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INTERSECTIONS

faith + life + learning

NUMBER SEVEN

SUMMER 1999

CUBA: THE FACE OF THE NEIGHBOR



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INTERSECTIONS

SUMMER 1999

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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

For the ELCA Division for Higher Education and Schools and the Council of ELCA College and University Presidents, the journal INTERSECTIONS is an important way to stimulate discussion of what it means (and should mean) to a college or university to be related to the ELCA. Another important way is through the conference where most of the papers have been presented that get published in INTERSECTIONS, the annual conference on "The Vocation of a Lutheran College." We thought the 1998 conference went exceptionally well, and the reactions after the presentations were very positive.

Maybe we should not be surprised then, that the INTERSECTIONS issue preceding this one, where we first drew upon that conference for papers, has been the most popular ever (so far), widely used by the Lutheran colleges and universities. But I do want to praise and congratulate our editor, professor Tom Christenson, since he gave as the keynote address at the conference what became the lead article of that issue. His modesty had not allowed us to draw upon his talents and insights in as prominent a manner until now. This issue continues the publication of the presentations from that conference.

Both the conference and the journal are possible thanks to a generous grant from the Lutheran Brotherhood Foundation. Now LB has come through with another great grant, so this summer we will be able to have the inaugural session of "The Lutheran Academy of Scholars in Higher Education." This will be a two-week long seminar at Harvard University for a select group of faculty from Lutheran colleges and universities. The theme will be "Finding Our Voice - Christian Faith and Critical Vision," and the leader will be Dr. Ron Thiemann, the John Lord O'Brian Professor of Divinity and former Dean of Harvard School of Divinity. This will be another way for the Council of Presidents and the Division for Higher Education to stimulate discussion of and publications about the relationship between faith, life and higher education.

I am glad that the institutions of the church and the institutions of higher education have recognized that they need to promote scholarly work on faith related issues in many different disciplines. I am also glad that Lutheran colleges and universities have faculty who respond to the challenge to study, argue, and present in oral and in written form new

insights about the important issues college students must face as they try to find clarity in their lives. And I am glad that you have the opportunity to read this journal to stimulate your thoughts about these issues.

Arne Selbyg
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From the Editor

This issue of INTERSECTIONS contains several things that should be of interest to you: A) A continuation of the papers from last summer's Vocation of a Lutheran College Conference, these by Cheryl Ney and by Robert Scholz. Both papers argue from and for a particular "take" on disciplines in the university, in their cases chemistry and music. B) In addition we have a personal response to the themes and issues of that conference written by Jennifer Sacher Wiley. We hope to include more responses of this kind in future editions. C) An interview with four faculty at Capital University who visited Cuba last summer and came away vitally transformed by it. D) A brief, but very thoughtful, meditation written by Eric Haaland, a student at St. Olaf College. E) An INTERSECTIONS first, a letter to the editor!

Among this variety I am sure you will find things to inspire you, things to provoke questions, and things to argue with. Whatever your reaction, let us know. We don't want this to be the only issue to print a letter to the editor. Share your thoughts with us.

Once again I want to share with you some things I've read. But in this case it is not the content of a book that I want to share, but the thing it models for us. *Wagering on Transcendence* is a collection of essays, all of them written by faculty at Mount Mary College in Milwaukee. In the introduction to this volume, the editor, Phyllis Carey writes:

A few years ago, a small group of Mount Mary faculty members met on a Friday afternoon to discuss George Steiner's Real Presences over a glass of wine in the faculty lounge. From the lively discussion that ensued ... the idea for this volume emerged. Steiner's book sparked a conversation about the relationship of God's existence to a variety of issues. ...in our own time ... God's non-existence has become a given. ... [By contrast] George Steiner argues that even secular transcendence implicitly depends on God's existence: "any coherent understanding of what language is and how it performs any coherent account of the capacity of human speech to communicate meaning and feeling is, in the final analysis, underwritten by the assumption of God's presence"

The essays in the volume are accounts of writers and works that witness to dimensions of transcendence: from Augustine to Italo Calvino, St. John of the Cross to Annie Dillard, Czeslaw Milosz, Etty Hillesum, Joan Didion, and Vaclav Havel.

Though I found many of the essays provocative and informing, what excited me about the volume was the community of intellect and spirit it bore witness to. What a wonderful model; conversation over wine about things of a deep and serious nature expressive of the nature and mission of the institution, provoking excellent academic work by a wide variety of thinkers. I think *we should shamelessly copy this idea*, and we should do it even before we get the faculty development grant that we usually wait for to begin such things. What better use of the Dean's budget than to spend it on a few copies of Steiner's book (or someone else's) and a jug (or a case) of wine? When I pass from this world I hope to leave money to endow many Friday's worth of wine and conversation. This shall be called the Christenson Endowment. *In vino veritas!* How about you?

Tom Christenson
Capital University, Summer, 1999.

“Rooting Science in Empathy: Growing Towards a Sustainable Science Practice for the 21st Century”
Or
“How a Feminist, Trained as a DNA Biochemist, Finds Freedom at an Institution Whose Heritage is German Lutheran”

By Cheryl L. Ney

“To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul.”

Simone Weil, The Need for Roots, 1952.

I would like to use my experiences in the Chemistry Department at Capital University over the past ten years to suggest what teaching and learning in the sciences at Lutheran institutions has been and can be about. In doing so, I hope to address the following questions: 1) What does empathy have to do with science?; 2) What is “science practice”?; 3) What is “sustainable science practice”? and 4) What does a “sustainable science practice” have to do with the teaching and learning of science in Lutheran higher education?

Exploring the Grounding for Teaching Science

I came to Capital University in Columbus, Ohio in 1987, as an assistant professor, just after obtaining a Ph.D. at the University of Chicago in Biochemistry¹. Since that time, with the support of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Daina McGary, who is well-versed in the work of Ernest Boyer², I have focused my scholarship on teaching, specifically on teaching and learning by women in science. A commitment to teaching on the part of our institutions allows faculty in the sciences the freedom to choose teaching as a focus of scholarship.

Cheryl Ney is Professor in The Department of Chemistry and Director of Capital University's Summer Science Institute.

As I look back on my exploration of the scholarship of teaching, I have come to realize that I spent the first six or seven years searching to define the foundations of teaching. I began my teaching career by trying to extrapolate from my own experience as a student to the students in my first general chemistry course — who were a *mere* 13 years apart, so I thought. Through a collaborative journaling project I conducted with nursing students in chemistry, a project I devised to lower their anxiety about the study of chemistry, I came to realize that their experiences were diverse and different from mine. As an example, they were having an opportunity to discuss their fears and anxieties about the study of chemistry to their professor as a way of improving their learning -- something my staid Arizona State University professors would never have done (after all, many of my classmates and I were not the “cream-of-the-crop”, the “target group” back in those days!).

With the realization that I couldn't solely use my experiences to understand the students in the courses I was teaching, I turned to the research literature on teaching and learning, in general and in the sciences, specifically³. Since I was primarily teaching chemistry to female nursing majors, I also focused on the literature describing the experiences of women and girls with science education.⁴ Imagine my surprise, when I, a narrowly trained DNA biochemist, learned that there *was* a research base for teaching. In turning to the research literature on teaching and learning, I had moved away from using “teachers teach as they are taught” as my foundation for teaching. This change

in direction also demonstrated to me that I could use my highly developed skills in scientific research in doing research on teaching and learning in the classroom. Every good scientist knows that you start a research project by reading the current research literature!

As an example of this practice, I can remember using a Journal of Chemical Education article, entitled, "What Goes on in Student's Heads in Lab"⁵, to change how I interacted with students in lab. I resisted asking students theoretical questions about their experiment, while they were conducting the experiment. The article reported that students have difficulty enough managing and thinking about the lab procedure, without also having to think about atoms and molecules — those questions can come after the experiment is over! I use this example to show that this research literature is very useful for one's own practice of teaching.

On the basis of my work in the teaching and learning of science, in April of 1994, I was chosen to be a faculty development leader in the National Science Foundation funded Women and Science project in the University of Wisconsin System. This was serious business — which got me thinking even more seriously about the foundations of teaching — although I really hadn't conceptualized my work yet as getting at "foundations". It was during this time that I participated in a discussion (at a faculty meeting, I believe) led by a colleague from the Humanities — a philosopher, I believe — Tom somebody — who was talking about his work— which had something to do with grounding something or other in Lutheran theology, that I connected the notion of grounding to my work. Eureka! I was searching to understand the grounding for teaching. As it happens, I was also actively pursuing an understanding of feminist critiques of science, which required an understanding of the epistemology or grounding in science. Armed with the notion of grounding and an interest in foundational issues in teaching *and* in science, I

came upon the idea that pedagogy in science ought to be grounded in the epistemology of science. That is, **how we teach science ought to arise out of what we believe about how we know what we know in science.**⁶

Understanding the value of empathy in science

Exploring epistemological issues in science led me to the work of Cathleen Loving, a teacher educator.⁷ She has developed a useful framework for understanding two important aspects of the epistemology of science (The Scientific Theory Profile), which she describes in two continua charted on an xy graph (something every scientist can understand). One additional feature of her work is that she identifies the thinking of important philosophers of science about these two aspects of scientific knowledge by plotting their beliefs as points on the graph. Glancing at the Scientific Theory Profile, one observes a scatter plot. This leads one to the important understanding that philosophers of science don't agree about the nature of scientific knowledge!

The aspect of epistemology in science I want to focus on addresses the question, "Who are scientific knowers?". Using Loving's Scientific Theory Profile, this question is explored on the x axis and therefore as a continuum. On one end of the scale is the purely rational knower — the one who through the correct and dispassionate use of "the scientific method", is led to an unbiased, objective understanding of nature. Two popular cultural portrayals of the best examples of this rationality can be found in two Star Trek series — Mr. Spock and Data— one a Vulcan, the other an android — they aren't even human! On the opposite end of the scale is the natural knower (surprise — it's not characterized as irrational!). This is the knower whose knowledge is hopelessly biased by their perspective (including emotions) and therefore uniquely their own. Perhaps those who believe in a flat earth, fall into this category. It is important to understand that these are two extreme ends of a continuum and somewhere

between these two extremes, lies modern western scientific knowers.

I have chosen to focus on this aspect of the epistemology of science since many of the feminist critiques of science specifically address this aspect.⁸ At the turn of the century and well into the 1960s, scientific knowers would be characterized well towards the rational end of the scale of “who can know” in science. And what gender would these knowers be? Herein lies a critique of science developed by Evelyn Fox-Keller. An early work of hers,⁹ examines the history of modern western science and shows that science was founded to be a “truly masculine philosophy” — in which, “thinking objectively is thinking like a man”. Women, emotional creatures, were considered to be incapable of rational thought. But is this so? We now have an emerging and rich history of women in science which shows us that women have been doing science since their days as seed gatherers!¹⁰

Does a rational investigation of the natural world require a cold, dispassionate stance? Another work by Evelyn Fox-Keller suggests an answer to this question. Fox-Keller has also written the biography of Barbara McClintock,¹¹ a scientist who won the Nobel Prize in the 1980s for work she had done in the 1940s and 50s. In interviewing McClintock for this biography, Fox-Keller noted not only the patient and careful investigations and finely developed cytogenetic techniques of McClintock but also the empathy, or intellectual identification that McClintock held for the objects of her investigation. McClintock herself used a phrase to describe this relationship which became the title of her biography, “A Feeling for the Organism”. It is this empathy which motivated McClintock’s curiosity and was the basis for how she conducted her research:

For all of us, it is need and interest above all that induce the growth of our abilities; a motivated observer develops faculties that a casual spectator may never be aware of. Over the years, a special kind of sympathetic understanding grew in

McClintock, heightening her powers of discernment, until finally, the objects of her study have become subjects in their own right; they claim from her a kind of attention that most us experience only in relation to other persons.”¹²

An understanding of how Barbara McClintock carried out scientific research demonstrates two very important ideas. First is the idea that one can do serious scientific research without having to be dispassionate and second, rooting scientific investigation in empathy can lead to important understandings about nature (afterall, McClintock did receive the Nobel Prize!).

Of what use is this foundational understanding of one aspect of the epistemology of science to the science educator? I can think of at least two answers to the question. First, much of the research on the teaching and science, as well as the experience of countless science educators, calls for science curricula and teaching that is “relevant”. Many students want to have some connection, some empathy, or connection to what they are studying. Chemistry, for example, is much more interesting when you understand that you can apply a chemical perspective to yourself and your world. Secondly, much of the research on teaching and learning in general, (plus the experience of countless educators), points to the idea that different people have different learning (and teaching) styles. A science which welcomes people whose thinking is rooted in empathy is an enriched science, one that can provide deeper understandings of nature.

Defining science as “sustainable science practice”

Rooting science in empathy emphasizes the idea that it is humans who do science. Since it is humans — with minds in bodies, culturally situated and historically located — conducting this creative endeavor called science, perhaps it is not quite the value free activity that it is portrayed as. If science is not what we thought it was, what is science? Back we go to foundational issues. If

humans, as natural knowers, do science, than science ought to be reconceived as a human activity. (This is something scholars in the area of science and technology studies have been actively working on in this century.) Borrowing from Arnold Pacey¹³ (an historian of technology), I'd like to suggest that we think of science as the "web of human activity surrounding science". This would certainly encompass much more than what scientists do. It would include the business of science, the governmental activities regarding science, the work related issues scientists, their managers as well as technicians face, the cultural representations of science, science education, the ethics of science, the use and abuse of scientific knowledge and so on. Pacey describes this "web of human activity" as a "practice". He then goes on to define three aspects to "practice": technical (which would include methods rooted in empathy as well as dispassionate rationality), organizational (business, legal, governmental) and cultural (values, history, cross cultural, education, etc.) aspects. With this concept of practice, science can be redefined as science practice with technical, organizational and cultural aspects to it. With this definition, science is positioned in society as an enterprise conducted by whole human beings!

What are the implications for teaching and learning about science as science practice? One implication is that this definition of science is useful for understanding science as it is in today's world. Learning how to apply this understanding of science practice to issues of science and society can help to raise important issues and concerns for our time. This definition however doesn't clearly speak to the issue of what kind of science practice we would choose for the future. I believe that this is a critical issue. Many young people don't have as a top priority understanding why science practice is the way it is (some of us do) — I think that if they want to know anything at all about science practice, they want to know about science practice in their future (not just their future employment).

What could science practice in the 21st Century

look like? One proposal, coming from several perspectives (including feminist perspectives) is a call for a *sustainable* science practice.

This is not a call to sustain science as it is but rather to choose sustainability as an underlying value in all scientific research and its applications, as well as in the practice of science.

What is sustainability? Here are some definitions found on the home page of the Center for Sustainable Communities at the University of Washington¹⁴

- "A sustainable society is one which satisfies its needs without diminishing the prospects of future generations." Lester Brown, Founder and President, Worldwatch Institute
- "Our vision is of a life-sustaining earth. We are committed to the achievement of a dignified, peaceful and equitable existence. We believe a sustainable United States will have an economy that equitably provides for satisfying livelihoods and a safe, healthy, high quality life for current and future generations. Our nation will protect its environment, its natural resource base, and the functions and viability of natural systems on which all life depends." President's Council on Sustainable Development
- "A transition to sustainability involves moving from linear to cyclical processes and technologies. "The only processes we can rely on indefinitely are cyclical; all linear processes must eventually come to an end." Dr. Karl Henrik-Robert, MD

A sustainable science practice then, is a practice of science rooted in the value of sustainability.

What could a sustainable science practice be like? Fortunately, models already exist that may provide

some direction for a future sustainable science practice. The earliest example comes from the Science Shops in the Netherlands. The one in Amsterdam, founded in 1977, has as its mission, offering socially under-privileged groups an opportunity to benefit from the University of Amsterdam's knowledge and research potential.¹⁵

Questions brought to the science shop have included, "Is the UV light used for drying offset printing harmful to workers? What are the environmental consequences of milk drainings due to strikes in the dairy industry? Is the cleaner, "Danclan" harmful to dentures?" In 1987, "an evaluation of 162 cases at the University of Amsterdam showed that investigations undertaken on behalf of clients of the local science shop have given rise to follow-up research, publications and many other enduring effects on academic practice."

At the time of this study, 2070 questions had been brought to the shop. Out of that 1875 cases had been passed on to university scientists, with 385 cases requiring original research to be answered (research conducted by graduate students — some of which led to Ph.D. dissertations!).¹⁶ This model of a science shop shows that resources for university research can be shared with the community to the benefit of both.

The Dutch Science Shop model has been adapted in the United States, where it is called "Community-Based Research". A comprehensive analysis of 12 case studies of this type of research has been compiled by researchers at the Loka Institute.¹⁷ These projects resulted in concrete changes to the community such as: energy conservation retrofits of over 10,000 low-income housing units in Chicago, a moratorium on forest logging pending the conclusion of Alaskan legislators and activists, replacement of poisoned drinking water with a safe water line into a rural Kentucky community (and a legal judgement requiring the establishment of an \$11 million community health fund) and the creation of a new health program in Chicago for refugee women, to name a few. Other important findings about

community based research are:¹⁸

- Community-based research processes differ fundamentally from mainstream research in being coupled relatively tightly with community groups that are eager to know the research results and use them in practical efforts to achieve constructive social change. Community-based research is not only usable, it is generally used to good effect.
- Community-based research often produces unanticipated and far reaching ancillary results, including new social relationships and trust, as well as heightened social efficacy. It may thus provide one constructive response to the growing concern that American civil society is in crisis and unraveling.
- To create a U.S. community research system that would provide service as comprehensively and accessibly as does the Dutch system would cost on the order of \$450 million annually (45 times the current investment in community-based research but less than 0.3 percent of total U.S. R&D expenditures) in 645 centers (50 have been identified).

"This research differs from the bulk of the R&D conducted in the United States, most of which — at a total cost of \$170 billion per year — is performed on behalf of business, the military, the federal government, or in pursuit of the scientific and academic communities' intellectual interests."

Teaching and learning science for the 21st Century

How would our institutions, and our teaching and learning of science change, if developing a sustainable science practice in our society were a goal? Could we use community based research to accomplish this goal? Some institutions are already moving in this direction with their emphasis on service learning.¹⁹ A chief concern regarding service learning on our campuses is that,

service learning is a curricular emphasis that competes with plenty of other curricular goals (as well as other types of interests) on a university campus. What would it mean for an institution to boldly choose service learning as their sole focus — even in the sciences? To commit the human and material resources of the institution to the act of teaching and learning for sustainability?

Freedom for individuals within institutions an institutional freedom

There is one final issue I would like to raise. While, I personally am eternally grateful for the freedom that Capital University, a institution of Lutheran higher education, provides to me to envision sustainable science practice and to work towards those ends by what means I can, I have to ask myself the following question: How and by what means do our institutions become more than the sum of its individuals acting out their freedom? I wonder if we, all of us, at universities and colleges — faculty, staff, administrators, students and their parents as well as Board of Trustee members, have the courage to work towards creating some kind of “institutional freedom” that would allow for the development of universities of vision and promise. Can we break free from the constraints of today’s corporate culture that are lurking in many of our institutions, where teaching and learning have often become solely about preparing for the job market? Can “we” as Institutions of Higher Education strive for the wholeness God wants from Abraham — not perfection but integrity?²⁰

Footnotes

¹ While in Chicago I was a very active member of Augustana Lutheran Church (across from LSTC), where we had a two-year-long discussion centered on “faith seeking understanding, understanding seeking faith”

² Boyer, Ernest L., Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of a Professoriate, Jossey-Bass, 1990.

³ Bruffee, Kenneth A. Collaborative Learning:

Higher Education, Interdependence and the Authority of Knowledge. The John Hopkins University Press, 1993. Tobin, Kenneth, editor, The Practice of Constructivism in Science Education, Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates, 1993.

⁴ Rosser, Sue V. Female Friendly Science: Applying Women’s Studies Methods and Theories to Attract Students, Pergamon Press, 1990.

⁵ Pickering, Miles, “What Goes on in Student’s Heads in Lab”, J Chem Ed 64(6), 521-3, 1987.

⁶ Reeves, B.J. and Ney, C., “Positivist and Constructivist Understandings About Science and Their Implications for STS Teaching and Learning”, Bull Sci Tech Soc 12, 195-9, 1992.

⁷ Loving, Cathleen C., “The Scientific Theory Profile: A Philosophy of Science Model for Science Teachers”, J Res in Sci Teaching 28(9), 823-38, 1991.

⁸ Harding, Sandra, The Science Question in Feminism, Cornell University Press, 1986.

Haraway, Donna, Primate Visions: Gender, Race and Nature in the World of Modern Science, Routledge, 1989. Longino, Helen E., Science as Social Knowledge: Values and Objectivity in Scientific Inquiry, Princeton University Press, 1990.

⁹ Fox-Keller, Evelyn, Reflections on Gender and Science, Yale University Press, 1985.

¹⁰ Alic, Margaret, Hypatia’s Heritage: A History of women in Science from Antiquity through the Nineteenth Century, Beacon Press, 1986. Rossiter, Margaret, Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940, John Hopkins University Press, 1982. Rossiter, Margaret, Women Scientists in America: Before Affirmative Action 1940-1972, John Hopkins University Press, 1995.

¹¹ Fox-Keller, Evelyn, A Feeling for the Organism: The Life and Work of Barbara McClintock, W. H. Freeman and Company, 1983.

¹² *ibid*, p 200.

¹³ Pacey, Arnold, The Culture of Technology, Fourth Printing, MIT Press, 1989.

¹⁴ <http://weber.u.washington.edu/~common>

¹⁵ Zaal, R. and Leydesdorff, L., “Amsterdam Science Shop and its influence on university

research: the effects of ten years of dealing with non-academic questions”, Science and Public Policy, 14 (6), 310-6,1987.

¹⁶*ibid*

¹⁷ Sclove, R., Scammell, M. and Holland, B., “Community-Based Research in the United States”, The Loka Institute homepage at <http://www.amerherst.edu/~loka/menu.html>

¹⁸*ibid*

¹⁹Rhoads, R. A. and Howard, J.P.F., Editors, Academic Service Learning: A Pedagogy of Action and Reflection, Jossey-Bass, 1998.

²⁰Christenson, T., “The Freedom of a Christian”, plenary paper for “Vocations of a Lutheran College/University Conference”, August 1998.

How Can We Stop From Singing?

by Robert Scholz

When I was asked to make this presentation, my first thought was to construct a well-organized and integrated response to Luther's idea of the freedom of the Christian from my perspective as a musician and to amplify this with my own anecdotes which would lead to wise conclusions. During further deliberations and reading (including Tom Christenson's clear and stimulating paper) I discovered more and more topics. These, in turn, were multiplied by ideas from other readings and personal reflections until I was finally left with a jumble that resembled the condition of my school office. After several days of procrastination, pulling weeks, and finding creative energy to do other easier tasks, I decided to follow Luther's directive, sin boldly, and get on with a paper that will offer opinions and raise some interesting questions (I hope), drawing on my experience as a musician of over fifty years and a college teacher of thirty-two years, thirty of them spent in a Lutheran environment at St. Olaf College and two at the South Baptist Campbell College (now University) in Buis Creek, North Carolina.

Before continuing, I need to tell you that I decided to limit this discussion to the area of music within the fine arts. Although one can group the fine arts together and find much in common, each of them is also distinct, and I have less expertise in those other than music. Besides, this decision cleared out a small portion of that pesky jumble of ideas. I hope that people here who teach or enjoy the other arts will find at least some parallels to my responses as a musician.

An additional problem for me is that I am a "jack of many (if not all) trades" in music (and master of few,

Robert Scholz is Professor of Music at St. Olaf College.

perhaps), and I would like to respond to Tom's paper in all of those capacities. Briefly, I am a composer and arranger, a choral conductor, singer, church musician, a teacher of music history (choral literature), a theorist and analyzer, a student aesthetics, a preparer of music educators (especially in the conducting course where specific techniques are discussed and practiced), a teacher of singing and vocal performance, and a researcher with a published historical edition of a Pachelbel Magnificat of significant size and forces. (I am not a great improviser or ethnomusicologist, and I play only keyboard instruments.) I mention these activities mostly to let you know that as you question me later, I can try to answer from those perspectives.

As I contemplated what I do at St. Olaf, I realized that at the heart of it all was making music, and that lecturing and the teaching of skills were largely aimed at that end. [At this point, Scholz played a tape of a Nunc Dimittis he wrote for the St. Olaf Christmas festival.]

Does this work for you as a piece of music? Is it good music? (You don't have to answer out loud.) In an intuitive sense, you know the piece even before I tell you things about it which may cause you to listen to it more perceptively.

Here are some ways I could try to help you understand more about the music. First of all, I could talk about myself, the composer, and give you background about the attitudes, training, listening, relating to people, teaching, and faith that might influence the music I write. Secondly, I could remind you about the text of the Nunc dimittis: the response of Simeon to the presentation of the baby Jesus in the temple. Liturgically, it is used at Compline, the last service of the day, or at Evensong in the Anglican tradition, or as a hymn of thanksgiving for communion in the Lutheran service.

All of these traditions combine to make it a fitting text for the end of the Christmas Festival.

I could explain the compositional process: in this case, first a melody for the chosen text, then harmony, then added choral parts, then orchestral parts, all with an attempt to remain unified in style (late 19th-early 20th C. English plus John Rutter) while honoring the flute trio which ends the work).

I could point out that the second choral phrase inverts the first, that the reprise has a canon between women and men instead of that inversion, that the tonic chord at rest is avoided until the final chord on the word "peace," and that the chord parts at that place are arranged in the natural overtone series. The final chord in the flutes adds the unresolved major seventh, which is meant to enhance the mood of anticipating the future in eternity. I could mention the grouping of phrases in a/a'/b form.

I could describe how the choirs worked on it and how it gradually unfolded in clarity and emotion. I could tell you what I discovered as I rehearsed it--what the other musicians involved (my directing colleagues and the members of the choir and orchestra) taught me.

I could share the audience's immediate response (quiet and enraptured) or their comments later to suggest that it "worked" for musicians and average audience alike.

If I replayed the "Nunc dimittis" for you with all of that information, you might hear it differently, but it would not explain everything you perceived and felt about the piece the first time. The fact one can describe a piece of music in such great detail does not guarantee its status as a strong and valuable work.

The experience of good music to a perceptive listener is always more profound and specific than words can completely describe. The best music is rooted in the deepest meaning of what it is to be human and has a connecting, wholesome power, both within the self

and in the community on many levels. Science is providing us with studies that point to the special place music has in the brain, to its connective powers, and to its influence on the whole creative process, even outside of music itself (i.e., the so-called Mozart connection). I have heard that the governor of Georgia is having the state provide a tape of music by Mozart for every newborn child.

In music, composing, performing, and listening are to analyzing, describing, and evaluating as worship, prayer, and faith are to theology and creeds in religious activities. The latter verbalization can never do justice to the experience of the former. The joy of making music or worshiping is at least in part of the joy of the freedom to be whole and imaginative and connected to others in the community, whether it be the choir, the congregation or an audience.

Along the same lines, if we are free in the Spirit, we place more value on what cannot be graded. For example, a person's faith in Christ and change of heart are ultimately more important than a grade in religion class. A mind that can be imaginative in math or science is ultimately more valuable than someone who delivers correct answers in tests and receives an "A." The creative composer is more valuable to society than the student who can write a perfect theory assignment by the rules. The artist who can move an audience with a beautifully sung Schubert song is more valuable to that audience than the person who describes the song in the program notes. All of these people may be valuable as God's children, but we must also honor the special gifts with which we can serve God and our neighbor and do for others what they cannot do themselves. In turn, these gifted people can teach others by word or experience or mentoring to experience their own gifts. The students' gifts might never be as powerful in the community as those of the teacher, or they might actually surpass them. In either case, the service of teaching with self-discovery as a goal is the joyful response of a free person who does not define his or her own worth by a student's success or lack thereof.

By way of illustration, I taught a week of Elderhostel this summer during which I was to create a choir out of 34 people, aged 60 to 95, most of whom had never met or sung with each other. Many had sung all of their lives. Some treasured their days as members of one of the famous Lutheran College choirs. Others had been silenced as young children by insensitive teachers and parents who thought that they couldn't carry a tune or that they didn't have nice enough voices--a great disservice indeed! A few had discovered "their voice" when they retired and subsequently sought out every opportunity to sing--and especially choral art music--since that discovery.

At the end of the week we presented a short concert with music ranging from chant and movements of Vivaldi *Gloria* to the Nunc dimittis you just heard. It was not stellar by the highest standards of music and aesthetic criticism, but it was great in terms of their learning about music, the singing process, rehearsing, and community. One participant declared several times in rehearsal during the week how wonderful it was to have so many people from all over the country join in their diversity to make music.

Being free in the Spirit also allows us to teach more intuitively. We can teach singing, conducting, and even music theory by connecting to life experiences and working from the emotion of the moment. For example, the conducting student might imagine bouncing a ball, tapping on a drum, or dancing with the upper body rather than slavishly conforming to a set pattern abstracted from a conducting book. The emotional response to the music could be allowed to flow into a natural gesture and communication with face and eyes. Conducting becomes less a right or wrong motion but more a language and a freeing and inspiring communication between director and the choir or other music organization members as individuals and not as sound-producers molded into some idealized tone or musical line.

The discussion of the Elderhostel experience leads to the question: "Whom are we serving in our colleges?" Most obviously, we intend to serve the

young adults who are recruited to be a paying part of our learning communities. We design our curricula to help them learn in breadth and depth. However, our whole institution of faculty, administrators, and staff, from secretaries to cafeteria workers and custodians, as well as trustees and regents (not necessarily in descending or ascending order!), is important in the learning process in the broader Christian sense as described by Christenson.

Before commenting on who else might be included in a more expansive view of whom the college serves, I would like to offer several observations about Christenson's liberating arts and how they are or can be included in the music curriculum designed for college-age students. I am not going to deal with cross-discipline possibilities, although these are important. (We have a Fine Arts concentration at St. Olaf, for instance.) I will proceed with this discussion of the liberating arts in reverse order from that presented by Christenson because, in my view, it seems to make better sense when thinking about how music works and is best taught.

1) The Arts of Enablement and Change:

Changes in culture will always be reflected in the best of new compositions. New electronic instruments and computers, awareness of music from all over the globe, new discoveries by other composers, and performances of jazz, folk, and pop artists can influence how a composer (student included) thinks and writes. Texts chosen can deal with contemporary issues, or those issues can influence settings of old and traditional texts. Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* is a prime example with its intermix of poetry by World War I soldier and pacifist Wilfred Owen and the Latin Requiem text. Music chosen by teachers of solo performance for their students, by directors for their music organizations, and by teachers of music classes can honor these trends of change and artistic expression of modern cultures as well.

2) The Melioristic/Creative Arts:

"Can we make something good out of what we are given?" Within the narrower discipline of music,

this question is raised as we choose the members of our organizations, surely a mix of all kinds of voices, instruments, musical talents, training, and attitudes. It is raised again as we program and rehearse music and then perform it. The bassoon player may be weaker than the string sections. Do we skip that Beethoven symphony as a result? The basses may not be the strongest section in the choir. Do we therefore avoid all Russian music? The singers and players also must compromise their own work in ensemble. Can a singer and her pianist agree on how to interpret that Brahms song? Can the teacher help to raise the appropriate questions that will point towards possible solutions?

For the composer, the discipline of having to write for a specific person or group or for a particular occasion and type of audience can actually be freeing and stimulating. Having to deal with real people in a real place can broaden the way the composer may usually think. Too often we think of a composer only as a person creating something completely new, drawn purely from the imagination on his or her own terms. The call of the community through commissions can be much more inspiring at times.

3) The Embodying/Connecting Arts:

I will repeat Tom Christenson's statement: "The musician who can play one instrument has more freedom than the person who has heard them all but can play none." Within a music department there is sometimes tension between the demands of so-called music educators and state regulators who want future music teachers in the public schools to know everything, play all instruments, etc., and the goals of musicians who as educators know that skilled and meaningful expression on one instrument (or through one's own voice) is more worthwhile. Students can be encouraged to explore other instruments and forms of artistic expression as long as those journeys do not lead them too far from developing the skills needed to sing or play sufficiently well to communicate in their primary performance area.

To connect with the world outside of the college campus, music education students spend many hours

observing and practicing in the classroom and meeting with mentors and each other to discuss those experiences. Some of those students go abroad to practice-teach as well. The students who are interested in arts management can spend a semester working with professional arts groups.

For many students, including non-majors, the preparation of recitals and concerts play a large role in this connecting of doing, deciding, and becoming. Often these rehearsals and performances result in some of the most memorable experiences of their lives because they are so powerfully moved, both personally and socially.

4) The Critical/Deconstructive Arts:

In music, these tasks are carried out in a formal way mainly in history and theory course work where music is analyzed and discussed. Why does this progression work? Why is Mozart considered so great a composer? Are some of his works more profound than others? Why? What does a work say about the culture from which it springs? Does John Cage's framing of silence or the sounds of a city street corner really count as music worth listening to? Is the ultra rationalism of Karlheinz Stockhausen too complex to be understood aurally? Do some of the popular minimalists achieve length by cheap repetition, or are they speaking to us from a different non-Western aesthetic? Performances can also be criticized.

The evaluation of the place of fine arts and the folk and popular arts in the education system belongs here, and it deserves argument and dialogue. My own belief is that the fine arts and folk traditions have much richer possibilities in terms of understanding culture and the human spirit and aspirations than do the popular arts. The latter need not be ignored, but should college courses really spend equal time with, or focus on Hallmark card verses rather than the poetry of T.S. Eliot, velvet paintings of sad-eyed children rather than masterworks or the Renaissance, and tin-pan alley tunes rather than Benjamin Bitten operas? Is a study of disco and 1980's rock more important than a

course in African folk styles? To further expose myself to the criticism of elitism, I will repeat this rating of folk and art music over the popular later when I discuss music in worship.

Returning now to the question of whom do we serve, we need to move beyond the confines of the usual college faculty and students.

In ever-enlarging circles we can include those Elder hostel "seniors" in Continuing Education programs or the children and youth brought to campus, such as those in Northfield Youth Choirs directed by my wife, Cora, or the High School Summer Music Camp at St. Olaf. These programs are not merely recruiting tools or even primarily recruiting tools but they also reflect a willingness to serve a wider community, often for little or relatively low salary.

What do we do for the towns or states in which we live as individuals and colleges? In music we can provide free and open concerts, workshops, and lectures that enrich the lives of citizens. We can provide community choirs such as the Northfield Choral with directors who can work for free or for a small honorarium because they are paid well enough by the college. We can have rooms available for them to rehearse and give concerts. We can support broadcasting of important news, ideas, plays, and music by radio and television. St. Olaf has its own high-quality radio station, the oldest listener-supported station in the country, and it needs to keep it on campus as part of the community. It also supports the occasional taping of the Christmas Festival to be televised locally and nationwide.

Our famous Lutheran College touring choirs can keep their focus on performing the best music available from those cultures which have a choral tradition without forgetting the centrality of the message of God's saving grace. They can exhibit the genuine humility of singing to the glory of God and service of the neighbor, not to their own glory and service of the director. The conductors I know do well at keeping this goal of serving in their work.

We might ask how we can serve the Church, both visible institution and invisible body of believers, in addition to being good stewards of our church-related colleges. Of course, all of the work directed toward previously mentioned groups is an attempt to be Christ to our neighbor when it is done in love and gratitude. However, we could also combine proclamation of the Gospel with that ministering in special ways. For example, our St. Olaf Christmas Festival can proclaim the deeper meanings of the incarnation in its themes: Dawn of Redeeming Grace, And the Desert Shall Blossom, Set the Captive Free, Before the Wonder of This Night Go Tell It on the Mountain, Wonder Anew. The directors are committed to those themes in text and music for the choirs, orchestra, and congregation/audience. Also included in the program is a beautifully written introduction to the theme by the College Pastor. It is a Festival that is worship for many.

For the annual Spring Concert of the Chapel Choir and Orchestra, the other musicians and I present a Chapel service which attempts to make connections between the composer's work, our performance, and the sacred texts and contexts of the music in the culture from which it arose--a large task to accomplish in twenty minutes, especially for something as profound as Britten's *War Requiem*. It does help the audience to listen in different ways, however.

Very important, too, is the way we model how music is a part of worship on our campuses and what kind of music we use. This serves the college community and wider church of present and future as well.

Let me return briefly to the Christmas Festival as a symbol of the Christian freedom we have been focusing on this week. Although we receive many letters of gratitude and enthusiasm, negative criticism arrives in the mail as well:

"F. Melius would roll over in his grave." (The past haunts us.)

"We should know all the music at a Christmas program." (Nostalgia rules. We would like to challenge the listeners as well as affirm the tradition.)

"Where was the Norwegian carol?" (We sang it in English this year!)

"You have to do 'your' kind of music, but don't forget us." (Some good white folk are having trouble with a black Gospel-tradition expression.)

"You are not inclusive enough." (Some wonderful poetry of the Renaissance refers to God as "He.")

"You are doing great music but are not preparing our young people for service in the church." (We did Handel, Britten, Rutter, etc., instead of so-called contemporary praise songs.)

"By doing all that esoteric music, you are just serving your own egos." (Ouch! Untrue, I hope.)

"I drove 400 miles to hear 'Beautiful Savior.' How dare you cut it to one stanza?" (In the 35 Festivals I have experienced, it was never sung in its entirety except for last year.)

As Christians, freed from being servant to all, we planners of the Festival can listen to these criticisms, let them inform us about some people in our audience, scrutinize their ideas in the full light of what we perceive to be true and best for the audience and performers at the Festival, and go on from there, free to grow and change while respecting tradition and varying opinions.

Finally, we need to consider the place of worship on our college campuses in light of Christian freedom and the call to serve God and human beings. If it is true that Lutheran Colleges are defined in part by what they do and how they act within the community, they need to have worship and the sacraments available for participation. It is one way that God comes to us, and it is one expression of how we love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and

strength and our neighbor as ourselves.

It is especially important that our musicians be involved with worship planning and in the worship service in light of Luther's view of the importance of music:

"Next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise. She is a mistress and governess of those human emotions...which...govern human beings or more often overwhelm them. ...For whether you wish to comfort the sad, to terrify the happy, to encourage the despairing, to humble the proud, to calm the passionate, or to appease those full of hate... --what more effective means than music could you find?" (Preface to Georg Rhau's Symphoniae iucundae, 1538)

Luther may have understood the importance of music in life in a way that has become more difficult since the Enlightenment and its stress on reason.

How much worship is enough for the college campus? Daily chapel, Sunday services, Feast Days, weekly convocations? How much participation is enough to be significant? A majority, a strong minority, occasional "seekers," one or two gathered together in Christ's name?

Enough of the community needs to participate so that it hears and experiences the good news which gives us our Christian freedom. If the message is too distant and second-hand, no series of conferences of this sort will be able to fill the space. Popular, secular culture will have its way instead with its own familiar ultimacies. We all need to be challenged and reassured by a ritual that does not waver from the truth and profundity of God's presence with us.

It is especially important for the college musician to assist in finding the most appropriate musical voice for the proclamation, prayer, praise, and sacrament that are part of worship. Luther himself set up helpful criteria by his choices of music for the new church: traditional chant, hymns already sung by choirs and congregation, motets and other liturgical

music already in use with occasional changes in text, tunes from the secular Meistersinger songs (the art songs of his day), newly composed hymns of the highest craftsmanship, often based on Meistersinger forms, and motets, Magnificats, chorale settings, etc. in imitation of the finest Catholic composers of the day, written for the new Lutheran school choirs.

Notice that I did not mention tavern and street songs, the popular music of the day. "Why should the devil have all the good tunes?" does not appear in any of Luther's writings, nor in the Table Talk, where one might expect it. Luther knew better. Popular music, with its aim towards entertainment and escape, does not have the strength and profundity to carry the message of God or the depth of the congregation's response.

Good art or folk music sung well by congregations and/or choir opens people to the truth instead of encouraging them to escape into some passive comfort zone. Most so-called contemporary Christian songs have weak texts as well and should be thrown out for their sentimentalism or vapidness of ideas.

I really object to the terminology "contemporary Christian" to describe a narrowly conceived soft pop-rock genre to the exclusion of all other contemporary musical styles--folk, jazz, or classical. What kind of music do you expect to hear at the Ohio State Fair during the 6:00 pm "Christian Music Shows"? Is the *music* "Christian"? I believe that is not possible for any kind of music. Or is the *show* "Christian" because the performers will be singing texts that mention Jesus?

In many of our churches the song leader on microphone and his or her back-up band have taken over the place of the sung liturgy and hymns. The

weaker the congregation sings, the louder the sound system. Who can compete with that artificially amplified sound? This leads to my next point.

The most recent degradation of the community of Christ is the substitute of the electronic media for human actions and interaction. A few years ago my Viking Chorus arrived to sing at a suburban-type church on a Sunday morning. As we walked in to find our places, a woman in charge of music for the day slipped a tape of New Age music into the tape player, and this set the mood as a prelude to the service. Where were people's *minds* and *strength* in that kind of worship? Also, since taped accompaniments to hymns and choral liturgical music are not flexible, they cannot respond to the spontaneity and expression needed for live worship.

TV evangelists and Crystal Cathedrals of the air provide only a passive virtual community. A message may be preached and a mood may be established, but where is the serving community needed at life's moments of sadness and despair (death, divorce, depression, failed subjects) as well as joy and exultation (baptism, marriage, great spiritual moments, academic honors)? Can you imagine having a "virtual" human family instead of a real family?

The family of God surely needs to interact in spite of and because of all its warts, disagreements, oddballs, and sinners. One of these interactions occurs in the singing of humans and participation in the liturgy. Our college communities benefit from this activity as well.

To avoid a longer diatribe, let me refer you to three books I especially recommend to leaders of worship who are struggling with the media, pop culture, and so-called contemporary services:

Some Personal Reflections on the ELCA Vocation of a Lutheran College Conference, 1998

Jennifer Sacher Wiley

Common-ness and Otherness

As a first time attendee of the ELCA Conference, it struck me that one of the main themes of the workshop was evaluating the relative strength of the Lutheran college identity. I offer the following observations about group identity and the evolution of that identity, as seemed relevant to our sessions at the conference.

Is there a distinctive identity to ELCA colleges?
What group members contribute to that identity?

In his keynote address at the 1998 ELCA Vocation of a Lutheran College Conference, "The Freedom of a Christian," Dr. Tom Christenson described an inclusive view of group membership in likening Lutheran colleges to woven fabric:

In weaving, it's usually what weavers call the woof or weft of the weaving that carries the color, the texture and the distinctive pattern of the weaving...But it's the warp that holds the whole thing together, that makes it a weaving at all. The 'for whom,' the 'by whom,' the 'where,' and the 'ethnic roots' of our institutions make them different weavings. We should celebrate those differences. But I think there's a common warp to all of us... We should celebrate that commonality.

Composer Charles Ives offers an even more inclusive view of group identity as he describes characteristics of American music in *Essays Before a Sonata*:

A true love of country is likely to be so big that it will embrace the virtue one sees in other countries...A composer born in America...may be so interested in "negro melodies" that he writes a symphony over them. He is conscious...that he

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wishes it to be 'American music.' He tries to forget that the paternal Negro came from Africa. Is his music American or as African?...If he had been born in Africa, his music might have been just as American, for there is good authority that an African soul under an x-ray looks identically like an American soul.

While Christenson points to a commonality of place as *uniting* a diverse group of people, Ives suggests that the commonality of *human-ness* serves the same function, blurring the distinction between sub-groups such as American or African music. However, Ives does suggest that commonality of *purpose* ("spirit") between individuals helps to distinguish a larger group:

"There is a futility in selecting a certain type to represent a 'whole,' unless the *...spirit* of the type coincides with that of the whole."

At the 1998 ELCA conference, I became part of a group seeking to define its Lutheran-ness. As we heard presentations and engaged in discussion, I was intrigued by the wide range of possibilities for inclusiveness in establishing the ELCA identity, as suggested by Ives and Christenson above. To simplify matters for myself, I thought about some general markers that might be used to determine the distinctiveness of a perceivable group.

1. The group has generated printed works.
2. There are people who consider themselves group members.
3. Group membership generates activity.
4. People outside of the group perceive the group as such, especially because of their own recognition of *themselves* as outside of the group.

These markers were recognizable and evident at the 1008 ELCA conference. Ernest Simmons' book *Lutheran Higher Education: An Introduction for*

Faculty served as a document of historical and visionary definition for the ELCA higher education community. Activity was generated as outstanding speakers, helpful staff, and committed administrators and faculty from ELCA colleges attended, engaging in discussion, thought, devotional services, and recreation for four days in Springfield.

Marker #4, the reactions of “others,” is a multi-faceted concept that I feel compelled to address. To the “other” groups on Wittenburg’s campus (marching bands, soccer camps, etc.), the ELCA conference was a group with an identity, to which they reacted, either consciously or subconsciously. To the “other” faculty, staff, and administrators from the ELCA colleges who *didn’t* attend the conference, those of us in Springfield were a “group” to which they may have reacted when the beginning of the academic year invited discourse about the conference activities and discoveries.

But, among those who *did* attend the ELCA conference, there were other “others”: those who may have felt, somehow, “outside” the conference even after having been given a room key and a name tag. In fact, *each* conference attendee may have felt “other” for a multitude of reasons: “I’m the only administrator in my discussion group.” “I’m the only Baptist.” “I’m the only athlete.” “I’m the only homosexual.” But, perhaps, more significant is a ~~kind~~ kind of “other” used by Dr. Simmons in his text. In his affirmation of the richness of diversity found at Lutheran colleges, he writes:

“We need denominational diversity on campus not only to enrich our own understanding of the Christian tradition but also to keep Lutherans honest. We need reflective Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, and others, for they may do more for the effecting of Lutheran identity on campus than a non-reflective Lutheran would.”

As a Unitarian Universalist with one Jewish parent, I certainly fall into the category “other” as designated by Simmons. Also, I am in the “other” category because I attended the ELCA conference after having served only one year as a faculty

member at Susquehanna University. My educational background also contributed to my “other-ness”: a secular liberal arts college (Oberlin), a conservatory (New England Conservatory), and a state school (University of Minnesota).

The concept of “other-ness” was discussed directly on several occasions at the ELCA conference itself. Dr. Robert Scholz, in his paper “How Can We Keep From Singing” used “other” in a positive sense, referring to music that would more meaningfully contribute to a “Christian worship service”:

“I really object to the terminology ‘contemporary Christian’ to describe a narrowly conceived soft pop-rock genre to the exclusion of all *other* contemporary musical styles--folk, jazz, or classical.”

Still, there was the “other-ness” of *institutions* that, clearly (to those presiding) belonged in groups other than the ELCA. Calvin College, Wheaton, and Pepperdine were identified by California Lutheran College’s Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Pamela Jolicoer as institutions “who use education to ‘Christianize’ or transform [culture]”—not a vision articulated by the Lutheran educators at the 1998 conference. On the other end of the institutional spectrum, Dr. Ryan LaHurd cited author George Marsden who, “offers a stern warning for colleges like ours, which he sees on the slippery slope sliding toward secularization in the historical tradition of Harvard and Yale.” Other earnest warnings were issued by Dr. Christenson: “...when I taught in Minnesota, the temptation was to be another Carleton or Macalister. In Ohio, we yearn to be another Kenyon or Oberlin...But let me tell you, this is not the direction we should go.”

From the perspective of a secular humanist, it might surprise Lutherans to learn that they may be seen as part of a group of colleges that call themselves “Christian”—Wheaton, Calvin, Southern Methodist University, and Bob Jones University included. All of these institutions are grounded in the belief of redemption through Christ. “Other” to some “unenlightened” people might mean *any* college that is “church affiliated.” At any rate, from my vantage

point, the group identity of the ELCA colleges seemed intact at the 1998 conference. Although I understand the frustration expressed at forming group identity on the basis of what the group is *not*, I believe that *many* groups face similar frustrations, Unitarian Universalists in particular. Thus, I was not surprised by Dr. Christenson's description of the "other" Protestant church schools looking to the Lutheran colleges for lessons in forming identity.

Shepherding the ELCA Identity

If it is acknowledged that ELCA colleges hold an identity, illuminated by documentation, people and their actions, and the reactions of "others" to them, the question that seemed to be urgent to many at the conference was what the future of that identity would be. I observed two positions (sometimes held by the same persons) in Springfield: the position of identity spoke of the importance of having people on their campuses who could "tell the story" (presumably of Lutheranism) to those new to the college community. On the other hand, one professor described an imaginary scene in which Martin Luther returned to the world to chastise Lutherans for preserving Lutheranism to the extent that it *prohibited* the development of their faith. One effective way of preservation is through historical documentation. The 1998 ELCA conference provided an exciting array of position papers documenting Lutheran points of view. Although the presenters of those papers will naturally experience changes in their perspectives in the years to come, the documents stand as testaments of their commitment to Lutheran higher education. The essence of Lutheranism will be preserved so long as those historical representations of ELCA higher education are made available to all members of the ELCA community.

However, I humbly suggest that my remaining three markers of the Lutheran group identity: its people (members, if you will), their actions, and, naturally, the reactions of "others" be allowed to evolve. If preservation of a group identity manifests itself in seeking to recruit members who mirror the views already shared by the group, it will stagnate. Rather, complimenting and even contrasting persons

(students, faculty, and staff) should be sought. I was aware of several fears expressed by those who voiced their colleges' needs for Lutheran personnel preservation. These fears were for loss of "worship" (number of services required, number in congregation), loss of the liturgical, theological Lutheran story, and loss of Christianity overall, which contributes, ultimately, they felt, to the loss of community on their campuses.

To that fear I offer my particular reaction to thinking about Christianity and community: if Christianity means the teaching of the gospel, the belief in Christ's power of grace and redemption, and the belief in the two Kingdoms of God, then, yes, those manifestations of Christianity could be superseded by other academic activities if the percentage of Lutherans on campuses declines. However, if one can accept the notion that Christianity means living the life *of* the redeemer, adopting the work ethic of Jesus, and his passion of vocation, then those persons selected to compliment and even contrast those members of the Lutheran community will not "dilute" the Lutheranism of the institution, but give it continued energy and growth.

"Little Christ"

From the presentations at the 1998 ELCU conference one heard expressed repeatedly a fear of "secularization." I interpreted that term, (in the context of the symposium established by the tone of Simmons' book) to mean a life without spirituality. I am not convinced, after my exposure to the inclusive nature of these Lutheran institutions that "secularization" means a life without belief in Jesus as Savior. Repeatedly, I heard professors claim the thankfulness with which they called Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, and their colleagues. Surely, the presence of these "non-Christians" strengthened their institutions, the conference attendees claimed. But how many "non-Lutherans" or "non-Christians" can an ELCA college have? Simmons writes, "According to Luther, the Christian relates to God through faith alone, which is then expressed in loving service to one's neighbor. Such is the freedom of a Christian when one is called upon to be a 'little

Christ' to one's neighbor by continuing in limited human fashion the incarnation of God's love in Christ."

A Unitarian Universalist might read those sentences like this: "According to one of the great religious reformers, Martin Luther, the human maintains faith in the notion of an affirming Creator, rejoicing in that faith through service to others. In that sense, the human may be called to serve as a 'Working Prophet' to her neighbor by living as Jesus lived, accepting his mission of human service as her own."

In my opinion, anyone who displays the qualities of engaged, committed, and passionate vocation and can share that passion for vocation with students and colleagues is not only a valuable member of the Lutheran higher education community, but even acts as a prophet in that community.

Therefore, I saw no need for Dr. Cheryl Ney (professor of chemistry at Capital University) to specifically address "Christianity," in her vibrant description of her community-grounded scientific vocation. She was clearly an example of the

incarnation of "Working Prophet" (or "Little Christ"), regardless of her specific beliefs in the trinity.

I wonder if a more inclusive definition of "Christianity" is what Dr. Christenson had in mind when, in his summary comments, he asserted that "Lutherans and other Christians" held the particular discerning ability to identify, recruit, and embrace engaged teachers from diverse backgrounds. Again, he was supporting the value of diversity of Lutheran campuses. But "Christians" were identified as the sole stewards of that diversity. To what extent would a more inclusive, working definition of "Christian" alleviate the fears I heard expressed at the ELCA conference about Lutheran reservation? Would the future of Lutheranism be secure if one were to accept Ives' charge to recruit individuals with the same "spirit" rather than concerning oneself with the "religious" beliefs of the individual?

It is a challenging position to consider one's "Christianity" by the way one is immersed in a vocation *as* Jesus lived, rather than in one's belief of Christ as Savior. I certainly am in no position to propose that challenge to the ELCA Lutherans. I am, after all, an "other."

The Face of the Neighbor:
An Interview with Four Capital University Faculty
About Their Recent Visit to Cuba

INTERSECTIONS: What was it that made each of you want to make a trip to Cuba?

Brian Wallace: I had been there twice before. The first two times I'd gone, I felt the need to go back, and I thought it was important to try to take some colleagues with me.

IS: You said you had the need to go back. What was this need?

BW: The first time I went, all I knew was that I needed to go back. It was during the time of the boat lift during August of 1994. It was really devastating. It was dismally hot. People were skinny. Ribs were sticking out of people. Kids were roaming the streets. It was hard to find food. There were long lines to buy nothing. Yet people seemed to have something there that we don't seem to have in our society. I couldn't figure out exactly what that was. That's why I knew I had to go back.

IS: You also said that you wanted to bring some colleagues with you?

BW: Yes, I wanted someone to share it with. It's very isolating and alienating to experience a transforming event, as travel often is, and then have people at your college look at you as if you have horns coming out of your head. And then after about three weeks you quit talking about it, because you are tired of funny looks. Cuba has become a part of my life, and now it is nice to have a group of people who understand what this is all about.

IS: Besides Brian, had any of you been to Cuba before?

Reg Dyck: No. It was a new experience for all of us.

IS: So what were your motivations for going? Did Brian have to twist your arm?

RD: It didn't take a lot of twisting, I must say. I was taken by surprise when he asked me if I was interested. I didn't know it was an option. I had heard about Pastors for Peace here locally, but I didn't know that much about it. I had been to Guatemala and El Salvador about a year and a half earlier, and I was interested in making comparisons. I was also interested in seeing what an alternative political system would look like, particularly a system that seemed to be run on different values. I was interested in making comparisons with the other Latin American countries I'd visited in terms of the nature of poverty, the nature of work, wealth, the range of freedom, those kinds of things.

IS: Michael, what about you?

Michael Yosha: Well, I was delighted to be asked. I had studied in Japan and in China, and I'd traveled there several times in the past two years. This was a unique opportunity for me to go to another culture. Cuba has a very different kind of political system. I wanted to experience the contrast and bring that back

to my classroom here. And also, our neighbors, yet they are quite unknown to most of us. Here's a country about which we have a lot of stereotypes. I was really interested to see first hand the Cuban people, their organizations and systems, policy deliveries and so on. And also it was such a unique moment in history. With all of the excitement in politics, I think that the experience was worth it. And it was a chance to connect with fellow faculty on different terms. I see Brian five times a week, but we never really get to know each other well until we're out of the country. And I just thought it was a fun time. Everybody there seems to be on a different channel, and I just thought it was a good way to get to know these people who are our neighbors. Now they have faces.

IS: What about you, Susan?

Susan Narita: I have been interested in Latin America since my days in high school and college when I studied Spanish. I was particularly interested in visiting Cuba because it's so cut off from the U.S. and we have so little information about it though we have preconceptions. It was exciting.

IS: You talked about our preconceptions. What sort of image did you or do people in general have of Cuba?

SN: My family was apprehensive about my going, partly due to the negative stereotype we have that Cuba is a Communist police state. Americans tend to think that Castro is this horrible dictator, but he really isn't. Many of my acquaintances assumed that we'd not be safe there, but actually, I felt safer on the streets of Havana after dark than I do in Columbus. My biggest concerns were about the trouble we might have with U.S. authorities on our return because of U.S. restrictions on trade and travel under the Trading with the Enemy Act.

MY: I felt safe there except for the potholes.

SN: He's teasing, but I was sure I was going to fall into one of those potholes, and that would be the end of me. I mean this isn't cracked sidewalk. You could really get lost.

IS: Returning to the question about preconceptions. Did you have a certain image in your mind about what it was going to be like, or what people had led you to expect?

RD: It's sort of hard to remember now what I was thinking before I went. I think I went there quite predisposed to see it positively. I was very interested in Cuba as a political experiment. It's not a utopia by any means, but I think they have quite a few very impressive values that form their society in a lot of ways that are good.

IS: Tell us more about that.

RD: For example, the way their economy works. The first priority in their national budget is education. The second is health care, and the third is the military. Now try that in the United States! In Cuba there isn't very much money to go around. It definitely is a poor place, but it is different than poverty in El Salvador or Guatemala. You don't have the extremes of wealth you see in those other countries. In Havana, there isn't the wealth you would see in Guatemala, but the poor didn't look as hopelessly destitute as they do in some of the worst parts of Guatemala.

SN: Cubans frequently talk about how there used to be so much illiteracy. But now everybody goes to school. It's been a miraculous change. It seems to me that those who stayed behind and didn't exit to Miami were the workers who really benefitted. It was a great mass of the population. They are now quite well educated. I didn't see any homeless people either. Of course we were only there for ten days. Did any of you see any homeless?

RD: No, but I heard about it. I stayed on for an extra four weeks, and I heard people talking about that. The housing shortage is a problem. Apartments are overcrowded. But they now have a program where people help to build their own homes. After so many years of labor equity, you earn a flat for your family.

BW: In Cuba there is barely a difference between the wealthy and the poor, like there is in the rest of Latin America. Although, I think that the difference between rich and poor is now growing in Cuba as well. Because of some recent so-called reforms, cab drivers, prostitutes, and others like that now make the most money, more than doctors, teachers, and even engineers.

IS: So, people do well who have the most contact with the tourists?

BW: Yes.

RD: I was just going to say that those who get involved in the market economy are creating the split between the rich and the poor. Of course many don't see anything wrong with it. We met with the acting head of the North American Division of the Cuban Foreign Service. When we raised questions about these market changes taking place, he said that the changes were difficult, but that certain basic principles would remain the same. But when he listed those principles, they sounded like democratic socialism rather than the hard core socialism we usually associate with Cuba. It seemed that younger leaders want to turn Cuba into a place like Germany or Scandinavia. They want to have health care for everyone, a good social network, and no extreme differentiation between rich and poor.

MY: Yet many people there realize that Cuba has a kind of identity in history, standing for a particular set of values. There are lots of people in Cuba who are committed to those values. They are very much concerned with retaining what they have accomplished such as the advancement in communications, the availability of health care and education for all. They realize things will change, and that there will be changes in market mechanisms. But they've also learned to hold on to things they value. Cubans are very nationalistic. They're proud of themselves as a people, they have a definite sense of character, and a strong sense of history.

BW: If you bring up something like the Spanish American War that happened in 1903, they still get upset about it. We think it's ancient history.

IS: You talked about education. Did you get a chance to visit schools, or talk to students or teachers?

SN: Yes, we did visit schools. We talked to the director and principal of one school, and were invited to talk to classes. We talked to the students about Cuba, but not a single student asked a question about the United States, which I found to be peculiar.

IS: What do you think accounted for that lack of exchange?

SN: I began to wonder if there was something wrong with us!

RD: I think that they live in a country that is so small, with a huge, dominating country to the north. Their goal is to resist us, and that is going to shape all of their thinking. A lot of people seem to have confidence that they know all they need to know about the U. S. In the same way, many in the U. S. have felt they knew enough about the Soviet Union. Remember when we thought it was the evil empire. That same reductionist attitude towards one's enemy happens in Cuba. That may have explained some of their wariness of us as Americans.

BW: When I was there in 1994, I was talking with three adolescent boys, and they were asking me about the strike. "What about the strike? What about the strike?" they kept saying. I thought they were talking about some meat packers' strike in Minnesota or someplace that Cuban television was covering, but they were really talking about baseball. They wanted to know about the baseball strike. There's an area where Americans and the Cubans have so much in common culturally.

IS: I assume you made contact with university people when you were there.

RD: Yes I did, because I was studying Spanish at the University of Havana. We had classes in the morning, and I met with university students as tutors in the afternoon. They were not a cross section, probably. They were chosen because they were progressive students. They were obviously well educated, so that puts them in a specific category.

IS: What is their view of their future? Did you pick up a sense of where they think Cuba is going?

RD: There is a sense of optimism. They realize that things have to change, that they need to change. There are frustrations about the restrictions of the press. Some would like freedom to travel as well. One woman, a literature major, was frustrated she could not get a visa for her trip to Mexico, but on the other hand, she was passionately dedicated to Cuba and the revolution on the home front. Nobody I talked with wanted to give Cuba over to the Cuban Americans of Miami. No one wanted to join up with market capitalism lock, stock, and barrel.

IS: Who were the Cubans who left and came to Miami?

BW: You can pretty much guess who they were by when they left Cuba. If they left in the fifties up to the sixties, they were general supporters of Batista, and those who left later in the sixties were often quite prosperous professionals who were going out for economic reasons. Later there gets to be more diversity in those leaving.

MY: Returning to your question about preconceptions, most of my surprises were visual. Because of the coverage of the Pope's visit I had a picture of what Havana was like. Being there it was kind of difficult to get used to. I was startled at how many buildings there were and the quality of architecture. Most of the buildings are now in disrepair, and we walked around in the rubble, but I started not paying any attention to it. I was beginning to think that's how people adjust. It was a part of daily life.

BW: The Cuban people continue to impress me. People take time to stop in the streets and embrace and talk to one another and meet in their community and in religious services; there was a real spirit of community. It wasn't just going through the motions. At one point I was in a Methodist church there, and they were having an intercessory prayer, and they asked anyone who had a prayer to come forward. Two thirds of the congregation got up and walked forward. This was a heart-felt thing. There was no sense of having to go to church, go home, go golfing, grade papers, do this, do that.

IS: At the beginning, you said that one of the things you saw that made you know that you had to go back there was the spirit of the people. Is this an example?

BW: Yes. Maybe it's just that I'm more in tune to see it in a different culture than I can see it in my own. I can ignore it when I'm walking down the streets in Columbus, but part of it is something that no ideology can erase. Usually when I'm around armed soldiers I feel extremely nervous. In Cuba I saw Cuban soldiers riding their bikes with their guns on their backs. But I wasn't scared.

RD: You know that's an interesting thing. I was there for July 26, which is a big festival day, and on the Malecon there were people everywhere, dancing and celebrating. Lots and lots of police were there in their green outfits, and they were young guys. People were chatting and being very friendly with them, and they didn't seem the least intimidated.

SN: What I have been reading lately is that things have changed since last summer in that regard.

RD: Well, the police have cracked down on prostitution. There have been more arrests.

BW: And they've cracked down on political dissonance. They have people in jail for long terms for being guilty of nothing but freedom of speech, which we take for granted in the United States.

SN: It seems like we really went at the ideal time because they were saying that tourists are not allowed in the Malecon now, but when we were there, we just walked around. It was great.

RD: In case you don't know, the Malecon is a kind of parkway area down by the sea. It was a great place to hang out and smoke a cigar.

BW: Not that *we* did, of course! But we saw other people who seemed to be enjoying themselves immensely. Germans, French, that sort.

RD: I was surprised by the cultural richness. Having more time there allowed me to walk around the city more, and I saw the art galleries, and the architecture. A lot of it is crumbling, but it is still amazing. At the bay, you have the really old buildings, going back to the 1600s, the cloisters and monasteries. From there you can walk through the city and see history charted in the buildings, from the great old religious ones to civic buildings and mansions of later centuries to the 1920s modern style hotels and apartments to the contemporary architecture of the new, well-to-do suburb of Miramar. We went to the ballet and to various concerts and performances. There is a lot of diversity within Cuban culture. We went to a community center where they were having an Afro-Cuban dance, and it was exciting and alive. That's also true in terms of the jazz scene. I went there thinking mainly of politics, but the country is not all about politics. There's so much more.

BW: There is a cultural mix that you don't see until you get down to the bottom.

RD: Yes, exactly.

BW: It's just like brewing beer. It's in the mix that the thing happens. The culture bubbles up from the bottom. You could take one of the old international communist meetings during the 60's when the Cubans were there with the Albanians and the Chinese and the Russians. I think all you needed to do is subliminally play a little salsa music in the background, and in ten seconds you could tell who were the Cubans because everyone else would just be sitting there. Cubans don't fit into our usual categories. There was this lay leader of the congregation that we were staying with, and she was a member of the communist party but she's also a noted religious writer, Methodist, I believe.

SN: That really surprised me. Castro didn't seem opposed to religious organizations like I thought he was going to be.

BW: Not as much as before. Although until '91, he'd allow anyone to believe in the communist party, and if you did you could become a doctor, a lawyer, or anything that took a university education.

RD: And then, in 1991 Castro had some positive experiences with religious groups, and he admitted that he was wrong, the church could be a very positive force in Cuba. Now, there are even pastors who serve in the Parliament.

IS: Are there international churches that have sent aid to Cuba?

MY: Actually it's often been the other way around. Cubans have been the ones who have sent aid.

SN: Yes, I know they have sent aid groups to El Salvador and Honduras after the hurricane.

RD: I know a student at Capital Law School who is from Uganda, and he has great respect for the Cuban doctors and other professionals who came to his country to help. As a matter of fact, he said that when he was a little boy, Fidel was his hero. His feelings have changed somewhat since then, but the Cubans had a very positive effect on them.

IS: Well, a few times you have talked about social dissonance and freedom of speech. What is your perception of this? Is this a problem in Cuba? Would the government be in danger if there was freedom of speech?

RD: Well, the coordinator of my language program was a communist party member and advisor to the Young Communist League at the University of Havana. He had committed his life to communism in Cuba. But he said that many things have to change, that they needed to have broader media coverage and more freedom of the press. I asked him about having a multi-party system, but he said that what would happen is that the second party would be Miami. The danger of opening up is not so much of what is on the inside, but what is on the outside. Millions of political dollars would come to support the corporatization of Cuba; I think that's a very legitimate fear. But in some ways I also think their fear and repression could be working against them.

MY: I was just thinking of this question in terms of China's attempt to economically open up, but still stay culturally closed. There haven't really been any success stories that I know of. I think the Cubans are very aware of it. They are walking a very fine line. How does one motivate people to go to school, to become professionals, if people without education make five, ten, twenty times as much? I think they have reasons to be concerned. I think they see what will happen if U.S. money comes pouring into their country.

BW: Of course the fear of outside agents can be a kind of excuse too. Lots of people have been imprisoned for being critical of the regime or for proposing democratic reforms. When people hear criticism they often hear it as sedition. When I was growing up in the South in the '50s and '60s during the Vietnam War, some people thought we should get out of the war. We all assumed such people were traitors and a communist sympathizers. Who else would say disloyal things?

SN: We haven't talked about the embargo. It has done nothing positive in terms of our goals in changing the government in Cuba, but it has certainly hurt the Cubans as a whole.

RD: And it has been so counter-productive to what our government's overt intentions are.

SN: I don't understand why it is continued. I don't understand what kind of strangle hold this embargo idea has on us. Is it an idea pushed on us by Cubans in Miami?

BW: No, I don't think so. I think it's just confused thinking.

BW: When I first went to Cuba, I was a bit of an agnostic about the embargo. I thought maybe now that the Soviet Union has collapsed the embargo would press Cuba to change a little. But it is clear that this is not happening.

MY: I really don't agree with it either. We are not getting what we want out of it, and it reinforces the image of the US as a bully over other countries, and in the long run, it is one of the worst policies we could have as far as our corporate interests. They must think we are crazy. The Germans or somebody are going to beat us to the punch, and in fifteen years from now, we are going to be reading about how this stupid policy made us miss a golden opportunity. Of course that doesn't give us the right to run down there and exploit them, but, as is so often said, if we don't, somebody else will.

RD: The Cubans are trying to be careful, though, so as not to be exploited. They're trying to be careful about what businesses are allowed in the country. In the past, joint ventures meant that the company had to be at least 51% controlled by the Cuban government although now it is becoming more open and flexible.

BW: One thing to remember is that it is more of an embargo on the US because it hasn't really isolated Cuba.

RD: One of the main effects of the embargo is on Cuban health care. It's not just that American medicine and medical supplies are banned. Here's an example. Cuban hospitals bought kidney machines from Europe, but an American corporation bought the European manufacturer. So now the Cuban hospitals have the kidney machines but can't keep them running because they can no longer bring European technicians to service them. As employees of American corporations, they are now covered by the embargo. Pharmaceuticals are a real problem; there are serious shortages. In a small way, this has

become a blessing because the Cubans have developed traditional green medicines they can grow there. Still, they need other medicines. An embargo on such things seems very inhumane.

IS: Michael, I think it was you who said that you were interested in Cuba because they are our neighbors. What do you think it takes to be a good neighbor in such a case?

MY: Part of it is just talking to each other. We could promote sister cities. The whole theory behind that is to break down these barriers and to get to know one another. Our policy has been more checkbook and military, and theirs is more about people. We fondly think of the Peace Corps as being this great success story, and it probably was, but it's because people respect people being involved. I would like to see more of that.

IS: How could we encourage that at a place like Capital University?

RD: I think we could get more involved with a group like Pastors for Peace. As a matter of fact, I just heard that Professor Hershberger is driving a bookmobile as part of a Pastors for Peace caravan. They will drive to Mexico and then have everything shipped to Cuba. It's great that someone else from Capital is going down there. I know that Trinity Seminary is also involved.

IS: What difference has this trip made to your life as a scholar and as a teacher?

BW: I'm doing a research project now, using my travels as a resource. I'd like to teach some foreign policy and use Cuba as a case study.

RD: I have developed a course in Latin American literature, and I will definitely use some Cuban literature. It was good to talk to the people about who they thought were important authors. We had a really fine translator who taught me a good deal about Cuban literature.

SN: This experience has had a profound impact on my understanding of U.S. relations with Latin America. I now realize that the image of Cuba in the American media is grossly distorted. My conversations with Cubans exploded the stereotypes I had of the island, its people and its leader. I think I've developed a more critical view of the news media in general. I teach ESL. The trip made me more empathetic to my students who experience culture shock. We are enrolling more students from Latin America and it's important to be aware of the current issues that shape their thinking. After I returned from Cuba it was fun to talk to a class of Columbian students and hear their perspectives on Cuba and on some of the issues we've raised here.

IS: What would you like to see from Cuban culture in America?

BW: The way people are valued for who they are, not for what they have, doing things on emotion, being more spontaneous. I have been trying to slow myself down, with some success. I would rather not run across campus so I'm sometimes late. No one cares. I have enjoyed that. I need to take time to talk to those people whom I love.

MY: People who come to the states always say how busy we are. You talk about energy level. I think our energy level is high as well, but maybe it does not enhance our lives.

BW: Energy is not dashing here and there. It's taking the time to value what is right in front of us. We have to be more understanding.

IS: Often when I have traveled somewhere, after a few months have passed, I find I have images that return to me when I think about the trip. Do you each have a sort of recurrent image whenever you remember your experience in Cuba?

BW: I think that mine would be one of the last days we were all there, when we visited the special needs school. It was for children who were amputees, who were terminal patients, and there was a little girl, Marguerite, who was singing for us. In all of the hospitals, and in all of the schools, and all of the day care centers that I have gone to, they should have been very depressing places. But I was not depressed. I felt like there was so much life there. When the principal of the school was taking us around, she was introducing us to various people, but she stopped to play catch with a little boy for about fifteen minutes. She just totally dropped us, and I said to myself that this is how it should be.

SN: It's interesting that you say that because I remember now just exactly what you were feeling, and it should have been sad, but it was a very light place. As a matter of fact, I have a tape of that girl singing, and I play it from time to time, and it makes me smile.

BW: I have a lot of pictures from that school, and you can see these kid's smiles and say just how great they are and how alive and how they didn't feel somehow abnormal or alone. They were accepted for who they were, and at the same time the teachers wouldn't take any crap from them. They are treated like whole, responsible people.

MY: Remembering that place makes me see how much can be accomplished when you get your values straight and through commitment, because those kids who are dying are doing quite well in school, and they have accomplished so much without a lot of resources. That's the image that sticks with me about Cuba.

Brian Wallace and Michael Yosha both teach Political Science. Susan Narita teaches in the ESL program. Reg Dyck teaches English. Their travel to Cuba was supported by a Cultural Studies Grant from Capital University. The interview was conducted by Jessica Brown, a Capital Senior, and Tom Christenson.

Meditation--Band Chapel Service

Erik Haaland

As I was thinking of what I might say for this brief meditation, I stumbled on the realization that what we are doing here, right now, is a curious thing. How many communities, at least in this country, gather daily in an activity such as this? Why do we gather together in an activity like this? Why did you as individuals choose to come here to this place, now? What do you find here? While I'm not presumptuous enough to try to answer these questions for *you*, I will attempt to answer them for myself. And in the process, I would like to share a few perspectives on worship that I have adopted during my time at St. Olaf.

This place and this act of worship fill a need within me in a way I struggle to describe. It's something spiritual, something emotional, something deeply human. And although I struggle to describe it, I know it has something to do with the totality of this experience. All of the elements around us are involved: the candles, the architecture, the stained glass, the music. Now, in this bit of rambling, I have conceptually combined two things--the deeply human and the manipulation of the physical world. And in my mental meanderings, I have found, in the combination of these two ideas, no better way to broadly define art--the expression of what is deeply human through the manipulation of the physical world.

But should we even be talking about the arts in worship? Given our Protestant history, this is a valid question. Christian worship and what are commonly thought of as the arts (especially music) have had an interesting and even antagonistic relationship. Church leaders have condemned the arts in worship at times, believing that our worship forms (liturgy or scripture reading) are specifically commanded by God. They believed these forms should not be polluted by human creativity.

As a committed humanist, I have to disagree with

this interpretation of worship. I do not believe that worship is set on us from above as an obligation or duty--instead, it comes from deep within us as an expression of needs and experiences that touch the very core of who we are. And, if my definition of art has any value, then it should come as no surprise that our religious needs and experiences find expression in a worship that is infused with art--indeed a worship that is art. With architecture, stained glass, music, and on days with more qualified chapel speakers, eloquence, our worshipful response to God is art, and it flows through so many of the mediums in which our humanity has found expression. And for what greater endeavor could we use our artistic gifts than to proclaim the word of God's saving grace?

However, my Lutheran tradition has always been very leery of allowing worship to look anything like a secular performance, and rightly so, for our worship should remind us of God's kingdom--not our own. But this concern should not prohibit us from realizing that our worship is really an art form, and as such, it requires our best and most sincere efforts. For as Christians, we have faith that what we express here is of infinite importance, not only for our lives, but for all of creation. So let me repeat; this worship/this art requires our best and most sincere efforts.

And if I might, I have one more perspective to offer. I can only speak from my own experience, but I know there are times when the God we worship and the salvation we proclaim do not seem to be very near. And if our worship were only the bare proclamation of those ideas in, say, a confessional creed, Christianity would have at those times little to offer those of us with questions and doubts. But in artful worship, we are presented not with something we must believe against our intellect, but something real and tangible we can hold on to. Here power and truth can be known experientially, even if not

conceptually. At least for me on my faith journey, this reality has been an infinite help keeping the faith, even if I have sometimes found my belief at an impasse.

Perhaps you are confident in your faith and knowledge of God—perhaps you are not. But no matter who you are, take heart in what we do here today. Seek to experience truth in what you see,

hear, and say. For at its best, this communal experience in which we are engaged has the power to bring us a glimpse of God and of the kingdom. And as we now see in a mirror only dimly, worship has the power to bring us a glimpse of our salvation. Amen.

Erik Haaland is a senior at St. Olaf College.

LETTERS

To the Editor:

I am a Lutheran pastor out here in the Pacific northwest struggling to articulate the Gospel in meaningful ways while not abandoning the core convictions we live by. I am also on the Board of Regents at Pacific Lutheran University, where I graduated in religion and history some nineteen years ago. I am writing to you out of a sense of perplexity regarding the current assumptions in the church related institutions. I recently read in the *Christian Century*, a review of a book by James Tunstead Burtchaell titled *The Dying Light: The Disengagement of Colleges and Universities from Their Christian Churches*. Apparently Burtchaell feels we are merely paying lip service to the gospel in the so-called Christian university. He articulates what he believes has been a whole hearted selling out of Christian core assumptions in deference to a watered down, less than offensive language of character building and lives of service for our fellow human beings. As a regent at PLU, I believe I understand some of the perplexities of appealing to a wider spectrum of people under the

guise of openness and tolerance. I wonder, however, if we have lost, amidst the generic language of service and leadership, a compelling word of hope and forgiveness in Jesus Christ? Have we, in an effort to become tolerant, abandoned our core convictions because of the offense? I write to you with these thoughts because I was impressed with the article you wrote for the *Intersections* journal on some of these very issues. I am neither a Christian without sensitivity to the cultural assumptions, nor do I consider myself among the ranks of those who are seemingly appalled when the Gospel is rightly proclaimed and articulated. I write as one convinced of the need for openness and necessary contemplation of varying perspectives and persuasions. Simultaneously, I am concerned for a differentiation between a liberal arts school unaffiliated with the church and one, that at least in theory, still yearns for the connection. I thank you for your consideration in this vital matter.

Pastor John L. Vaswig
Spokane, Washington

ELCA Colleges and Universities

Augsburg College
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Augustana College
Rock Island, Illinois

Augustana College
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Bethany College
Linsborg, Kansas

California Lutheran University
Thousand Oaks, California

Capital University
Columbus, Ohio

Carthage College
Kenosha, Wisconsin

Concordia College
Moorhead, Minnesota

Dana College
Blair, Nebraska

Gettysburg College
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

Grand View College
Des Moines, Iowa

Gustavus Adolphus College
St. Peter, Minnesota

Lenoir-Rhyne College
Hickory, North Carolina

Luther College
Decorah, Iowa

Midland Lutheran College
Fremont, Nebraska

Muhlenberg College
Allentown, Pennsylvania

Newberry College
Newberry, South Carolina

Pacific Lutheran University
Tacoma, Washington

Roanoke College
Salem, Virginia

St. Olaf College
Northfield, Minnesota

Suomi College
Hancock, Michigan

Susquehanna University
Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania

Texas Lutheran College
Seguin, Texas

Thiel College
Greenville, Pennsylvania

Wagner College
Staten Island, New York

Waldorf College
Forest City, Iowa

Wartburg College
Waverly, Iowa

Wittenberg University
Springfield, Ohio