleavened to the palates of the purists, but our lump is a lot yeastier than it might have been without the consistent support those leaders showed for our ties to the church.

I come finally to the evil of secularization. Here I must begin with the obvious historical question: if movement toward more robust church affiliation is so clearly desirable, why have the large majority of “religious colleges” moved consistently in the other direction? I would begin by piggybacking on my reflections on the second issue: lack of adequate support – in money or students -- from the sponsoring denomination has forced colleges to attract a broader segment of students and donors. But I believe Sloan's essay suggests an equally compelling explanation – that the enlightenment had a good reason for choosing to put claims based on faith assertions to the side. Some scholars would go so far as to argue that the enlightenment model arose in significant part as a reaction to the clashing faith-assertions of the religious wars that followed the Protestant and Catholic Reformations. Those seeking truth welcomed a method that could set claims one against another without regard for the personal convictions of the claimants; “privileging” occurred only when an explanation stood the test of criticism over time. [This is of course an ideal; Noll reminds us that enlightenment scholarship has in fact privileged élites over women, the poor, and members of minority groups, and Thomas Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962) showed how even paradigms in the natural sciences could exercise dogmatic control over the search for new truth (p. 85). Personally, I see such observations as challenges to reform the enlightenment model rather than simply to toss it away.] Despite the argument that the academy has now entered a post-modern, post-structural, or post-enlightenment state of development, I remain cold toward the proposal, not seldom heard from segments of the church, that Lutheran or Christian positions should be “privileged” in the classroom. Joel Carpenter's essay, delivered not quite a year before September 11, 2001, reminds us of Samuel Huntington's contention (*The Clash of Civilizations* [1996]) that religious traditions will play a powerful role in the culture clashes of the twenty-first century. I believe we will need the enlightenment model more than ever; my Lutheran respect for seeking the truth without any dogmatic limitations only reinforces my respect for a university model that subjects all truth claims to the most rigorous criticism and grants no special privileges to particular interpretations, be they liberal, conservative, individualistic, conservative, Muslim, or Christian.

Let me try to state this point less obliquely. I think our Lutheran tradition demands that our colleges maintain an allegiance to the highest ideals of academic scholarship no less than an allegiance to the church body to whom we are related. We ought to yield to no one in the rigor of our scholarship, and we ought to ask no special indulgence from the critiques of our non-Lutheran colleagues. [This includes the Religion Department, by the way. I do not share the disdain of some theologians for the results of sociological, anthropological, historical, and literary study of religious traditions or the assumption that religion courses exist to teach “biblical truth.”] On this point I see Wittenberg in the mainstream of Lutheranism, not on its secular fringe. If I understand DeAne Lagerquist correctly, I agree with her conviction that the reconciliation of faith and knowledge occurs not in the subordination of one to the other but beyond them both. If this is secularization, colleges have been wise to embrace it.

I need to add that I have often heard colleagues at other ELCA colleges explain at Vocation Conferences how welcome their non-Lutheran colleagues feel at their institutions. I take their assertions at face value, but I think we ought to beware of the

possibility of wishful thinking on this point. It may be that my experiences at Wittenberg and Gettysburg are anomalous, but colleagues at both institutions, particularly Jewish colleagues, are quick to bristle when they sense Lutheran favoritism. Shortly after my arrival at Wittenberg, I was told sorrowfully that it was well-known until 1970 that a Roman Catholic could never receive tenure, regardless of the quality of her teaching and scholarship. And those who would measure our commitment to the church by the percentage of Lutheran students might at least consider that both Capital University and Wittenberg have a percentage of African Americans in our student body that most ELCA colleges would envy. These students are disproportionately serious about their Christianity, but almost none of them is Lutheran, and I wonder whether they would have found us as attractive if our Lutheran identity were significantly more robust?

If not by privileging Lutheran values in the classroom, how then do we differ from secular institutions? One important way is in the co-curriculum, and particularly in programs in the chapel. I described how our church relationship enriches Wittenberg's life at the 1999 Vocations Conference, so I will not repeat those directions here.

What about the curriculum? Reading these essays has brought to mind several areas – explored at Notre Dame -- where colleges like Wittenberg could significantly improve the quality of their church relationship. First, we could reflect our history and commitments more clearly in the areas we choose to emphasize. To take a “secular” example, one might expect the Gettysburg College History Department to pay more than usual attention to the American Civil War (and it does). Lutheran college history and religion departments ought to be especially strong in Reformation (Protestant *and* Catholic, I would hope) studies and offer ample opportunity for serious biblical study. Many are and do. One could, like Augsburg College, emphasize global studies with a particular interest in the developing world. Like Notre Dame, many of our colleges offer special opportunities to study the language, history, and culture of their founding ethnic groups. The teaching and scholarship in those courses should be as rigorous as any, but the very existence of the courses and other curricular emphases can show forth the college's sense of itself.

Second, we could follow Notre Dame's example and hire scholars like Marsden, scholars who may not be from the founding church but who self-consciously reflect their faith commitments in the five ways Marsden enumerates. Marsden asks no dispensation from the adherence to the discipline of his craft. No supernatural explanations – from demons or the holy spirit – are invoked to explain natural and historical events. Were Marsden convictions different, were he a socialist, for example, or a libertarian, those convictions might equally be apparent in his scholarship. But he would adhere to the rules of his craft nonetheless. Noll suggests that such scholars are faring well at large research universities. Rather than counting the number of Lutherans on our faculties, we might well try to increase the number of those whose reflections have led them to pursue their vocation more self-consciously out of their commitments.

Third, we might be more open to the qualitative epistemologies called for by Sloan (and present to some degree in Roche's vision for Notre Dame). Dennis O'Brien, former president of Bucknell and the University of Rochester, has recently made the case for such an epistemology in *The Idea of a Catholic University* (2002), which appeared after the conclusion of this conference. O'Brien argues that the university has learned – perhaps somewhat grudgingly, to accept the fine arts into its curriculum, even though the arts with their commitment to a highly personal, “signed” truth expand the bounds of the scientific epistemology. He calls for it to find ways of including the sacramental, “iconic,” “participatory” truth of religion as well, so as not to exclude encounter with our ultimate reality. Parker Palmer makes a similar call for participatory knowledge in *To Know as We Are Known*.

Enough. It should be evident that these essays can provoke even the most phlegmatic reviewer to vigorous engagement with the topic. That, I believe, was the editor's hope.

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ELCA COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES



Augsburg College
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Luther College
Decorah, Iowa

Augustana College
Rock Island, Illinois

Midland Lutheran College
Fremont, Nebraska

Augustana College
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Muhlenberg College
Allentown, Pennsylvania

Bethany College
Linsborg, Kansas

Newberry College
Newberry, South Carolina

California Lutheran University
Thousand Oaks, California

Pacific Lutheran University
Tacoma, Washington

Capital University
Columbus, Ohio

Roanoke College
Salem, Virginia

Carthage College
Kenosha, Wisconsin

St. Olaf College
Northfield, Minnesota

Concordia College
Moorhead, Minnesota

Susquehanna University
Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania

Dana College
Blair, Nebraska

Texas Lutheran University
Seguin, Texas

Finlandia University
Hancock, Michigan

Thiel College
Greenville, Pennsylvania

Gettysburg College
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

Wagner College
Staten Island, New York

Grand View College
Des Moines, Iowa

Waldorf College
Forest City, Iowa

Gustavus Adolphus College
St. Peter, Minnesota

Wartburg College
Waverly, Iowa

Lenoir-Rhyne College
Hickory, North Carolina

Wittenberg University
Springfield, Ohio