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## Faculty ritual, solidarity, and cohesion: Thirty-five years of change at Eastern Mennonite University

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**FACULTY RITUAL, SOLIDARITY, AND COHESION:  
THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF CHANGE  
AT EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY**

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A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Education  
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

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In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Education

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by  
Nathan F. Alleman  
July 28th 2008

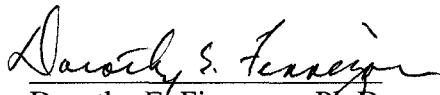
Faculty ritual, Solidarity, and Cohesion:  
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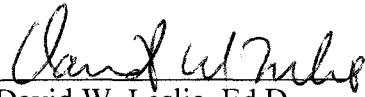
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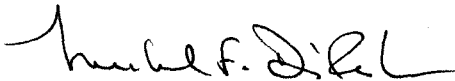
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To Karen, my dearest companion

To my family, my support

To Dot, my mentor and friend

And most of all to Christ Jesus, my purpose:

Unless the Lord builds the house

Its builders labor in vain.

Unless the Lord watches over the city

The watchmen stand guard in vain.

In vain you rise up early

And stay up late,

Toiling for food to eat –

For he grants sleep to those he loves.

(Psalm 127: 1-2)

## Acknowledgements

We play at paste,  
Till qualified for pearl,  
Then drop the paste,  
And deem ourself a fool.  
The shapes, though, were similar,  
And our new hands  
Learned gem-tactics  
Practicing sands.  
(Emily Dickenson, 1924, p. 30)

I cannot believe I have been carrying that poem around in my head since high school. Perhaps now it will finally be exorcized. This document is both gem and sand. I must acknowledge those who have taught me to play at paste, and to strive for pearl. Thank you first to my parents, David and Julia, and my sister Rosalyn, whose dedication to education planted the seed from which all of this has grown. The lesson that education comes to the willing before the able is one that I am still trying to grasp.

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A deepest thank you to Dr. Dot Finnegan for poking and prodding me, and not allowing me to settle for “sand”. You have been the gold of the program, and any melancholy about the

end of this path is soothed (“Is there a better word? What about mollified? Or ameliorated?”) by the prospect of future collaboration. Thank you also to Dr. David Guthrie, to whom the term *Doktorvater* is not lightly applied; your passion for higher education and vision of a transformed world for Christ lit a new fire in me at Geneva College. I look forward to continuing our professional and personal relationship. Thank you Dr. David Leslie, for your amazing ability to critique and humor simultaneously. The “big questions” of governance I have learned to ask through courses and conversations with you will not be forgotten. I also will fondly remember the witty repartee of email banter that seemed to accompany even the most serious messages. Thank you to Dr. Michael DiPaola, you continued to ask important questions and dig through my exhaust(ing/ive) writing even though you did not need to, and your contribution to my project throughout has made it a stronger product.

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# **FACULTY RITUAL, SOLIDARITY, AND COHESION:**

## **THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF CHANGE**

### **AT EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY**

#### **ABSTRACT**

This historical case study of Eastern Mennonite University faculty between 1965 and 2000 explored the shifts in social bonds, examined through the concept of ritual (Collins, 2004), concurrent with cultural, social, environmental, and professional forces that impacted the institution. Employing the concepts of cohesion (as the specific other) and solidarity (as the general other) (Mead, 1934) provided a distinction between individual relational networks and the shared ideological commitments that bound faculty together.

Results of the study demonstrated the significance of intrinsic motivators on faculty hiring, persistence, and perceptions of institutional purpose and employment desirability. Physical space (as the place of assembly) and metaphysical space (as the sense of relational or conceptual connection) emerged as significant frames to understand social bond change. Physical faculty dispersal due to campus sprawl contributed to a reduced sense of relational closeness, making opportunities for cross-disciplinary social and task interaction increasingly important.

The terms of social bonds changed concurrent with the shift from strong to weak ties (Granovetter, 1973; Lindenberg, 1998). The strongly-tied religious, educational, and ethnic Mennonite community of the 1960s contained many mutually-reinforcing rituals. The shift toward weak ties was brought on by the professionalization and diversification of faculty, the reinterpretation of Mennonite values and beliefs, and other internal and external forces. The effect was a de-emphasis on ethnic Mennonite rituals as the source of cohesion, and an increased

emphasis on educational task rituals. However, social connections established despite difference provided significant new bases for solidarity and cohesion in a professionalized religious community.

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FACULTY RITUAL, SOLIDARITY, AND COHESION:  
THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF CHANGE  
AT EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FORCES OF CHANGE AT EASTERN MENNONITE

By the time Eastern Mennonite School was founded in 1917, the cultural, religious, and educational hegemony of Protestant higher education in the United States had significantly eroded. How and why this displacement occurred has generated considerable scholarship and minimal consensus. Secularization scholars such as Laurence Veysey (1965), George Marsden (1994), Julie Reuben (1996), James Burtchaell (1998), Jon Roberts and James Turner (2000), and Christian Smith (2003), name many of the same elements and actors, but differ in their analyses of the causal relationships. Darwinian evolution, Enlightenment science, college presidents and faculty lured by academic recognition, private funding sources, religious anti-intellectualism, intellectual anti-religiosity, cultural arrogance, student pluralism, the scientific method, and many other ingredients mixed together in a draught interpreted today as either poison or strong medicine (and perhaps both) for the Protestant higher education establishment. Regardless, the cup of *secularization*—the removal of religious (Christian) assumptions as the basis of reality—was imbibed by nearly all higher education institutions, albeit by degree. This portion of the story is oft-recited. With few exceptions (see Benne, 2006; Parker, Beaty, Mencken, & Lyon, 2007) insufficient consideration is given to the identity of faculty individually and collectively at religious institutions in what might be termed the *post-secularization* age of higher education. We are left to wonder, what are the normative forces that result in group change now, if the initial turmoil of this academic, cultural, and religious upheaval has stabilized?

The birthing process of Eastern Mennonite School (now University) in Harrisonburg, Virginia mirrored the pattern established over the previous two hundred years of higher



education founding in America. A small enclave of committed individuals with a shared vision, a dearth of resources, and an ambition for the benefits of education mixed with a deep-seated concern (Pellman, 1967) about the creeping influences that might claim the souls of their youth should they fail. In his essay on the origins of Goshen College (Elkart, IN), a Mennonite institution established nearly fifty years prior, Theron Schlabach (2000) argues that Mennonite institutions were less susceptible to the secularizing influences that transformed much of Protestant higher education largely because Mennonites were theologically committed to maintaining separation from the influence of the dominant culture. Nevertheless, the influence of secularization was an early determinant in the development of Mennonite education in a way quite different from other Protestant institutions: even as secularization eroded the orthodoxy from Protestant colleges to varying degrees, Mennonites were founding Eastern Mennonite School<sup>1</sup> to buttress their youth against those same influences in the culture at large.

In the mold of Protestant institutions decades and even centuries before, Eastern Mennonite School began as an educational enterprise committed to perpetuating a theologically-centered way of living and conceptualization of life. In practical terms, teaching focused on biblical instruction with most professors holding undergraduate degrees at best. The founding Board members implied by their faculty search process that they were committed to hiring teachers who modeled conservative dress over those who displayed the academic regalia of advanced degrees (Pellman, 1967).

Among the many factors contributing to the secularization of Protestant colleges, it was the faculty at many institutions who led the parade out of the chapel and firmly locked the doors

---

<sup>1</sup> Eastern Mennonite School has gone through several name iterations, becoming Eastern Mennonite College in 1947, then Eastern Mennonite University in 1994. For simplicity, I will refer to the institution as “Eastern Mennonite” generally, or EMU when referring to it as it exists presently.

of the ivory tower behind them (Burtchaell, 1998). And not only in the metaphoric sense. Burtchaell recounts the disengagement process, as faculty began to opt out of mandatory chapel attendance, and once released from these exercises, began to question whether the ritual was at all appropriate at an institution of higher education. Gradually, faculty reacted with increasing intensity to potential religious impositions that might taint the air of rigorous inquiry. This picture of secularization is a rough sketch of an academy displaying minimal tolerance for those not willing to bow to Enlightenment thinking, the scientific method and all that serious inquiry entailed.

The common religious, social, and cultural values and beliefs unique to Mennonites formed the primary motivation for institutional participation by those early educators who had no illusions of external recognition or grand compensation. Indeed, many were drawn for that very reason. Despite minimal resources and reluctant support from regional churches (Pellman, 1967, p. 74), the shared conviction that Eastern Mennonite must persist as an educational safe harbor for the preparation of their youth solidified the faculty. Although disagreements occurred, institutional solidarity and cohesion were the by-products of a struggle to establish an educational entity markedly different from anything else available. Yet the same ambition that led to the founding of such a modest school pressed it forward through physical plant debt, curriculum expansion, and eventually, the external academic recognition of accreditation.

From its opening day, the passion of the founders for Eastern Mennonite School was nearly matched by a cadre of persistently suspicious Mennonites who viewed entanglement in “worldly” activities such as higher education as a sure sign that the scriptural dictum to “be in, but not of the world” had been violated, and with consequences forthcoming. Despite these

concerns, Eastern Mennonite was neither estranged nor significantly differentiated from the religious and cultural customs of Mennonites in the early decades of its existence.

However, by the late 1950s, forty years of convocations, faculty meetings, chapel assemblies, and graduations provided ample time for the institution to solidify its own collegiate *modus operandi*, and with it, a recognizable culture and structure that, although still very Mennonite, made the college increasingly identifiable as a separate entity from the Mennonite Church at large. Accounts of the ongoing dialog (Pellman, 1967) between multiple partners including Virginia Conference (owners of the college), the Religious Welfare Committee (mandated to assure theological compliance), faculty and administrators, and the larger Mennonite community highlight the tension between divergent theological interpretations and behavioral expectations (p. 208). Whereas institutional members at the founding of the College were Mennonites operating an educational venture, increasing organizational and cultural coagulation meant that faculty became Mennonite educators of a very different sort than their predecessors. As educational standards increased, the issue of faculty *professionalization* became another area where collective faculty identity in relation to the Mennonite character of the institution had to be worked out.

### *Faculty Professionalization*

In higher education, professionalization indicates an increasing awareness of and loyalty to an academic discipline and set of colleagues. This is traditionally connected to a loss of institutional loyalty (Gouldner, 1957), though this assumption has recently been challenged (Rhoades, Marquez Kiyama, McCormick, & Quiroz, 2007). The perceived value of professionalization is context-determined: for those individuals who associate with a certain set of academic preferences, professionalization is largely positive. For those individuals and

institutions, like the Mennonites, who have an educational purpose designed around the perpetuation of a unique community and expression of core values ancillary to mainstream America, perceived discontinuities abound. Professionalization is not necessarily a negative presence in Mennonite higher education. It has increased the quality of instruction, scholarship, and institutional visibility, credibility, and resources. Institutional leaders from the inception of Eastern Mennonite recognized the inherent benefit in such improvements, despite their conservative orientation (Pellman, 1967).

It is, therefore, worthwhile to separate professionalization as a historical trend connected to academic secularization, from the process of professionalizing through which faculty have become more interested in research and scholarship, since the latter may or may not include disassociation from religious assumptions. In the post-secularization age, assuming the latter implies the former is demonstrably unwarranted (Parker, et al., 2007).

Finally, the concept of professionalism is couched in assumptions of improved ability, status, and vocational betterment that overlook the social and relational costs of community connectedness in lieu of professional mobility as a self evident virtue. Thus, professionalism represents a nuanced value set whose role in the educational and religious community of Eastern Mennonite is not presupposed to be either detrimental or beneficial.

### *Mennonite Higher Education*

Mennonite higher education in general and Eastern Mennonite University in particular is grounded in a set of values and beliefs, both cultural and religious, which traditionally have been in opposition to the dominant educational and cultural paradigm. The *ethic of Jesus, simplicity*, and *communitarianism* are three Mennonite reverberant values that echo through various facets of organizational life and theory (Sawatsky, 1997; Meyer, 2000; Gerbrandt, 1998). Although

they do not represent an exhaustive list, these three values are particularly pertinent for their interpretive impact on faculty professionalization and collective identity at Eastern Mennonite.

Briefly defined and broadly generalized, Mennonites view the life of Jesus as a living example for his followers to emulate rather than as a basis for abstracted theological precepts (Wenger Shenk, 2001). Two of the most concrete expressions of the ethic of Jesus are service and peacemaking lifestyles (Gerbrandt, 1998; Koontz, 1998), which include commitments to seek reconciliation on inter-personal, national, and international levels, as well as fair trade, disaster relief, peace activism, and other expressions of care for the marginalized and oppressed regardless of citizenship.

Simplicity is a religious and heritage<sup>2</sup> value historically grounded in the rejection of what sixteenth century Anabaptists considered to be the excess and affluence of the Catholic Church. Instead, Mennonites have traditionally held that a preoccupation with material accumulation places undue value on temporal rather than on spiritual gains. Just as Jesus lived a simple life of relative poverty and, though fully God, took on the role of the servant, so too Mennonites believe that humility and simplicity go hand-in-hand for his followers. Finally, *communitarianism* is summative of several significant values: a belief that all people are equal before God and therefore deserving of equal treatment and equal participation in the church, and an incarnational eschatology of “Word became Flesh” that divides the community of Mennonite believers from the world and its alternate nationalistic and self-seeking priorities (Sawatsky, 1997).

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<sup>2</sup> Throughout this proposal, the term *heritage* or *Mennonite heritage* will often be used to refer to unique Mennonite practices that are not primarily religious, though they may reflect religious values. Examples would be a capella singing, quilt-making, and meal-sharing. Implementation of this term is necessary since the common term *culture* is specifically defined and operationalized in this study.

On a most basic level, the ethic of Jesus is a theological commitment that stands in opposition to the secular position of many academics (Koontz, 1998). It promotes a minority view on topics such as the origin of existence, the nature of knowledge, the certainty of truth claims, and the purpose of education. Specific interpretations of the ethic of Jesus have led to an emphasis on service and an interest in internationalism expressed in part through Eastern Mennonite's required semester of study abroad in a developing or conflicted country, led by a faculty member or team of faculty. "If one builds community around a commitment of service to others, one inevitably respects the other and the other's point of view" (Graber Miller, 2000, p. 7). The common faculty experience of collaborative study service is challenging and transformative, promoting close-knit faculty relationships and association with the College mission (Birky, 2000).

Simplicity and communitarianism are intertwined concepts that speak to the posture and purpose of instruction in Mennonite higher education. Educational access is promoted as a benefit to all, since theologically Mennonites believe each follower of Christ has equal access to God without the need of a hierarchy of intermediaries found in many religious traditions. Consequently, teaching (both theological and vocational) has been justified by its promotion of egalitarian values, though at times, this same sentiment has produced anti-intellectualism as well (Sawatsky, 1997). Instruction is additionally emphasized by the desire to prepare students for an encounter with a self-focused society post-graduation and to instill in them the unique purposes of the church. The traditional posture of teaching, likely reflecting the ideation of Jesus as Teacher, is one of humility and relationship with the learner (Schrag, 1998; Meyer Reimer and Barge, 2000; Sprunger King, 1998).

Despite the desire to promote an alternative vision of life and higher education, Mennonites have willingly entered a social arena where the terms of discourse have already been defined. Albert Meyer (2000) notes that when churches or other organizations name an organization by the term *college*, they are buying into a well-established institution of society, with layers of cultural assumptions that constituent groups believe they already understand (p. 83-84).

Thus Eastern Mennonite University is an institution attempting to marry a cultural and religious community to a pre-existing and often differently motivated educational community. Elements of this uneasy union cohere to or repel one another in three different ways. Some values are shared with the wider academia, such as the importance of quality instruction and vocational preparation. Others values display superficial parallels, but actually may be incongruous, or vice versa. For example, the physical plant is an unrelenting source of pride in higher education, although for many Mennonites the financial stewardship of investments in elaborate structures over student or even community needs is a source of consternation (Koontz, 1998). A third set of values, consisting of religious commitments and priorities, such as the importance of theological adherence over academic freedom, are the most obviously opposed (though, considering the history of secularization, not necessarily irreconcilable). This triptych of values highlights the dynamic tension of Mennonite participation in higher education that simultaneously attracts and repels this religious community.

#### *Durkheim, Ritual, Solidarity, and Cohesion*

Near the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, sociologist Emil Durkheim observed a fundamental shift from peasantry to industrialized labor in his native France. As with secularization, the social transformation observed by Durkheim was propelled by scientific positivism that instigated

unforeseen tectonic shifts of a magnitude that altered the terms of life, from the most fundamental assumptions of human purpose to the daily rhythms of work and home. Social transformation occurred in two inter-related categories relevant to this study: the alteration of solidarity from *mechanical* to *organic*, and a shift in the role of ritual in society.

*Mechanical and organic solidarity.* Durkheim's (1893/1933) published doctoral thesis, "The Division of Labor in Society" reflected the preoccupation of the emerging social sciences as well as his desire to distinguish his own version of the problem of order and social bonds in society from established contemporary thinkers in Germany (Karl Marx's socialism), Great Britain (Herbert Spencer's utilitarian individualism), and his home country of France (Auguste Comte's "communal associationalism") (Muller, 1994, p. 76-77). The massive changes occurring in French society led Durkheim and others to wonder how a society could remain cohesive with the loss of social homogeneity and of religion as the central unifying force. Durkheim's response was a set of social-evolutionary concepts: mechanical and organic solidarity. Mechanical solidarity referred to "primitive" or pre-industrialized societies featuring a high degree of homogeneity and social conformity. Individuals are "mechanical" in the sense that they are identical replaceable cogs in the social machine. Such societies are united by their sameness and strong collective consciousness. Generally, sociologists agree that mechanical solidarity is conceptually sound (Pope and Johnson, 1983).

According to Durkheim (1893/1933) as a society advances, individuals begin to specialize and simultaneously challenge the collective mindset. Although as Durkheim suggests, every society is a composite of both types by degree, mechanical solidarity begins to give way to organic solidarity due to the re-alignment of social focus from groups to individuals, based on freely chosen labor preferences and the cultures, rules, and norms they contain. Organic



solidarity is so named because it mimics the organic interdependence of a human body – separate and distinct yet co-dependent parts. Solidarity within these independent groups becomes the basis for a new “moral community” and promotes society-wide solidarity (Barnes, 1966, p. 170).

However, organic solidarity is conceptually problematic. How can solidarity be based on collective connectivity *and* individualism, which in its extreme form of *anomie*, Durkheim points to as a cancer to social solidarity (Pope & Johnson, 1983, p. 683)? Despite this and other critiques (Barnes, 1966; Wallwork, 1984; Muller, 1994; Rueschemeyer, 1994), organic and mechanical solidarity remain salient concepts today, perhaps in part because social scientists continue to struggle with Durkheim’s foundational question of how a diversified society can remain united.

Durkheim’s formulation of social interaction was neither the first, nor unique in its general emphasis. Durkheim’s contemporary Ferdinand Tönnies (1887/1957) divided all social relationships into the categories of *gesellschaft* and *gemeinschaft*. *Gesellschaft* emphasizes individual rights and minimal obligations in a voluntary association. Contract delineates the scope of the relationship, and it is generally characterized by a high degree of individualization and impersonality. *Gemeinschaft*, as the counter-point, involves extensive obligations, such as a parent to a child. Ties here are non-rational, affective, and other-oriented (Hechter, 1987, p. 21). Dichotomous descriptions of social relations are common throughout early sociology, though Durkheim receives special attention here for the breadth of his analysis and persistence of his concepts throughout the field in general.

*Cohesion*. The historical struggle to define the term *cohesion* with theoretical and operational precision is reflected in the disciplinarily polarized and fragmented use of the concept today. *Cohesion*, *group cohesion*, *cohesiveness*, and *social cohesion* are terms with

technical definitions linking them to macro-social and micro-social concepts, as well as concepts available in the common vernacular. *Cohesion* is used across the disciplines; *group cohesion* tends to be the domain of psychology and social-psychology, as is *cohesiveness*.

*Social cohesion*, however, is nearly always a macro-sociological term used to describe societal-level bonding. For example, social cohesion has been used to discuss the impact of education on citizen's inclination to participate in the public good (Moiseyenko, 2005) or the government's creation of symbols that encourage social bonding (Capshaw, 2005). In anthropology, social cohesion is often used to discuss immigrant populations (Nguyen and Peschard, 2003). This latter use of the concept in these studies however is nearly indistinguishable from the use of social solidarity elsewhere in anthropological works.

James Moody and Douglas White (2003) succinctly describe the dilemma created by the multiplicity of terms, definitions, and disciplines involved in cohesion research:

We study "cohesion" in almost all our substantive domains, and in its ambiguity, it seems to serve as a useful theoretical placeholder. Ubiquity, however, does not equal theoretical consistency. Instead, the exact meaning of cohesion is often left vague, or when specified, done in a particularistic manner that makes it difficult to connect insights from one subfield to another. (p. 104)

Some of this confusion can be mediated through an historical perspective.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Emil Durkheim was joined by a range of social observers who attempted to make sense of the cultural upheaval around them through sociological and psychological categories. In particular, William McDougall (1921) noted the mayhem caused by otherwise rational individuals who are *depersonalized* in the anonymity of crowd behaviors. He surmised "the group is more than the sum of the individuals and has its

own life, proceeding according to laws of group life, which are not laws of individual life” (p. 13). McDougall’s theory suggested a group consciousness, but fell short in explanatory detail. Michael Hogg (1992) traces the lineage of cohesion theory back to this formulation and notes that it was soon superseded by Floyd Allport’s (1924) dictum that “there is not a psychology of groups which is not essentially and entirely a psychology of individuals” (p. 4). Allport’s declaration gained popularity, and with it, the pendulum swung strongly toward the study of individuals as the source of group behavior.

At mid-century, interest in cohesion and cohesiveness in groups developed rapidly within social-psychology. Early definitions tended to focus on less scientific formulations of how groups “stick together” (Hogg, 1992, p. 18). Unfortunately, purposeful strides toward a formal definition also increased confusion. Festinger, Schachter, and Back (1950) are frequently cited (see Mudrack, 1989; Hogg, 1992; Friedkin, 2004; Levine & Moreland, 1990; Bollen & Hoyle, 1990; Dion, 2000) as responsible for laying the groundwork for what Peter Mudrack (1989) characterizes as “a legacy of confusion” (p. 37). Specifically, Festinger, et al. initially formulated cohesion as “the total field of forces that act on members to remain in the group” (p. 164). That same year Festinger (1950) shifted the causal emphasis of the definition by reformulating cohesion as “the *resultant* of all the forces acting on members to remain in the group” (p. 274; emphasis added).

Subsequent definitional iterations ranged from “the resistance to disruptive forces” (Gross & Martin, 1952), a composite of closeness to other group members (Gross, 1954), a composite of restraining forces (Hall, 1955), indexes of morale (Zeleny, 1939), and specific descriptions of the role of attraction (Shaw, 1974). Unfortunately, the splintering of definitions intensified from this point, and as the formal concept of cohesion developed under the purview

of social-psychology, the methodological position of cohesion took the form of its ontological assumptions. Seashore (1954) was among the first to recognize the conceptual disconnect between definitions of cohesion in terms of individual experience and a term meant to describe a *group* property (as noted in Mudrack, 1989). Psychology and social-psychology (and to a lesser extent, sociology) accumulated a wealth of variables believed to be causally linked to cohesion and cohesiveness despite the absence of a comprehensive definition that accounted for and described the concept on a group-level basis. Linked concepts included membership attitudes and behaviors (Friedkin, 2004), increased productivity (Stodgill, 1972), increased participation (Carron, Widmeyer, & Brawley, 1988, as cited in Dion, 2000), increased conformity (O'Reilly & Caldwell, 1985; Rutkowski, Gruder, & Rorner, 1983) increased liking (Lott & Lott, 1965), and many others.

Theorists (Levine & Moreland, 1990; Dion, 2000; Friedkin, 2004) have, in defense of their definitional struggles, pointed to the multidimensionality of the cohesion concept. Yet comparisons among various operationalizations have “often indicated only weak or non-significant correlations, or the existence of separate cohesiveness dimensions” (Hogg, 1992, p. 49). Thus, definitions are not mutually-inclusive. What may be defined as cohesion in one context or in one group structure may not be an indicator of cohesiveness elsewhere. As a result, recent theorists (Dion, 2000) have usefully suggested a multi-layered typology, with a primary layer of general features common to all or most cohesive groups, followed by secondary layer of context-specific characteristics.

*Durkheim and ritual.* Among Durkheim's many interests, the disappearance of religion troubled him deeply because of his concern for the loss of religious rituals that provided the basis for social stabilization and shared cultural identity (Durkheim, 1912/1995). In his observation of

Australian aboriginals, Durkheim struggled to define religion through scientifically observable concepts. His answer was to define religion in terms of the *sacred*, with *ritual* as its action-element (Pickering, 1984, p. 115). More foundational than religion, Durkheim described the essence of primitive social life as a duality of the sacred and the profane (p. 116). Profane time is marked by involvement in everyday activities of resource collection and production, frequently dispersing a community to perform required tasks. By contrast, sacred time is full of religious collective engagement. The fundamental social character of a group is expressed in rituals, which in turn are symbols of collective meaning and commitment. Out of the euphoria of ritual comes a sense of renewed group identity, moral purpose, and in-group/out-group separation. In short, a by-product of ritual is social integration, that is, cohesion and solidarity.

Since the middle of the twentieth century, the concept of ritual has been applied ever more liberally to events far afield from the religious order of Durkheim's concern. Contemporary sociologists (Goffman, 1967; Collins, 2004) extend Durkheim's notion of ritual beyond religious observance to most any repeated practice that reinforces the identity and connection of the participants and provides a sense of purpose, at least for a time. *Informal* rituals involve anything from sporting events, to holiday observances, to face-to-face greetings on the street. Rituals that do not invoke collective effervescence, group identity, and purpose are "failed", though the same ritual may be successful for one person (perhaps an initiate) and failed for another (a long-time participant with little sustained interest) (Collins, 2004, p. 51). Within education, formal events such as graduation and the ubiquitous campus tour have been vetted as rituals rife with symbol and meaning that impart a strong sense of group identity and shared purpose (Quantz, 1999).

Though rituals most readily connect to mechanical solidarity in contemporary applications, rituals exist in organically solidary groups as well. In his later works, Durkheim modified his approach to individualism, distinguishing between egoism (self-focus damaging to society) and institutionalized individualism as a source of solidarity via the “cult of the individual” (Durkheim, 1922/1983). In effect, the individual in modern society becomes a self-focused deity, thus reconnecting with his concept of religion and ritual. As a result, solidarity is based on the division of labor through structural interdependence, and through mutual respect for individuals as a common value (Fararo & Doreian, 1998, p. 6).

Eastern Mennonite, as an institution of religious and educational purpose, is an environment in which many types of rituals occur. As an organization founded on principles of separation from the dominant culture, reinforcement of group norms and confidence built through rituals have traditionally buttressed collective identity. Embracing academic standards and professionalized faculty may mean the inclusion of new rituals and new meaning infused into familiar rituals. What impact membership in various educational and religious groups has on faculty solidarity and cohesion is a central issue in this project.

### *Repositioning the Study of Faculty*

The case for the transformation of a faculty from a group consisting of teachers to a collective of professional scholars can easily be over-stated as a linear process of development, akin to Durkheim’s societal transformation from mechanical to organic. Durkheim and his contemporaries attempted to make sense of the social implications of political and cultural upheaval. They correctly perceived a fundamental change had occurred in their society, and wondered on what terms the basic bonds between citizens could be re-forged in light of industrialization and the de-personalization of labor and social groups. Durkheim viewed this

transition from mechanical to organic solidarity, albeit multi-staged and overlapping, in terms of linear and evolutionary progress. Although I reject the presupposition of evolutionary improvement, the question he struggled to address on a societal level finds its parallel here: given this change of culture and professional status, in what ways do faculty bonds develop and persist?

The story told by secularization researchers such as Burtchaell (1998), Veysey (1965), and Marsden (1994) accurately emphasizes a radical ontological transformation, but does so in a way that implies a largely undeterred trajectory of continued disaffection and dissolution of religious commitments. I suggest the end of the twentieth century signals a transition to a post-secularization era when change in the small religious college is no longer dominated by this evolutionary presupposition. Instead, change should be thought of as transition and adaptation to the undulations of social systems, religious and professional communities, and faculty culture, both local and cosmopolitan.

#### Statement of the Problem

In light of this history and the confluence of identity questions that arise from the disparate forces discussed, serious questions can be posed about the nature and type of change that has occurred at Eastern Mennonite, and the adequateness of existing frames to understand and investigate it in depth. Thus, this study analyzed how, between 1965 and 2000, possible changes to faculty culture, solidarity, and cohesion, viewed through ritual, have altered faculty collective identity and in turn, have redefined what it means to faculty for EMU to be a Mennonite institution of higher education.

The study of faculty has gradually developed over the past century from psychological analysis of individual experience, to psychosocial consideration of types (Gouldner, 1957), to

sociological and anthropological explorations of identity by discipline and institutional category (Clark, 1987; Becher, 1989). As insightful as these studies are, for a small university concerned with tending a unique historical and religious identity, considering faculty as a collective group reveals dynamics of commitment and change not available by focusing on disciplinary sub-strata or individuals. The solidarity and cohesion experienced by the faculty collective is an essential and revealing element of organizational culture for two reasons: first, at an institution at which physical resources are scarce, intrinsic motivators, such as personal alignment with institutional mission and a sense of collective identity provide significant employment incentives (Hechter, 1987; Finnegan, 1993). Second, intrinsic motivation is reinforced and supplemented by the presence of formal and informal rituals that in turn also create and re-form the group bond (Durkheim, 1912/1995).

As a study of organizational culture change over time, the membership of the faculty group is shaped by a host of environmental factors. Erratic national market forces over this 35 year span dramatically altered the applicant pool available to institutional leaders as they weighed institutional needs and aspirations (Finnegan, 1993). These shifting periods of want and plenty contributed to the formation of faculty hiring cohorts of varied academic affiliation, prestige, and orientation to the basic mission and identity of the institution. This study questions how individually cohesive and institution-oriented these constantly shifting cohorts were, and their role in the formation and change to the faculty as a whole during this time.

Based on an interpretivist model, this study relies on in-depth interviews with individuals who were employed as full-time faculty at Eastern Mennonite between 1965 and 2000. Interviews explored faculty perceptions about potential changes on three fronts: the types of ritual interactions faculty experienced with one another, the interpreted meaning and effect of



those interactions on culture, ritual, solidarity and cohesion, and the impact of these common experiences on perceptions of what it is uniquely “Mennonite” about Eastern Mennonite.

Thus, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are faculty rituals, and how have they changed by structure and meaning?
2. Based on changes to ritual, how have faculty culture, solidarity, and cohesion been altered?
3. What subsequent impact have changes to culture, solidarity, and cohesion had on collective faculty identity?
4. How have changes to collective faculty identity reshaped the way faculty view what it means for the institution to be Mennonite?

#### Significance

Four concentric circles illustrate the significance of this study. Individually, past and present employees of Eastern Mennonite can use this conceptual framework to understand their personal experiences of group solidarity and cohesion change. At the institutional level, insights into group bond changes provide a resource for understanding how collective faculty identity has shifted in response to changes to ritual, membership and environment, and the impact this has had on the formation and perception of collegiate identity.

Other implications extend beyond the institution. The type and strength of bonds between faculty and the factors that contribute to changing collective faculty identity are not well understood. Particularly at smaller, less prestige-driven institutions, group bonds and the implications of bonds for institutional identity are salient issues in an era when creating and maintaining distinctiveness and market niche are pressing concerns (Guthrie, 1990). Finally, some implications include and extend beyond higher education: the interaction effects of

multiple solidary groups, the rituals that arise and change in the process, and the impact on institutional culture provide insights into the formation and re-formation of organizations of all kinds where social, cultural, and/or religious commitments overlap.

#### Limitations and Delimitations

The historical case-study methodology of this project results in limitations that are either imposed or chosen. Study duration and resources limit the size of the participant pool, which could benefit from additional voices especially across faculty generations, and an increase in the number of interactions. The quasi-historical nature of the study limits data sources, excluding the option of observation or researcher as participant involvement to improve the depth and accuracy of interpretation through multiple data sources. Participants' recalled accounts, some from several decades prior, may be a less accurate data source since memories may be obscured by the passage of time. However, what is sacrificed through the fog of history may be gained through the thoughtful reflection and self-analysis of participants who are better able to evaluate past experiences.

The study design also includes a number of self-imposed limitations. Eastern Mennonite has a cultural and religious history that results in social attitudes and behaviors very different from other institutions, whether religious or secular. Within the single-case institution, scope was limited to the 35 years between 1965 and 2000. The participant group was limited to full-time faculty representing an informant pool with a unique relationship to one another and a unique contribution to the identity of the institution. Several key administrators from the three presidential eras, as well as a number of cultural informants provided triangulation through multiple data points. Students, administrators, staff, trustees, alumni, and community members also contribute to institutional identity in their own ways, but focusing on the bonds between

faculty members alone allowed for greater attention to the rituals salient to just one group.

Finally, considering faculty as a group through the lenses of solidarity and cohesion rather than as individual agents, narrows the conceptual breadth of the study, limiting parameters of research to social-level activities and outcomes.

## CHAPTER TWO

### IDENTIFYING THE METHODOLOGICAL AND ONTOLOGICAL PREDISPOSITIONS OF CURRENT RESEARCH

The divergent existing literature of this study's five central issues of solidarity, cohesion, ritual, professionalization, and Mennonite higher education are united by one or two broad methodological and ontological shortcomings. First, beginning with Durkheim, solidarity and cohesion literature has frequently contained an evolutionary or linear bias that this study resists and addresses. Change is not always linear; it is redundant, circular, and may shift from one arrangement of inter-related parts to another. Although at times a linear model may be most appropriate, imposing the expectation of linear progress and evolution (or devolution) potentially restricts the interpretive possibilities of a group or organization narrative un-necessarily.

Second, the contextual study of each of the five concepts tends to be limited in the consideration of multiple and/or overlapping cooperative memberships or contexts that may serve to buttress or transform a group in unanticipated ways. Studies are frequently designed with one or both of the following shortcomings: they are either uni-dimensional in that they consider only one group, group dynamic, or context, and/or studies emphasize conflict interactions without accounting for the mediating of reinforcing group memberships. This literature review reveals these implicit tendencies found throughout this diverse literature base, and demonstrates the need for a conceptual framework unconstrained by these preconditions.

#### Solidarity

Research in solidarity often displays two assumptions that limit the potential explanatory power of their models. First, solidarity field studies of established groups frequently rely on evolutionary designs in which change is linear and progressive. Grounded in Durkheim's

“Division of Labor” (1893/1933) explanation, solidary change develops from mechanical (simple, interchangeable) to organic (complex, differentiated). The theme of social improvement through functional differentiation is an implicit value not only of Durkheim’s theory and subsequent elaborations (Wallwork, 1984), but of field research that builds on this sociological tradition as well.

Mark Hutter (1970) in his comparative study of occupational change and kinship solidarity in American and Japanese families identifies tension created when inter-related structures are tested by changes elsewhere in a solidary network. In this case, change was brought on by shifts in family labor participation from an agrarian farming-based lifestyle to that of the middle-class, resulting in a loss of traditional life patterns. Hutter’s analysis is based on two assumptions: first, that change is linear and moves from the simple to the complex, and second that the effects of change on kinship relations could be detrimental (Hutter, 1970, p. 33). New labor patterns are complex, but the complexity of a pre-existing agrarian society is familiar and culturally decipherable. The difference may be a matter of adaptive preparedness. Other solidarity research that repeats the themes of linear movement, progress, and development from simple to complex include a study of women’s credit groups as a response to poverty and industrialization in India (Azad, 1987); an ethno-medical account of the role of a local healer in the face of industrialized medicine (Clark, 1993); and the effects of new oil money on kinship relations in Papua New Guinea (Gilberthorpe, 2007).

Second, although theories of solidarity suggest variations of type and strength, existing research does not fully account for the impact of overlapping group memberships and the effect they may have in the way that change is manifested or resisted. Solidarity is variously described in terms of weak and strong ties (Granovetter, 1973; Lindenberg, 1998), arrangement by network

structure (Markovsky, 1998), or relative position of an individual in a solidary group (Collins, 2004). However, these worthwhile distinctions fail to describe the interaction effects of multiple and potentially over-lapping group memberships. One related model is the notion of *equivalence* proposed by Thomas Fararo and Patrick Doreian (1998). Groups are *regularly* equivalent if members of group A connect in the same way as members of group B (they suggest all members of juries as an example). Groups are *structurally* equivalent if all members connect in the same way to the same group (members of one jury) (Fararo & Doreian, 1998, p. 20). This distinction of solidary levels, however, does not describe interaction effects between levels of memberships.

### Cohesion

Research on solidarity tends to focus on long-standing ethnic and/or self-selecting social groups. Yet, due in part to the development of cohesion research through social-psychology, cohesion has been employed to study short-term assemblages such as therapy groups (Lieberman, Wizlenberg, Golant, & Di Minno, 2005), collegiate housing residents (Festinger, et al., 1950), sports teams (Pepitone & Kleiner, 1957 (as cited in Mudrack, 1989); Carron & Brawley, 2000), and a range of laboratory groups assembled for study purposes (Marshall & Heslin, 1975; Karau & Hart, 1998; Holtz, 2004). Frequently, the result of the use of short-term groups is a de-emphasis on change, or a focus on linear and stage progress toward improved cohesion.

Temporal groups as the study subject encourages questions related to the emergence of group feelings and identity. Leigh Thompson, Laura Kray, and E. Allan Lind (1998) constructed escalation dilemmas to see how or if newly-formed groups developed cohesion. William Owen (1985) monitored the language use in small group discussions to key on metaphors as an indicator of cohesion. Lawler and Yoon (1996) observed the power dynamics on affective bond

development between dyads in business relationships, focusing on the emergence of commitment (cohesion). What transforms a collection of individuals into a cohesive group is a salient question. However, a linear predictive model of emergence and stability results from these studies and others. Instead of viewing cohesion as a group feature that ebbs and flows with environmental and interpersonal change, cohesion becomes a group feature to be generated through proscribed and prescribed behavior or structures. A few studies have resisted this characterization. Albert Carron and Lawrence Brawley (2000) found that cohesiveness fluctuates over the course of group life.

Since the 1950s, cohesion researchers have increasingly recognized the multidimensionality of the cohesion concept, resulting in a range of multiple factor studies (Carron, Widmeyer, & Brawley, 1985 (as cited in Dion, 2000); Bollen & Hoyle, 1990; Cota, Evans, Dion, Kilik, & Longman, 1995). However, a similarly nuanced account has not been developed to explain the way multiple cohesive group memberships may interact. The exception to this literature gap is the identification of conflict relationships between groups that provide a stronger sense of in-group cohesion and purpose (Bone, 2006). Nevertheless, within an organizational context, the intermingling of multiple cohesive groups may result in a variety of interaction effects that have not been sufficiently explored.

### Ritual

Despite the expansion of the concept of ritual beyond traditional religious contexts, ritual studies seldom consider group and organizational environments in which both formal and informal rituals are an integral part of social life. This oversight has been particularly acute in the study of educational rituals.

Although the foundations of ritual study are primarily in the examination of religious (and frequently tribal) events (Durkheim, 1912/1995; Grimes, 1982), recent interest in ritual study has expanded the range of ritual contexts and illuminated everyday events through the lens of the *informal* ritual (Bellah, 2005; Goffman, 1967). Examples include a study by Margaret Visser (1992) who explored the rituals of table manners as a set of unspoken standards that mediate access to scarce resources in an environment charged with potential disagreement and even violence. Stephen Pinker's (1994) study of *motherese*, the maternal speech patterns and vocal tones used with pre-lingual infants, emphasized the universality of ritual in everyday life.

Of a different variety, Erving Goffman (1967) suggests that the *interaction ritual* is the most fundamental human ritual involving a complex system of encoded meanings exchanged through the respect and attention individuals show to one another. Rituals, even on the micro level, cause individuals in the presence of sacred objects (persons included) to behave in a way concurrent with the symbolic meaning of the object. Thus, even a simple greeting confers and maintains the terms of a relationship in which both individuals play meaning-laden roles in that moment of exchange.

Randall Collins (2004; Collins & Hannemen, 1998) uses the concept of the "interaction ritual chain" to build on the work of Durkheim (1912/1995) and Goffman (1967). Emphasizing physical co-presence, internal/external boundaries, mutual awareness, and a common emotional mood (Doreian & Fararo, 1998), Collins places ritual as the locus of culture. Rituals exist in chains to highlight the need for repeated renewal, as the shared emotional and moral focus gained dissipates over time. Unlike Goffman, Collins suggests that ritual groups may be of any size, so long as participants are co-present (although in discussing the use of mass media, he is suggesting limitations).



Despite this broadening of ritual investigation, concentration on formal education as a ritual environment has been sparse, even though the rhythms of the academic calendar and life indicate ritualized activity (Bellah, 2005). Most prominently, Kathleen Manning (2000) highlights the formal campus rituals of the presidential inauguration, charter day, convocation, class shows, alumni parades and other collegiate calendrical reoccurrences. Manning constructs a helpful typology of rituals (reification, revitalization, resistance, investiture, incorporation, entering/exiting, etc., p. 5-7) noting that these secular observances carry different functions in the life of the academia.

Manning's (2000) focus on secular rituals acknowledges the many kinds of rituals that occur outside a formal religious context at many higher education institutions. Manning's institutional participant pool of four schools excludes those with active religious traditions, limiting the applicability of her findings. Her emphasis on Turner (1969) and van Gennep (1960) rather than Durkheim (1915) (although his contribution is briefly acknowledged) thereby overlooks the valuable relationship between sacred and profane (or secular) in which all rituals contain an element of the sacred, although they may not be *religious*. Use of the term secular to refer to non-religious results in a missed opportunity to identify, as Durkheim and Goffman do, the transferal of sacred status from groups to the modern cult of the individual. As Collins (2004) notes, identifying the sacred in non-religious rituals means that we recognize the deference given to objects and relationships of symbolic significance. Finally, by focusing only on formal observances, Manning elects not to examine the range of "natural" rituals (Collins, 2004, p. 49) that play an important role in supporting the beliefs, values, and group bonds within an institution on a daily basis, and may in fact serve to sustain the significance of the symbols

found in formal rituals she identifies. Manning's insightful work could be more robust with inclusion of these concepts and ideas.

Returning to the study of educational rituals broadly, Peter Magolda (2001) through his work on the college campus tour as ritual supports the observations of Burnett (1976) and McLauren (1993). All three claim that rituals, particularly in the educational context, are seldom scrutinized, are important sources for revealing social and cultural conditions, reveal much about ritual organizers and participants, and are political acts that communicate expectations and norms for behavior and performance.

A modicum of other studies has considered ritual in education settings. However, research conducted in a working-class Toronto Catholic school (McLauren, 1993), in an American high school (Burnett, 1976), and in high school and college athletics (Goodger, 1986) have demonstrated the richness of ritual study in the context of education. Rituals in higher education have received less scrutiny, although the studies by Magolda of the campus tour (2001) and graduation exercises (2003), as well as Kathleen Manning's (2000) work on formal campus rituals are valuable exceptions. Based on the trails thus blazed, expansion of ritual study should proceed in several directions. First, ritual study in higher education has not considered the many interaction rituals among faculty, administrators, and students, as presented in general by Goffman (1967) and Collins (2004). Second, faculty members as a group have not been considered in terms of the rituals that provide identity parameters and a sense of purpose within their respective institution.

#### Faculty Professionalization and Secularization

Despite the fact that professionalization studies have increasingly focused on the influence of the specific context, the desire for generalization and typologies has resulted in

missed opportunities of depth available in one institutional faculty unit. Researchers often stop short of full institutional explication, relying instead on common typological nomenclature to provided sufficient descriptive depth, such as *selective private colleges* (Clark, 1987).

Typologies provide a useful tool for framing the most basic features of an institution. However, to pursue contextual particularities no further is an injustice to the frequently cited institutional variations that make American higher education so compelling to study, yet so difficult to standardize.

The literature on faculty professionalization reveals the accumulated commitment of educational researchers to focus on the effects of fragmentation and stratification of the disciplines on the identity of the professorate. Just as the disciplines have fragmented through academic specialization, so the focus of research into faculty identity pursues differentiation of career stage (Baldwin & Blackburn, 1981), discipline and field (Becher, 1989), hiring cohort (Finnegan, 1993), orientation toward research (Gouldner, 1957), management of daily life (Matveev, 2007) and institution type (Clark, 1987; Finnegan, 1993) in their analyses. This emphasis on categorization, frequently in combination with the use of interview data, succeeds in revealing more of the nuance of individual contextual experience than previous quantitative efforts (see Becher, 1989; Finnegan, 1993; and Clark, 1987). However, the types of questions these studies seek to answer tend to (with the exception of Finnegan, 1993 and Matveev, 2007) exclude or overlook faculty as an institutional group and their dynamic relationship with the identity and mission of their college or university.

Four specific gaps appear in the current literature that this study addresses. First, with the exception of Matveev, (2007), studies that focus on the individual (Gouldner, 1957) or the categories of institutional or disciplinary type (Finnegan, 1993; Clark, 1987; Becher, 1989)

ignore the possibility of faculty as an institutional whole as an appropriate category of analysis. Second, with the exception of the work of Clark (1972) on institutional *saga*, efforts to understand faculty identity differences generally do not consider that faculty, as a group at a given institution, may have a collective identity beyond their own atomistic professional orientation. Third, the emerging faculty identity literature has not sufficiently explored the possibility that, despite professionalization and the specialization of disciplines, faculty may still be significantly oriented toward the unique mission of their institution (Matveev, 2007). The few studies that address faculty relationship to institutional mission only confirm its importance (Finnegan, 1992). Finally, the perspective of the institution regarding the effects or the management of professionalization is seldom considered, nor the impact it may have on campus mission and identity.

Researchers in faculty sociology often display a preference for the study of elite institutions and high profile individual faculty as the ideal of the profession (Becher, 1989). This celebration of faculty self-determination posits the experiences of highly mobile and highly visible stars as normative, as in Tony Becher's incisive study of faculty as tribal members. Only passing consideration is given to educational values outside of this narrow segment, and even in those cases it is often presented in an unfavorable light. Three exceptions are the work of Finnegan (1992, 1993) who studied faculty at comprehensive universities and determined that many pursue jobs at those institutions due to a sense of fit, rather than "settling" for these posts. Matveev (2007) recently analyzed the management of work life of faculty in a teaching-dedicated comprehensive university, finding differential management skills and tasks by longevity in the profession. To a lesser degree, Clark (1987) discusses the common identity

found among faculty of community colleges, who sense they are making a significant impact in the lives of students with minimal educational opportunity.

This prevailing focus on the individual faculty member reflects the modernist ideal of the “academic man” (Wilson, 1942) representing a value claim and not reality in a strict sense. Values systems or faculty identity perspectives that do not conform to the preferred vision are often dismissed or neglected, a trend described in general by Popkewitz (1997).

Although the Enlightenment roots of academic specialization and faculty independence originated beyond the shores of the American colonies, domestically this notion found resonance with the emerging cultural values of rugged individualism and the pioneering spirit of a dawning nation. A full recitation of this history is unnecessary to understand that higher education has adopted and has, through the research imperative, advanced this cultural priority. Emblematic of this mindset, the establishment of the Carnegie Institution of Washington (CIW) at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century made available a vital new stream of research funding for individuals and institutions at a time before the link between higher education and scientific research had been solidified. The CIW set aside a significant allotment of its original research grants to support the “exceptional man,” the unknown genius laboring alone in obscurity (Geiger, 1986, p. 64). The effort was a tremendous drain of resources and proved to be unproductive, yet it represented the persistent romanticism of the “lone academic ideal”.

One result of the emphasis on the individual scholar as investigator and investigative subject is that the faculty of an institution as a whole has seldom been explored. One exception is David Dill, (1982) who employed the Clark’s typology of three academic identity levels (enterprise, profession, and discipline) to discuss the loss of a unified and commonly held set of beliefs that has stripped faculty at an institutional level of shared identity (p. 311). Dill wants to

foster “common belief systems” (p. 318) generally, a feature I believe to be present already in many small private colleges, though its symbols and manifestations may be shifting. Certainly, restrictions of scope at larger universities may create logistical hurdles and ameliorate the potency of collective faculty identity. However, existing studies of smaller institutions (Burtchaell, 1998; Benne, 2006) where the faculty collectively are considered frequently lack the depth of investigation needed to meaningfully analyze the remaining connective strands that bind a given professoriate to a common cause.

This cult of the individual ideal that privileges the scholar and his academic peers over the institution or faculty collective can be seen in the work of Tony Becher (1989) on the academic disciplines as tribes. Becher frames his investigation with five questions: the character of each discipline; the epistemology, or role of theory; career patterns; reputations and rewards; and professional activity. Through these frames, Becher provides an in-depth qualitative peek into faculty culture, albeit within research universities. As he focuses on the unique features of the disciplines as an association of like-minded scholars, he demonstrates the external ties of faculty within these types of institutions, but neglects to consider the faculty as a group or the mission of the institutions to be worth mentioning.

As a counterpoint, in a discussion regarding mission drift Clark (1987) identifies the importance of institutional identity in substantiating the work of faculty at many types of schools:

The American system of higher education and the American professorate could well use stronger sets of beliefs that legitimate and make emotionally satisfying the roles of minor universities, state colleges, and community colleges, belief that would stabilize

professional commitment as much as do the doctrines that give major universities and leading liberal arts colleges such substantial legitimacy. (p. 144)

Although institutional mission and faculty identity may be less of an issue for a handful of all-star faculty sprinkled around the country at a few elite institutions, the vast majority of instructors serve in institutional contexts where factors beyond their own professional affiliations greatly impact the quality of their position (Dill, 1982; Clark, 1987).

Alvin Gouldner (1957, 1958) in his foundational social-psychological study established the conceptual frames for a conversation on faculty professional affiliation and loyalty that continues today. Gouldner investigated the orientation of faculty in terms of the level of commitment ascribed to their profession versus their institution. He reasoned that individuals are a *ménage* of social identities and within different contexts each predominates. He contrasted *manifest* identity to *latent* identities, or the non-dominant roles that may be considered irrelevant or inappropriate in a given situation (Gouldner, 1957). Manifest roles focus on the “manner in which group norms yield prescribed similarities in the behavior and beliefs of those performing the same role,” while latent roles are not prescribed by the local context (p.286). Gouldner employed the latent role concept to explain the differences in behavior between people in like manifest roles.

Gouldner (1957, 1958) distinguished two types of latent faculty roles (*locals* and *cosmopolitans*) which he related to three variables: loyalty to the employing organization, commitment to professional skills, and inner or outer reference group orientation. *Locals* refer to faculty who are oriented toward the institution, possess less regard for research and their extra-institutional disciplinary peers, and are oriented toward an “inner” institutional peer group. *Cosmopolitans* are faculty members who display a low level of institutional loyalty and high

degree of mobility, who are committed to research and scholarship over teaching, and whose reference group are disciplinary peers, generally outside their institution.

Three shortcomings of the local/cosmopolitan distinction create space for reconsidering how faculty members relate to their institution. First, the limited generalizability of Gouldner's sample must be taken into account. Although his sample included 123 of 130 faculty members employed at a selective liberal arts college, generalizability cannot be assumed beyond this immediate group. Gouldner's results shed new light on faculty role definitions, but should not be construed as automatically applicable to institutions of different size and mission. Studies by Clark (1987) and Finnegan (1992) illustrate that faculty priorities vary by institutional type, be it a flagship university, a comprehensive university, or a community college. Similar distinctions might also relate to institutional mission. The minimal campus detail that Gouldner provided falls well short of thick description (Geertz, 1973) eliminating the possibility of generalization through the comparison of features on a campus-by-campus basis.

Second, although Gouldner's local/cosmopolitan distinction rightfully bears a certain self-evidential weight throughout higher education, there is no logical reason why faculty cannot be concerned with professional and scholarly development and still strongly associate with the mission and identity of their institution. The implicit assumption that the primary determining factor of faculty professional orientation is their desire to be an active scholar and relate to their disciplinary peers without regard for their motivation for seeking employment at their current institution does not take into account the draw for faculty who may strongly associate with the mission of their institution, such as Clark's saga schools (1972).

Finally, Gouldner considered the local/cosmopolitan duality to be latent role. However, in the fifty years since he wrote the article, publication and the expectation of professional



mobility may have transformed the cosmopolitan role into a cultural expectation, and therefore, shifted it from a latent to a manifest social identity (Finnegan & Gamson, 1996). Therefore, a meaningful latent division instead exists between faculty members who participate in external scholarship but identify by choice with their given institution, and faculty members who are oriented to teaching and are strongly attached to their employing college or university. The difference may be in their *potential* mobility, not in their actual desire to behave itinerantly. This possibility does not deny the tendency for faculty who are focused on their professional community to behave as a prescribed cosmopolitan. However, it does provide space for the possibility that institutional context and individual motivation are potential determining factors in career trajectory.

The study of two comprehensive universities by Finnegan (1993) is one of the few investigations to address faculty hiring and continuance in relation to institutional mission. Fluctuations in the academic labor market and institutional hiring patterns shape the membership of three faculty cohorts, each with distinctive socio-cultural features relating to teaching, scholarship, and motivation for seeking employment at the two universities. Finnegan found that the contracting demand in the faculty labor market of the mid-to-late 1970's allowed her sample institutions to engage in an aspirational hiring of faculty with superior qualifications to those available during a period of less adequate supply a decade prior.

Conclusions suggest that those hired when the market was open defied the popular notion of an academic queue, where the best candidates are whisk away to the elite institutions, leaving those remaining to fill the less attractive positions (Finnegan, 1993). Instead many faculty members at the two comprehensive institutions chose to work at this type of institution because it was a place that most closely aligned to their academic values. Additionally, among the least

satisfied were faculty members hired earlier but disillusioned when the institution began to emphasize scholarship and pursue candidates accordingly. Finnegan notes that some faculty felt they had been misled by the professed emphasis on teaching at the hiring process, resulting in a discontinuity between the identity of the institution, the aspiration of the institution, and the expectations of the new employee. Finnegan concludes that the institution would be better off focusing its energy on meeting hiring needs that address its mission, rather than selecting higher profile faculty, even when the market makes them available.

These conclusions suggest the potential advantage of a harmonious relationship between the professional orientation of faculty and the mission of the institution. However, in Finnegan's formulation the relative importance of the research imperative of the institution draws the applicant, and not the construction of an institution-wide identity, as in Clark's three "saga" institutions (Clark, 1972). Also, the emphasis by Finnegan (1993) is on the individual faculty members rather than the summative weight of collective faculty identity and its implications for institutional mission. Although Clark (1972) does consider faculty as a collective, his concern is only for those senior members who are in a position to lend credibility and force to a reform initiative.

#### Mennonite Higher Education Theory

Just as solidarity and cohesion studies have overlooked the interaction effects of multiple group memberships, ritual studies in education have largely ignored the impact of religious and common rituals in one organizational context, and faculty professionalization has overgeneralized the experiences of faculty, so Mennonite higher education theory has yet to sufficiently acknowledge the value of depth and interaction effects on community life found in a collective faculty unit, despite ontological commitments that would favor this interpretation.

Theron Schlabach (2000) argues that since the inception of Mennonite higher education in the late 1800's, Mennonites have positioned their educational efforts to stand apart from American culture, both academic and popular. This purposeful counter-cultural strategy has translated into a natural resistance to the seduction of recognition and resources that at Protestant institutions has frequently resulted in disassociation from their founding churches (Burtchaell, 1998). Such reactionary impulses inspired the founding of Eastern Mennonite as a haven of religious conservatism and inculcation into the theology of a unique community in the early part of the twentieth century (Pellman, 1967). A central theme of this alternative religious collective has been the role of the community as a confessional body of believers, equal (and equally needy) before God and oriented to the "Kingdom of God" as their primary affiliation (Koontz, 1998; Wenger Shenk, 2001). Successful perpetuation of an alternative vision for life has engendered efforts on two fronts: ensuring young people develop a sufficiently stable identity through which to relate to the dominant culture and second, creating educational institutions that consistently reflect this vision and model it for their students (Hertzler, 1971; Schrag, 1998; Koontz, 1998; Meyer Reimer, 2000).

Despite the preoccupation in Mennonite higher education with nurturing community identity, theorists and practitioners alike neglect faculty collectively as a potential model for that community and instead emphasize the primacy of the teacher/learner dynamic (Sprunger King, 1998; Meyer Reimer, 2000; and Schrag, 1998). Ironically, the place of teaching in Mennonite higher education is most often conceived of as an individualistic activity reflective of "the professor and pupil on two ends of a log" academic ideal of a non-religious origin (Clark, 1987). Reflective of this, Dale Schrag (1998) writes of the "crisis of community" in America, and claims "in general, we don't think 'corporately' any more; we measure most things – including

our church commitments – almost entirely on how it affects us (or perhaps our immediate family)” (p.83-84).

If a loss of community thinking is at issue, one point of emphasis might be for faculty to model community through their lives together, professionally and personally. Instead, Schrag lists three faculty roles meant to instill a sense of *the good* beyond content alone: the professor as partisan, honoring and reflecting the narrative of the church; the professor as model, reinforcing behavior through example, and the professor as pastor, demonstrating an explicit concern for spiritual development and life outside of the classroom (p. 96-98). Schrag defines each of these roles as a singular activity pursued without reference to faculty colleagues who presumably are engaged similarly.

Schrag later decries the “commitment to specialization” as the philosophical position of the secular academy that, as a consequence, devalues and erodes community life (p. 90-91). Schrag does point to the lack of communication between academics even within sub-fields of the same discipline, however, this aside regarding the effects of specialization on faculty cohesion deserves a more exhaustive exploration.

Other writers have echoed the value of the faculty unit as community exemplar. Although specifically referring to faculty/administrative relationships, Ted Koontz (1998) alludes to the potential of the group as unit to reflect an alternative vision of identity. “From an Anabaptist perspective, church-related institutions should be ‘signs’ of how to be together institutionally which reflect our theological commitments and offer life-giving alternatives to those patterns in our cultural corporate life which are destructive” (p. 115). Koontz concludes that Mennonites will lack credibility regarding their “prophetic” stance if institutions do not reflect these beliefs. Daniel Hertzler (1971) also pointed to the primacy of community, noting

that “education in the history and values of the Christian tradition are best accomplished in the experience of community” (p. 23). As these quotes suggest, further conceptualization and investigation of faculty as a collective group within a tradition that so highly values community may provide an additional source of insight into the efficacy and content of identity conveyance to subsequent generations of young Mennonites.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CONSTRUCTING AN ORIGINAL STUDY

#### The Conceptual Framework

The compelling and potentially confusing aspect of this study is that the moment of research occurs at the confluence of historical, environmental, sociological, and cultural change. The following section will parse out the major conceptual elements of this discussion, defining the major study elements of culture, solidarity, cohesion, and ritual, before exploring the operational implications for these concepts in combination.

#### *Culture and Symbols*

In this study, culture refers to the framework through which a group of people makes sense of their world (Smircich, 1983). Thus, rather than organizational culture *as* an organism or *as* a metaphorical machine, in an adaptation of Geertz' (1973) symbolic anthropology, culture is not something an organization *has*, rather culture is something an organization *is* (Smircich, 1983, p. 347). Culture, then, is the web of values, attitudes and beliefs that represent normal life for insiders. As Geertz (1973) emphasizes, culture is not about a list of rules, but “familiarity with the imagination universe within which their acts are signs” (p. 13). This approach also emphasizes the shared meaning-making of participants, and the role of the researcher in interpreting the symbols through which insiders or members navigate and make sense of their world.

#### *Solidarity and Cohesion*

Expansive and disciplinarily diverse bodies of literature have grown up around solidarity and cohesion, largely independent of one another. As noted in the chapters one and two, the definitional and conceptual struggles theorists and field researchers have encountered due to the

interdisciplinary and contextually-dependent nature of these terms are legion. Because descriptions and definitions of either concept are limited in application outside a given setting, and because, as used in this study, both concepts are best understood as they relate to one another, I will begin by outlining a few central definitional characteristics before exploring the concepts in tandem, and then in relation to other relevant terms.

*Solidarity.* Although the literature demonstrates little consensus regarding the essential elements of solidarity, I have identified from the literature six characteristics of solidarity salient to the use of the concept in this study. *First, solidarity contains both cognitive and affective elements that result in and from a shared need, commitment, or connection to others as the basis of their bond.* Scholars in their research on solidarity have tended to bifurcate the cognitive and affective elements that I see as complementary, rather than opposing. Describing solidarity in these terms acknowledges the strengths of Hechter's (1987) rational choice model and his emphasis that solidary members decide to access privately-held, jointly-produced, excludable goods through membership. At the same time, my definition does not exclude recognition of an attraction element that has nothing to do with production; multiple individuals may share a similar commitment or ideology and thus be drawn together (see Heise, 1998 on empathetic solidarity). Theorists have frequently emphasized the affective or the cognitive at the expense of the other. However, the relative mix of cognitive and affective draw that binds a person to a solidary group may impact the degree of loyalty and willingness to sacrifice on its behalf.

*Second, solidary membership contains expectations for member behavior, and repercussions for those who deviate from those norms.* Each instance of solidarity is also an orientation to the point of shared commonality. For example, a solidary group of peace activists hold a set of values with implicit (and perhaps even explicit) assumptions about behavior that

echoes this set of commitments, such as, “we don’t purchase toy guns for our children”. Were a member to purchase toy guns for her kids, she may not be directly reprimanded. However, violation of this norm requires that she either justify her actions (and in doing so, re-establish her commitment and simultaneously reassure other members of the value of the jointly-held belief) or face some manner of sanctions, be they direct questioning of her commitment, or indirect distancing, such as the cancelation of a play-date with other adherents’ children. Regardless of the methods, boundaries are implicit to solidary membership, though the nature of response to violators is dependent upon context and type of solidary unit, described in detail below.

Third, and closely related to the second, *solidary groups have boundaries that separate in-group members from out-group non-members*. Boundaries are a product of the same values that establish standards of acceptable behavior. Boundaries serve an important though different function for outsiders and insiders. For outsiders, boundaries restrict access to resources (material or non-material) reserved for insiders and may send messages of varying clarity regarding how welcome outsiders are at specific events. Boundaries serve insiders in other ways. As the terms of an ongoing dialectic regarding what is acceptable for groups (Cohen, 1985), boundaries are dynamic in response to internal and external changes. What is perceived to be a threat by insiders may be thought of as benign to outsiders, such as the introduction of technology beyond current societal capacity.

Fourth, *solidarities exhibit a high degree of differentiation by type, stability, and relative member position in the group*. A non-exclusive list of factors contributes to the relative strength and distribution of members in a solidary group: homogeneity of membership, frequency of interaction, and relative position of members in the solidary network. The role that group solidarity plays may vary by intensity and as a result, by type. Building off the work of



Granovetter (1973), Lindenberg (1998) employs the concepts of *weak* and *strong* solidarity to explore the extent and type of differing group characteristics. In weak solidarity, social bonds are less restrictive, in part as a result of the relative extent of obligations experienced by members. However, since the girth of this solidarity is thinner, the possibility of complete breakdown that would necessitate coercive means to assure compliance is more likely. The greater potential for failure and the inconvenience of other methods for group maintenance keeps members in check generally, even though the formal bonds experienced are weaker (Lindenberg, 1998). Strong solidarity is based in homogeneity and equality. In a weakly solidary group, however, conformity is enforced less, and members who are able to contribute resources and expertise are valued and rewarded. This system of equity (as opposed to equality) indicative of weak solidarity may represent a meaningful connective force in group life, despite the relative loosening of bonds (p. 93-96).

Strong solidarity occurs when the value of jointly-produced goods or attraction to group is of high enough value that “non-solidaristic” means (influence to coercion) are not necessary to maintain the hold of the group over the individual (Lindenberg, 1998, p. 97). The distinction between weak and strong solidarity highlights that a given solidary group may remain constant by membership or other variables, and yet change by the degree of pressure to conform, rewards or consequences of behavior, and other alterations of quality and type.

The experience within a given solidarity by its members is also variable, relative to their importance to the group (either legitimate or symbolic). As Collins (2004) indicates, solidarities are gradient circles: most intense toward the center, but fading at the margins. Those members who are closer to the center are more strongly committed to it may play a more central role in defining the essential elements of the group. Those members who are at the margins are less

committed, but also less strongly held and less important to the perpetuation of the group. This creates an insider/outsider effect, even within a given solidarity. Access to the inner circle of a solidary group may be highly guarded, and those inside reified (if only by one another).

Fifth, *the effect of the interaction between or among multiple solidarities may be positive or negative depending on the relative strength or dominance of a given solidarity*. Solidarities frequently share group members, creating a system of overlapping concentric solidary circles, based on congruent beliefs or values. If a person is a member of a strongly solidary group, that membership may exist at the exclusion of other possible groups, at least to the degree that secondary group solidarity memberships are congruent with the dominant one.

Complex organizations may contain layers of interactive solidary groups, depending on common cultural, religious, ethnic, or ideological commitments shared by significant numbers of members. Solidary groups within a complex organizational context naturally exhibit varied interaction effects. To the extent that two or more solidarities are congruent and cross-promoting, I propose the term *mutually-reinforcing*, that is, values, beliefs, and subsequent behaviors that represent and instantiate a given solidarity may also support others that share parallel commitments, etc.

Sixth, *solidarity may be promoted by homogeneity or diversity*. Implicit in Durkheim's (1893/1933) work on solidarity is the claim that solidarity is somehow the product of mechanical societies that are homogenous in structure as well as industrialized organic societies where the free division of labor allows for independent association and recognition of the value of interdependence. The goal of this study is not to prove or disprove Durkheim's thesis, yet the terms in which solidarity persists, if at all, in an organization of increasingly diverse membership and ideology is central to the interest of this project.

*Cohesion.* In cohesion research, the balance between identifying common characteristics and accounting for contextual differences has been difficult. In a qualitative study like this, utilizing the new heuristic structure proposed by Albert Cota, Charles Evans, Kenneth Dion, Lindy Kilik, and Stewart Longman (1995) and later revised by Dion (2000) may provide the most balanced approach. Cota, et al. suggest that primary dimensions characterize most applications of cohesion broadly, while secondary dimensions are contextual-specific features that may or may not be shared with other cohesive groups. In this study, secondary dimensions are defined as *cohesion modifiers*, elements that shape and promote the primary dimensions, given the unique context of a cohesive group. This strategy provides a framework for understanding the concept without making hard claims that ignore the specific variables that make a given instance of group cohesion so compelling.

Kenneth Dion (2000) proposes four characteristics of cohesive groups: individual/group distinction; social/task functions; belongingness; and the vertical/horizontal nature of groups (p. 22). The first three characteristics are used in this study. The *individual/group characteristics* are important both as primary frames of an ongoing cohesion discussion, and more broadly, because they hint at a vital and fundamental ontological divide between those who view the individual as the primary actor who chooses to join groups, and the view that the identity of individuals is socially nested in groups. The *social/task characteristics* of cohesion are linked to a broader issue of needs: why people persist in groups and why they may or may not find them satisfying. *Perceptions of belonging* address an emotional component important in cohesive groups: a moral sense of attachment that speaks to the value of the group to an individual, summative of social/task and individual/group dimensions. Finally, the *vertical/horizontal* dimension of cohesion recognizes the role that lay in effecting cohesion, either directly or

indirectly. This factor is not be explored at length due to the organizational-level focus of this project and the individual or network-level function of the vertical/horizontal characteristic.

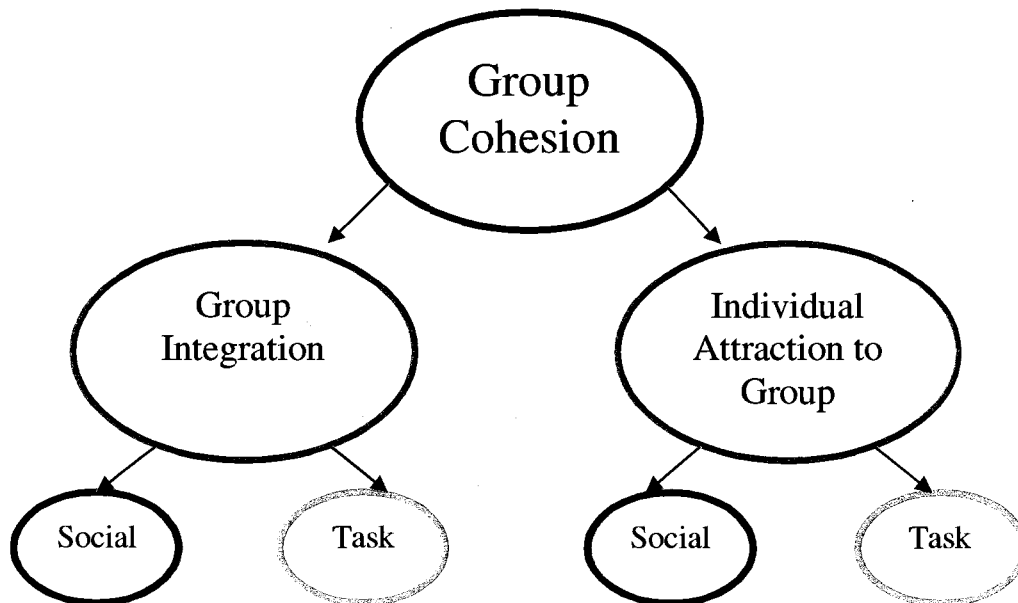
Although the goal of these four factors is to identify features that are common to most cohesive groups and represent avenues through which cohesiveness can be examined, other variables are thought to promote cohesion also. These include group stability, individual liking for one another, shared difficult experiences, task success, and homogeneity of nearly all personal characteristics (Hogg, 1990). The degree and type of impact each of these additional elements incurs varies with the relative strength and interaction of each with the other elements. For example, a group that is cohesive as a result of shared difficult experiences is differently cohesive than a homogenous group, or a group that is cohesive based on interpersonal liking and group continuity.

*First, individual and group identities are characteristics of cohesive bonds.* The primary conceptual tension over cohesion, even within social-psychology, has been based on a division between those who perceive there to be an individually-transcendent group concept (such as Hogg & Turner, 1985; Hogg, 1992; and to a lesser extent, Piper, et al. 1983), and those, like Friedkin (2004) who argue that all group level conditions are either antecedents or effects of individual-level attitudes or behaviors (p. 416).

Recently, several authors have resisted the individual/group bifurcation of cohesion, instead treating them as subsets under one conceptual umbrella (Carron, Widmeyer, & Brawley, 1985 (as cited in Dion, 2000); Bollen & Hoyle, 1990; Cota, Evans, Dion, Kilik, & Longman, 1995). In particular, Carron, et al. suggest a three-tiered hierarchy (Figure 1) that divides group cohesion in parallel sub-categories of individual attraction and group integration. The hierarchy proposed by Carron, et al. uses this individual/group distinction to suggest two separate ways

group members' perceive identity in the context of group membership. The second tier is then further sub-divided into social and task distinctions, considered in the following section.

Figure 1. Carron, et al. (1985) Group cohesion hierarchy



Source: Dion, 2000, p. 14.

Conceptualizing cohesion as a manifestation of both group and individual characteristics opens a wide array of opportunities for imagining how issues of attraction, persistence, and identity may change over time. Lott and Lott (1965) acknowledge the artificially narrow conceptual focus that is a consequence of attraction theories. However, they are careful to note that their dependence on individual-level data for cohesion theorizing in no way eliminates the presence of group-level identity, but is a result of measurement limitations (p. 302).

*Second, task and social interactions characterize group cohesion.* Two aspects of group functionality are frequently found in multidimensional studies: achievement of group productivity aims, and affective factors through which groups meet the social and emotional needs of members (Festinger, Schachter, & Back, 1950; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969 (as cited in

Carron & Brawley, 2000), Mikalachki, 1969; Carron & Brawley, 2000). These two characteristics that contribute to cohesive groups are commonly referred to as *task* and *social* characteristics. All groups serve both functions; though for some groups, social maintenance is their instrumental purpose (Carron & Brawley, 2000).

Task and social interactions, as characteristics that promote cohesion are recurrent themes throughout cohesion research (Zaccaro & Lowe, 1988; Bollen & Hoyle, 1990; Bernthal & Insko, 1993 (as cited in Dion, 2000); Hoyle & Crawford, 1994 (as cited in Dion, 2000), though several recent studies present more detailed models. As Figure 2 illustrates, task and social characteristics can be conceived of as group-level or individual-level phenomena. Although the hierarchical model presented by Carron, et al. (1985) is useful to the extent that it acknowledges the bifurcated function of the group and individual attraction sub-sets, it seems equally likely that these characteristics in an organization with a high level of social and task interaction cannot be so neatly distinguished from one another. A set of bi-directional arrows between each set of task/social bubbles in Figure 2 might be more accurate.

Considering the crossover between task and social characteristics is more than a technical exercise. When analyzing change in an organization with layers of groups, the compelling mix of these characteristics causes a person to persist and commit energy and resources above and beyond what is formally required may be subject to change. As the organization grows in size and/or complexity, individuals may be increasingly “loosely-coupled” (Cohen & March, 1974) across the campus and outside their department, altering the social/task dynamic of cohesion.

*Third, belongingness contributes to group cohesion.* Kenneth Bollen and Rick Hoyle (1990) use the concept of belongingness (in combination with morale) in their six-part Perceived Cohesion Scale (PCS) that is intended to avoid the typical limitations of attraction measures,

such as restrictions of sample size. Belongingness is a subjective self-evaluation of their relative degree of connection to a given group. One of the strengths of the belongingness concept is the combination of cognitive and affective aspects (Dion, 2000). Cognitively, group members assess experiences with a given group and consider the feedback received that indicates their relative standing in the group. Affectively, group members reflect on the way those same corporate experiences have made them feel. An increased sense of belongingness, produced in many ways, is a factor in the level of cohesion a group experiences. In terms of the social/task dimensions, belongingness mostly arises from the social elements of groups, though collective task performance may also promote a sense of belongingness.

#### *Relating Solidarity and Cohesion*

Solidarity and cohesion are related concepts, though the exact nature of that relationship is usually left vague, and at times, they are treated as synonymous (Alpert, 1941; Johnsen, 1995). Indeed, social solidarity as the study of society-wide social bonding is hardly distinguishable from social cohesion, apart from social solidarities' clearer conceptual lineage via Durkheim. Confusion and misuse of the terms may be due in part to the group-level disciplinary focus of sociology which tends to use solidarity, and the individual and individual to group interests of psychology and social-psychology, which use cohesion primarily. Nevertheless, several authors have suggested conceptual connections that allow for a greater precision of description and investigation in my study.

*General and specific others.* One of the most useful conceptions of the relationship between solidarity and cohesion employs George Herbert Mead's (1934) concepts of the *generalized other* and the *specific other* (Fararo & Doreian, 1998). Formal solidarity research recognizes two levels of ties: "a direct interpersonal tie in a social network, and a solidary tie that

connects actors whether or not they interact directly with each other” (Fararo & Doreian, 1998, p.22). The analogy to Mead is obvious. The level of analysis preferred by sociology and anthropology is the generalized other, or solidary social bonds. The focus of social-psychology is on the specific other, or cohesion.

The result of equating the generalized other with solidarity and the specific other with cohesion is a domain distinction that allows for more nuanced analysis of groups that are changing and multi-faceted. An organization (or group of groups) may experience shifts of solidarity that may or may not impact cohesiveness, and vice versa. Barry Markovsky (1998) defines cohesion as *reachability*, or the relative distance of one actor from another in a network of relationships. Higher reachability (cohesion) is an indicator of, but not sufficient cause for increased solidarity (p. 345).

*Solidarity and cohesion in combination.* According to the various iterations of network and exchange theories, the density (Nguyen & Peschard, 2003) and type (Markovsky, 1998) of connections between all dyads determines the strength of group cohesion (Moody & White, 2003). In Figure 2a, a given actor (ME) has an interpersonal connection (lines and arrows) with other actors (small circles) to form a cohesive group. The network is not perfectly cohesive since each actor is not connected to every other actor directly. Actor ME is *embedded* to the extent that more dyads are connected through ME and thus depend on that actor for network stability and continuity (Lawler & Yoon, 1996). The graphic also illustrates Markovsky’s concept of reachability; for a group to be cohesive, individuals must be close enough to interact and maintain personal relationships.



Figure 2a: Cohesive network

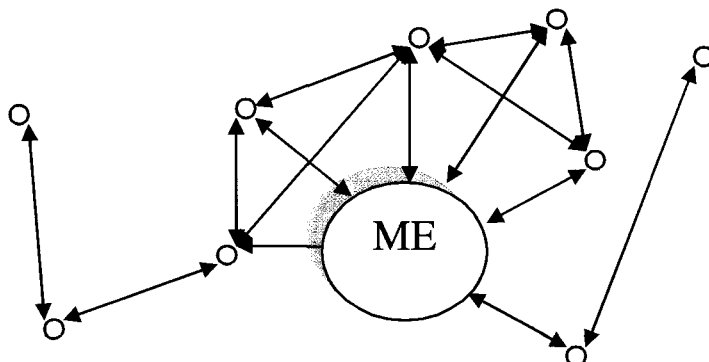


Figure 2b illustrates solidarity: the red circle represents the generalized other and all actors contained within are part of the solidary, regardless of interpersonal relationships. The blue dotted circles (and all small solid circles within as actors) represent three possible scenarios: as sub-solidarities within a larger social solidarity that may be mutually-reinforcing, as sub-solidarities in conflict for the dominant role, or as a sub-dividing response of those within the larger red solidary circle, given a particularly divisive issue. For example, a religious community that is otherwise solidary to outside threats might internally divide into different solidarities due to a protracted schism (Redekop, 1967).

Figure 2b: Group solidarity demonstrating two contexts: Large group and sub-groups

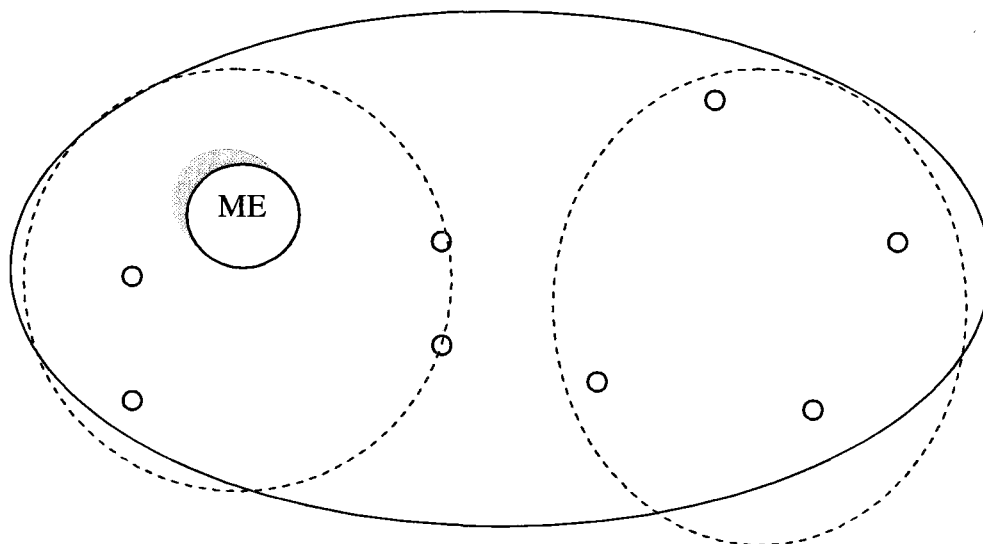
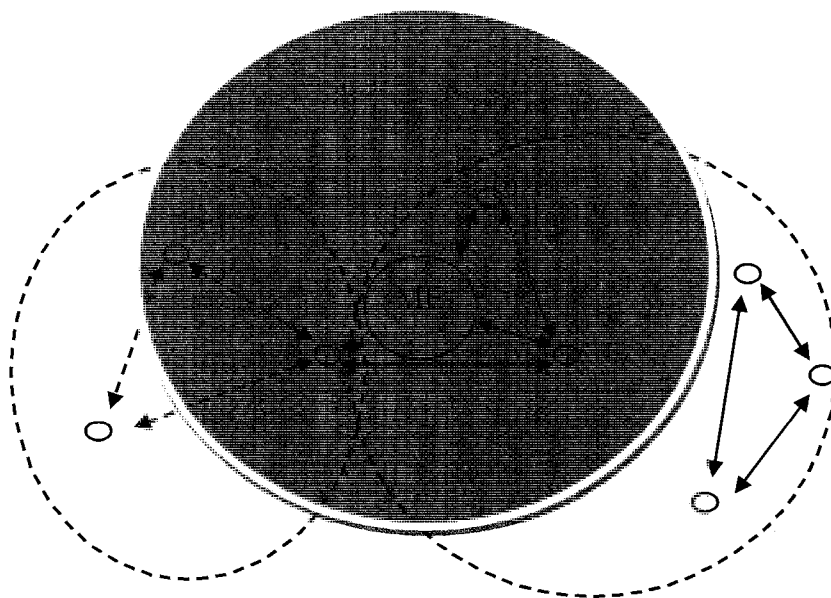


Figure 2c combines concepts from 2a and 2b. The blue circle represents a solidary group (generalized other), part of which is also a cohesive specific other (the actors connected by black lines and arrows to ME). As in Figure 2b, the dotted circles represent alternate contexts of generalized other (solidary) groups as well as specific other (cohesive) groups within. The red dotted lines connecting (small circle) actors in the left circle suggest a possible cohesive unit within a newly-formed solidary groups (the left red dotted circle). Multiple formulations are possible beyond what is suggested here.

*Figure 2c: Solidarity and cohesion with two contexts: Large group and sub-groups.*



Thus far, culture, solidarity, and cohesion have been defined, and the inter-relationships of solidarity and cohesion have been explored. In this study of group change, solidarity and cohesion represent conceptual barometers, both independently and in tandem. As internal and external forces weigh upon the group, solidarity and cohesion shift and stretch, adding and shedding mutually-reinforced sub-groups. Solidarity and cohesion are amorphous in their fluctuation without a definitive and momentary event in which the strength and shape of group

bonds are applied to a specific action, and within that moment, are reshaped and re-energized.

This is the ritual event. Thus, this final section fits ritual, as the fulcrum, into the overall design.

### *Ritual*

Ritual as an area of sociological and anthropological study began with religious rituals but has spread to include rituals that do not contain traditional religious assumptions of organized observance related to a Transcendent. The idea of distinguishing types of ritual is not new. Some authors have used the word secular to distinguish a class of rituals that does not fit the criteria of traditional religious rituals (Moore & Myerhoff, 1977; Manning, 2000). However, I use the terms *formal* and *informal* to provide definitional separation between periodic, highly structured and stylized events such as graduations and opening convocations, and the frequent and un-premeditated interactions that naturally and regularly occur in everyday life.

*Application of ritual to informal events.* The renewed credibility of the pillars of anthropologic theory (Collins, 1975; Moore, 1995), along with a burgeoning critical studies field (Magolda, 2001, 2003) have helped to expand the ritual study subject criteria beyond traditional religious observance. Diverse fields and disciplines, including theater, philosophy, sociology, kinesiology, anthropology and others, though separated by academic traditions and methods, contribute ritual categories that include speech, movement, music, artifacts, space, and time (Grimes, 1982). Exploring ritual without primary reference to structuralism and functionalism has opened new possibilities for the role of ritual, as can be seen in the work of Pinker (1994), Visser (1992), and Quantz (1999). It has also created new struggles, since informal definitions of ritual must grapple with a much broader set of criteria.

Just as informal rituals have become a new source of interest, formal religious rituals of the kind traditionally practiced by Mennonites have become far less pervasive. According to

Bellah (2005), one outcome of American secularization (at least to the extent that religious plurality is widely recognized and Christian Protestantism is no longer the assumed national norm) is that the increased compartmentalization of culture-wide religious rituals has resulted in fewer widely shared rituals. However, the importance of rituals persists, even if the degree of cultural religiosity and purposeful attention to ritual is less ubiquitous.

On the other hand, rituals that persist may be increasingly valuable as points of confluence for an increasingly diversified community. However, informal rituals may persist only at the level of what Roy Rappaport (1999) terms “middle-order meaning” rituals; containing symbols of meaning, but lacking the euphoric connective force of rituals that result in “high-order” meaning (p. 71). Whether, or to what degree rituals of a traditional religious nature persist is another telling aspect of this study, since the presumption of Durkheim (1912/1995) is that as a population becomes more diverse, it displays lower levels of religious enthusiasm along with a decreased intensity in group solidarity.

Erving Goffman (1967) emphasized the pervasiveness of ritual at the level of conversation and greeting where comparably minor interaction ceremonies facilitate the construction of social identity through reciprocation. Indeed, Goffman implies that with the decay of rituals related to the supernatural, rituals of interaction may be only ones remaining within secular society (Lemert & Branaman, 1997). On the other hand, Goffman does not intend to suggest the advent of an irreligious world:

Many gods have been done away with, but the individual himself stubbornly remains a deity of considerable importance.... Perhaps the individual is so viable as a god because he can actually understand the ceremonial significance of the way he is treated.... In

contacts between such deities there is no need for middlemen; each of these gods is able to serve as his own priest. (as quoted in Lemert & Branaman, 1997, p. 32)

This transfer of title, rites included, forces a dramatic rereading of the now re-contextualized ritual. If the self is deified then ritual participants engage in informal exchanges that symbolically acknowledge the deistic nature of the other. Serving as one's own high priest means we seek out those experiences and individuals through whom we can symbolically honor ourselves.

Goffman's concepts of *deference* and *demeanor* reveal the performative, sacred attitude assumed by interacting individuals (Goffman, 1967). Briefly, a person who feels deference is due must exhibit a demeanor that is believed to command it, or at least, given circumstances (such as formal authority) will not compromise it. An employee who provides wanted deference to an employer's demeanor, may receive deference in return. The pivotal fact is that each person, regardless of station, commands only part of this didactic; a person can establish a demeanor, but others must instantiate their demeanor through deferential exchange. As Goffman suggests, objects of ritual focus receive special treatment. Deference and demeanor create an exchange where each person formalizes their behavior, in a sense giving recognition to the sacredness of the other individual. Thus, common rituals contain a sacred element, as individuals or symbols receive deference and respect, despite the lack of formal ceremonial structure.

*Collins' interaction ritual chains.* Building on the tradition of Durkheim's (1912/1995) "Elementary Forms of Religious Life" and Goffman's interaction rituals, Randall Collins (2004) constructs a theory of contextually-driven ritual meaning-making that he calls "interaction ritual chains". Collins identifies four central elements of ritual: co-presence of participants; boundaries

between insiders and outsiders; focused attention on a common object and awareness of common focus; and a common mood and experience. The sum of Collins' ritual characteristics results in a strong, though momentary, sense of immediacy and united purpose, and the distribution of emotional energy among participants.

Collins (2004) also identifies four specific results of ritual: symbols that represent the group; emotional energy in the individual; feelings of morality and rightness of group adherence; and group solidarity and feelings of membership. These four deserve a brief explanation, since they are significant action-elements in this conceptual framework. First, ritual effects dissipate quickly and must be renewed through re-enactment. The construction of symbols or meaning-bearing objects in the ritual event aids in the perpetuation of collective purpose. Symbols encapsulate central beliefs and frequently occupy highly visible positions in community life as unspoken reminders of what really matters.

Second, emotional energy is a by-product of ritual interaction and is characterized as feelings of confidence and enthusiasm for group activities (Collins, 2004, p. 108), though individuals also accumulate emotional energy, impacting their relative position in future interactions. In Collins' formulation emotional energy is a central concept used to explain differential benefits of ritual interactions due to stratification and power imbalances. In a given interaction, some members have more emotional energy from previous interactions (a related term is charisma, in that it provides a certain cachet and ability to command/lead others). Powerful people are able to monopolize the emotional energy created through a ritual interaction. Emotional energy is not emphasized in this study due to the group level focus of the research.

Third, the resulting emotional energy produces feelings of moral rightness. Moral sentiment leads persons to compulsive acts to defend the honor of the group and the symbols it

holds to be sacred. It may result in a kind of righteous judgment and anger toward those who fail to show proper deference, especially, though not exclusively, toward insiders. The more central a person is to a solidary network, the more pressed they may feel to uphold its symbols, and the more shame they may feel if they fail to do so.

Finally, ritual participation results in feelings of membership and solidarity. In a successful ritual, *ritual entrainment*, or a shared mood, occurs between participants. This may include verbal utterances, physical movement, or various other forms of repeated, mimicked, or responsive interchanges (Collins, 2004). The effect is a buildup of coordinated emotional energy, resulting in feelings of solidarity. Solidarity spurs members on to acts of altruism, but also may result in negative reactions toward those on the outside, or insiders who fail to properly adhere.

Thus far, I have presented an outline of the three central elements of this study; ritual, cohesion, and solidarity, and suggested a framework for understanding the relationship of solidarity and cohesion, based on H.G. Mead's (1934) generalized other and specific other. The conceptual framework concludes with a framework for understanding the nature of change, followed by several suggested implications of this working definition. The goal of establishing this model clearly is not predictive: it serves only to flesh out important definitional nuances that allow for additional analytic depth as the study is conducted and findings reviewed. Clifford Geertz (1973) cautioned that the force of interpretation cannot rest on coherence alone (p. 20). It is my position that meaning-making, and the act of interpreting the meaning-making of others is a perpetually unsteady balancing act between the construction of concepts to provide tidy, easy to grasp themes, and the inevitable trimming, cutting and excluding of outlier ideas that do not seem to fit and that therefore inevitably misrepresent, by degree, the meaning participants make.

To paraphrase Geertz, the closest we can get is interpreting others' interpretations, and the act of doing so fixes them in history quite apart from their original existence.

### *Conceptualizing Change*

In this study, understanding how a group changes requires several lenses through which types of change can be recognized. Here change is formulated in four ways; as a shift from one structural condition to another, as transition of characteristics without reference to structure, as an ongoing process through which meaning can be made, and as an altered social condition that does not imply linear advancement.

*Change: Nature and structure.* Understanding how the faculty culture at Eastern Mennonite has changed is predicated on understanding the types of changes that ritual, solidarity, and cohesion undergo. The change process and outcomes can be described as a shift of nature and/or structure (Richardson, 1971). Operationally, changes in structure are a realignment of parts that results from internal or external forces acting on the organization such as the addition of new members, new rituals, new organizational elements, or external mandates. Structural changes do not necessarily signal changes in the meaning of rituals, symbols, or group bonds. On the other hand, changes to the nature of the culture by definition represent a change to the meaning of symbols, rituals, and group bonds. Changes of nature may or may not be structural; the change may be a matter of group-internal meaning construction only. Distinguishing between changes of nature and of structure allow for distinctions between what externally appear to be significant changes with ramifications for group purpose and identity, but are only structural. The opposite is true as well: the appearance of structural continuity may mask transformations of meaning.



*Change and the passage of time.* The concept of time is considered from two perspectives in this study: the relation of time to data gathering, and the assumptions of time related to change. Studying group change in historical research without the benefit of longitudinal analysis requires purposeful attention to the historical moment or moments that informants speak from or are located in, relative to the period of study as a whole. Field research, in particular anthropological works, often isolate one moment of group history to study, inferring continuous stability or change from that single description. Diachronic studies that focus on several distinct time periods (such as Finnegan, 1992) demonstrate the depth of description and change analysis available through the comparison of organizational snapshots dispersed across the life of a group. However, diachronic designs also artificially isolate moments in time, presuming that they can be removed from one another and compared as separate events.

Throughout this study, the conception of time has received special consideration, and I have resisted assumptions of linear change implying a paradigm of progress and improvement. Historical secularism and faculty professionalism are external forces relevant to the EMU context that, for a period of time, contributed to a redefinition of faculty identity and relationship with their employer. For example, perhaps over time some faculty members have identified less with their institution, and more with their profession, or have begun to view academic freedom as a value above denominational control. However, it would be presumptive to assume a trajectory of continued change implying a permanent paradigm. Further, it is unwarranted to claim that the advent of secularization and professionalization are, in some capacity, superior developments indicating an evolutionary improvement that will eventually fulfill a particular ontological eschatology. This study views change as a process of cultural and social adjustment and

redefinition in the context of organizational life. As such, the passage of time, although a primary mechanism for deciphering change, is de-emphasized in favor of a focus on the ebb and flow of group life, viewed through changes in ritual, culture, and group bonds.

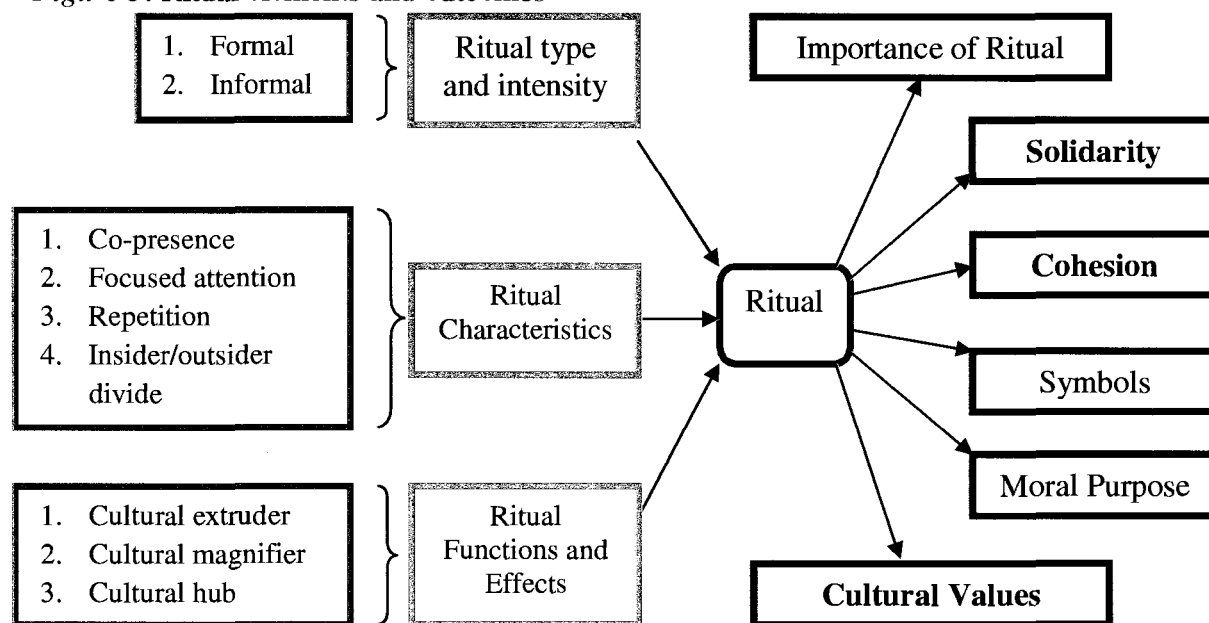
### *The Ritual Event*

The following conceptual framework offers a description of the elements of ritual (figure 3), general inputs and outputs of ritual that is explored in this study (figure 4), including an explanation of the functions and effects of ritual (Table 1), and will conclude with a model for specific interaction effects between ritual, culture, solidarity, and cohesion that is operationalized in this study (Figure 5).

Figure 3 outlines the basic elements of ritual. On the left are internal elements in three groupings: *type and intensity*; *ritual characteristics* (from Collins); and *ritual functions and effects*. On the right of the ritual box are the general outcomes of ritual. *Importance of ritual* signifies that rituals reinforce their own value. *Solidarity* and *cohesion* are major elements of this study, along with *cultural values*. *Symbols* and *moral purpose* are grouped by color with cultural values, since they are both significantly recognizable as outcomes of ritual, yet they are categorical sub-sets of cultural values.

Returning to the ritual elements boxes on the right, ritual events, in my estimation, vary by type and intensity. Ritual type refers to whether a ritual may be classified as *formal* or *informal*. Formal rituals, though less frequently occurring, often mark the passing of periodic events or achievements and include a greater degree of decorum and stage-setting preparation. Examples of this are the educational rituals of opening convocation, presidential inaugurations, and graduation (Manning, 2000). Informal rituals still contain structured elements, but lack the degree of premeditation and pomp of formal rituals. Informal rituals also occur more frequently.

Figure 3: Ritual elements and outcomes



Similar to the difference between formal and informal rituals, ritual intensity varies on a relative scale due to the level of involvement in ritual characteristics exemplified by the participants and the characteristics of the ritual group itself. Intensity relates to the type of outcomes that result: a more intense ritual experience is more likely to result in more solidarity and stronger group symbols. An important caveat to this definition, as noted by Collins (2004), is that the scale of the group and its pre-existing bonds (such as an audience at a play or sporting event) may create an experience of immediate but unsustainable intensity.

Ritual is a moment of cultural convergence, renewal, and realignment, resulting in a spectrum of potential outcomes. Utilizing Collins' (2004) definition, ritual is identified by four characteristics (Figure 3): *co-presence of participants; focused attention of participants; repetition; and boundaries between insiders and outsiders*. All four elements are necessary conditions for behavior to be classified as a ritual. However, exceptional situations in which most, though not all ritual elements are considered as well, if they represent events that result in

outcomes reflective of rituals. However, each characteristic may differ in component elements within each enactment of the ritual.

The final box on the left side of Figure 3 is ritual *function* and *effect*. In this study, ritual has three functions that I call *cultural hub*, *cultural extruder*, and *cultural magnifier*. As cultural hub, rituals are the place where these individual artifacts of culture converge, and collective meaning is renewed and reshaped. Ritual involvement signals a willingness to engage, and to some extent to be shaped. The cultural extruder function of ritual shapes the values, beliefs, and attitudes of the group, reflecting and reforming existing culture. Individuals as artifacts of culture, along with the unique moment of the ritual itself, result in an intersection of symbols and meaning-making beyond the control or possession of any one participant. The outcome is an event similar to Victor Turner's (1969) *communitas* in that new expressions and formulations of culture may occur, be dispersed and accepted in the moment of collective unity.

Third, ritual functions as a cultural magnifier by exaggerating and augmenting many of the features central to group identity and purpose. As a result of a successful ritual experience, individuals are propelled to action by a sense of moral purpose, and reassert their own commitment to the culture, to the other individual participants (cohesion), and to the group in general (solidarity). Rituals usually reinforce their own value and encourage future participation. Finally, individuals are motivated by behavior that reflects their sense of moral imperative.

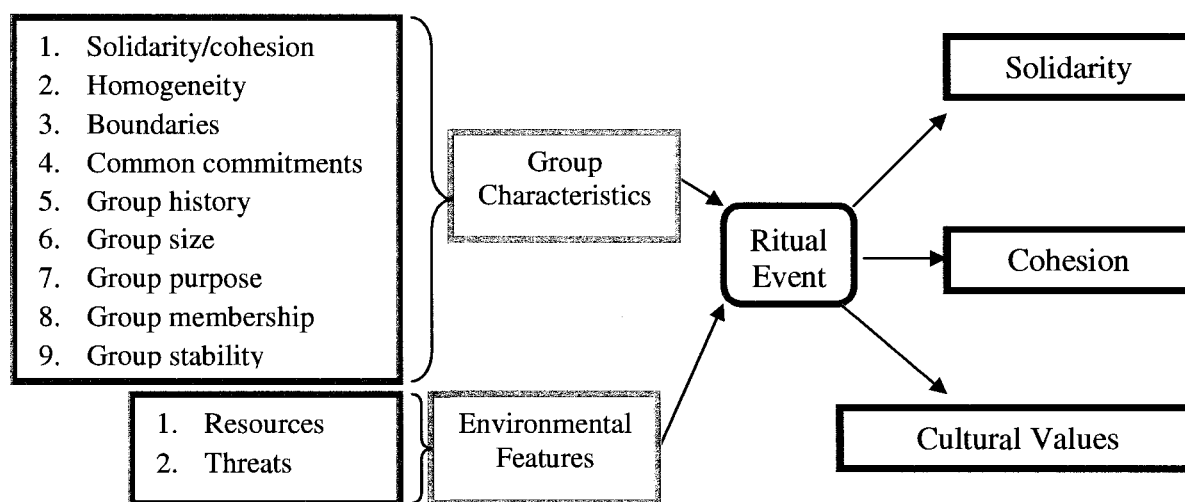
The *effects* of ritual upon culture, solidarity, and cohesion vary by context, in addition to the functional roles described above. Table 1 divides and describes what characteristics of culture, solidarity, along with characteristics that contribute to cohesion are especially reflective of ritual effect. Characteristics particularly susceptible to ritual influence appear in bold type, followed by a brief explanation of their accompanying ritual effects.

*Table 1: Ritual effects on culture, solidarity and cohesion characteristics*

<p><u>Culture characteristics:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Values</li> <li>2. Beliefs</li> <li>3. Attitudes</li> </ol> <p><u>Ritual effect:</u>  <b>Values, beliefs and attitudes</b> are strengthened and magnified through the focused attention, moral purpose, and symbols generated ritually.  <b>Cultural change:</b> though ritual, values, attitudes, and beliefs may be altered through new meaning and symbols in old rituals, or by new rituals replacing existing ones (changes of nature or nature and structure)  <b>Cultural purpose:</b> rituals refocus members through co-present enactment, creating positive feelings regarding group ideology and goals.</p>	<p><u>Solidarity characteristics:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cognitive and affective elements</li> <li>2. Expectations for member behavior</li> <li>3. Boundaries</li> <li>4. Variation of type and arrangement</li> <li>5. Interaction effects</li> <li>6. Promoted by homogeneity or diversity</li> </ol> <p><u>Ritual effect:</u>  <b>Cognitive and affective:</b> positive emotions of group moral purpose result from the collective focus of rituals. Cognitively, rituals provide events that participants may reflect on later as sources of support for beliefs.  <b>Expectations for member behavior:</b> rituals create symbols that encapsulate core beliefs and reinforce behavioral expectations. The sense of moral purpose further buttresses members' confidence in their collective position and appropriate behavior.  <b>Boundaries:</b> ritual co-presence separates participants from non-participants. Boundaries define the group, but are also continually adjusted through ritual exchange.</p>	<p><u>Cohesion Characteristics:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Individual and group phenomenon</li> <li>2. Social and task dimensions</li> <li>3. Sense of belongingness</li> </ol> <p><u>Ritual effect:</u>  <b>Individual and group phenomenon:</b> ritual impacts individual affective connections through intense mutual focus and co-presence. Ritual buttresses group identity through collective moral purpose.  <b>Social and task dimensions:</b> social needs are met through ritual behavior that reinforces group commitment to one another, in part through the exclusion of outsiders. Similarly, task dimensions are strengthened both through ritual as group task, and through collective moral purpose to accomplish group goals.  <b>Sense of belongingness:</b> participant entrainment through physical presence, attention, and movement, along with intensified feelings of membership to the exclusion of others.</p>
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Figure 4 illustrates the possible inputs and outputs of a generic ritual situation in this study. What the outcomes of a particular ritual are, is a product of the ritual elements (ritual type and intensity, characteristics, and functions and effects from Figure 3) and the general inputs (group characteristics and environmental features from Figure 4). On the right of the ritual event box solidarity, cohesion, and cultural values (inclusive of symbols and moral purpose) represent ritual outputs. Note that in any specific ritual event, the mix of elements and inputs result in variable changes to solidarity, cohesion, and cultural values.

*Figure 4: General Ritual Inputs and Outputs*



*Group characteristics.* Group characteristics describe both the shape of the group demographically (history, size, membership, homogeneity), and socially (solidary/cohesion, boundaries, purpose, stability (which may also be a demographic characteristic), and commitments). Demographic characteristics are facts external to group members and are generally accessible to insiders and outsiders. Social characteristics are categories of meaning-making that exist in the minds of group members and represent frames by which we can understand group culture. Although both demographics and social categories shape rituals, social categories are themselves reshaped directly by ritual, and demographic categories are

affected indirectly, if at all. Additionally, group member's interpretations of their demographic characteristics are shaped both by their social categories, and by their collective ritual experiences.

*Environmental features.* External to the group, environmental features inside and outside the organization contribute to the shape of the group and the ritual event. Scholars in the fields of strategic planning (Bryson, 1995; Rowley & Sherman, 2001) and organizational theory (Birnbaum, 1988; Fowler, 2004) emphasize the role that external resources (access to support, expertise, finances, etc.) and threats (loss of resources, autonomy, boundaries, etc.) play in the experience of an organization, and the importance of group sensitivity to environmental change to ensure continued viability. Similar to group characteristics, threats and resources include quantifiable and psychological elements through which members recognize and interpret environmental change.

This general overview of ritual inputs and outputs sets the stage for a closer examination of the specific interaction effects upon culture, solidarity, and cohesion that result from a ritual event. *Ritual is the means through which organizational change is observed as rituals reflect and shape the values, attitudes, beliefs, and bonds of the faculty as a group, and ultimately, their collective purpose.*

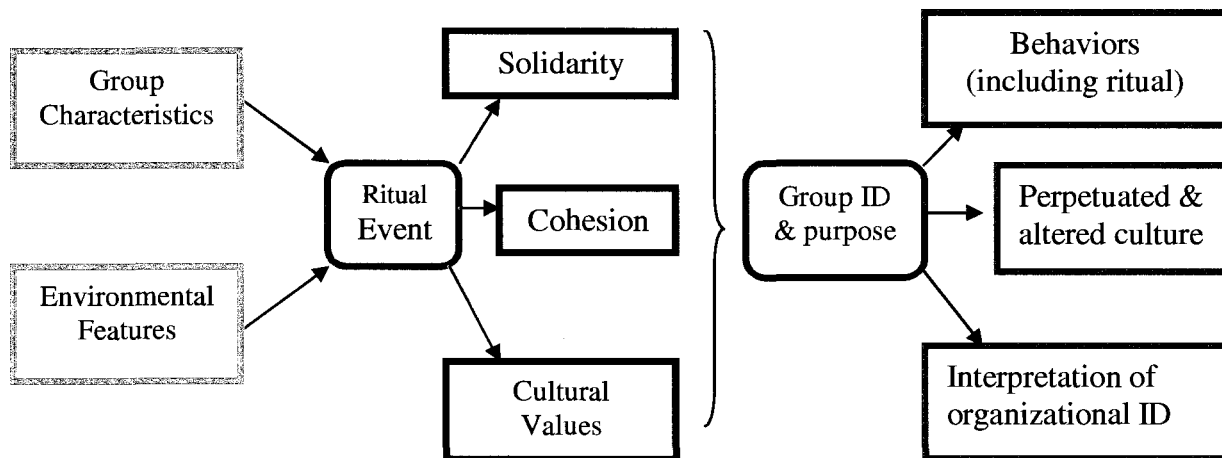
### *The Conceptual Framework in Action*

The research question at hand regards the nature and structure of group bonds via ritual. As a result of change, questions may be asked about shifts in the way faculty conceive of their institution generally. Figure 5 graphically illustrates how this conceptual framework operates toward this end. The two boxes on the left (and their sub-sets) represent points of change. Changes to faculty membership, professional self-perception, group continuity and many other

factors are part of group characteristics that input new and altered elements into a ritual event. Changes to the organization, its mission, its relationship to constituents, expectations placed on faculty productivity and role, as well as changes in the profession and culture broadly are captured in the property of environmental features.

Progressively, changes to ritual inputs can be expected to impact not only the ritual event itself, but also the outcomes it produces. Thus, possible reverberant effects include the specific changes listed in Table 1: magnified or redirected culture, and altered solidarity and cohesion. Figure 5 demonstrates the general relational chain that follows: changes to culture, solidarity, and cohesion reflect and result in a renewed or redefined group identity and sense of purpose. Finally, changes to group identity and purpose is reflected in behaviors (ritual), perpetuated and altered culture (attitudes, beliefs, and values), and a vision of the group in relation to the larger whole, that is, the organization.

*Figure 5: Relational chain from ritual to group identity and purpose.*





## Methods

The use of qualitative methodology provides tools to explore with depth and detail the socially-constructed meaning people make of group interactions (Dubin, 1978; Creswell, 1998). In this study, a historical, interpretive, modified case-study design is used to deliver an understanding of the changes to social bonds among a group of faculty, with implications for the way faculty members perceive the institution as a result.

As a historical study, interviews and focus groups with past and present employees as well as archival document analyses serve as the primary sources of data. As an *interpretive* study, I emphasize the position of researcher as interpreter of the culturally situated, social knowledge a particular group of participants used to make sense of the world around them (Geertz, 1973; Schwandt, 1998). My research perspective is of an interpreter rooted in my own social history and context. Epistemologically, I am not privileged to any empathic insights into the intentions of participants: data only results from what was gleaned and interpreted from the accounts, self-interpretations, and expressions divulge to me. Thus, it was my task to peer into the narratives provided by the participants and create a theoretical construct to makes sense of their collective descriptions of reality.

This project is a single-case study as the subject of interest and as a methodological design (Creswell, 1998). Eastern Mennonite represents both an *intrinsic case study* because of its unique social, historical, and cultural elements, and an *instrumental case study*, illustrative of the conceptual framework developed around ritual, solidarity and cohesion (Creswell, 1998). The aim of a case study may be exploration, description, or explanation (Stake, 1995). In this study, description and explanation contribute to the final goal of understanding, to provide

theoretical and practical clarity to the institutional context based on thematic and categorical analysis and interpretation.

*Setting, Participants, and Permission*

The setting for this study, Eastern Mennonite University, was founded in 1917 as Eastern Mennonite School, and is located in Harrisonburg, Virginia. EMU is owned by the Mennonite Church, USA, and is operated by a Board of Trustees that currently consists of seventeen members and one representative from Mennonite Church USA, as well as a pool of associate trustees. The University has an undergraduate enrollment of approximately one thousand. On the graduate level, the University offers master's degree programs in education, business, counseling, and conflict transformation, and supports a seminary that grants master's degrees of divinity and of Christian ministry. Thus, the total enrollment is approximately sixteen hundred students. EMU is classified by the Carnegie Classification as a baccalaureate, liberal arts institution, and is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

The relative strength of numbers of Mennonites within the faculty as compared to the student body represents an intentional institutional focus in response to a larger demographic and cultural change. Mennonite students account for 51% of all undergraduates. The percentage of Mennonite faculty members is much higher (no published numbers are available from the institution, although informal calculations place the percentage between 70 and 80. Chapter five describes the curricular changes at EMC in the 1970s that, combined with a larger movement in the Mennonite church away from the insular practices of the past that helped funnel Mennonite youths to affiliated colleges, resulted in a marked decline in the Mennonite student population. In the 1980s, institutional leaders again emphasized the importance of hiring Mennonite faculty as a way of keeping the institution faithful to its theological and cultural roots. Consequently, by

the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, questions intensified regarding what it meant to educate a significant cohort of non-Mennonite students in a Mennonite institution. Although students are not the focus of this study, the shifting identity of the student population nevertheless contributed to the shape and identity of the faculty collectively.

Although Eastern Mennonite engages in many typical higher education rituals and practices, significantly, the institution eliminated the faculty tenure system in the 1970s. Professors who had already earned tenure were grandfathered in to the new contract system. According to faculty and administrator interviews, a combination of reasons contributed to the removal of the tenure option. Among, them, the dean at the time felt that it privileged faculty inappropriately, and in conjunction with a group of faculty leaders, conspired to end the practice. Second, some faculty members believed that the removal of the tenure system would improve instructional quality, by allowing the institution to dismiss faculty who were not meeting professional expectations. Third, the dean at the time suggested that the tenure system was under-utilized, and a number of faculty members who were eligible for tenure were not actively pursuing it. In place of tenure, a fixed-interval contract system was established that stepped faculty members up a series of lengthening contracts as their duration of their employment lengthened. According to one administrator from that era, ending the tenure system upset many faculty members and caused significant turmoil. Nevertheless, Eastern Mennonite still does not offer tenure, perhaps increasing the tension that the institution must manage when faculty are dismissed for personal, theological, or professional reasons. In addition, the ability to attract and retain faculty without this standard professional practice may be made more difficult.

A second practice common to higher education professionals that deserves comment is the role of disciplinary affiliation among faculty members at Eastern Mennonite. In chapter nine,

I discuss off campus physical space and the meaning faculty have made of it. For professionalized faculty, relationships with disciplinary colleagues and conference attendance are significant parts of their identity and time usage. This type of space and identity receives only passing mention in the findings, primarily because disciplinary orientation outside of the College was not raised by most faculty members as an area significant to them. Although faculty members at Eastern Mennonite have become increasingly professionally-oriented, research represents a minor element of faculty life for many faculty members during the era of study in question. Furthermore, the emphasis in this study was on ways that faculty interact, which precludes many of the off campus disciplinary activities commonly associated with academic cosmopolitans.

Eastern Mennonite University was selected as a study subject for reasons of personal interest, accessibility, and depth of group complexity through which change can be studied. As a Mennonite myself, I am interested in the development and adaptation of Mennonites to higher education in general, and as a former employee of EMU, at this institution in particular. The framework of this study could be applied to many institutions; however the unique history, geographic location, relationship to other Mennonite and religious communities, and mission of Eastern Mennonite add specific variables of culture and community focus not found elsewhere. Also, my previous connections to EMU and the local community made establishing contacts for institutional support and participant selection easier than they would have been at an unfamiliar school.

Apart from these personal logistical advantages, Eastern Mennonite was an appropriate case to study because of the overlapping commitments to religious, educational, and Mennonite heritage groups it contains, forming a complex web of solidary memberships and rituals that may

reinforce them. In addition to these internal elements, ongoing issues of institutional identity and relationship to external forces of popular culture, secular academia, and religious ecumenicalism result in an environment of ongoing transition.

The 35 year era between 1965 and 2000 was selected as a span of time during which internal and external forces changed rapidly, escalating the potential for new formations of ritual, solidarity, and cohesion. Internally to the Mennonite churches generally, requirements of dress and acceptable interaction with “worldly” activities such as movie-going, television ownership, and other symbols of separation began to lose their prominence. Externally in higher education, the employment market fluctuated dramatically between a period of high demand in the mid-to-late 1960s, followed by a rapid constriction of available positions in the liberal arts in the 1970s (Finnegan, 1992).

Concurrently, the percentage of new faculty hires who had not attended Eastern Mennonite as undergraduates gradually climbed through the 1960s and 1970s, as did the number of non-Mennonite faculty in the decades that followed. For example, between 1960 and 1965, 33 faculty members (from all departments) were hired, 24 of whom received their undergraduate degrees from Eastern Mennonite (72 %). Between 1975 and 1980, 42 new faculty members were hired, only 20 of whom were Eastern Mennonite alumni (48%). Finally, between 1995 and 2000, 40 new faculty members were hired, only eight of whom received degrees from Eastern Mennonite (20%) (Eastern Mennonite College Catalogs, 1960-2000). This example illustrates a significant demographic shift, and highlights one reason among many that Eastern Mennonite is an appropriate institution for the study of group change.

### *Participants*

Participants in this study were 40 full-time current, former, and emeriti faculty who served at Eastern Mennonite between 1965 and 2000. Throughout the discussion of findings, “faculty” will be used to indicate participant faculty only. Although conclusions may be applicable to the total population, I do not assume this extension. Additionally, six college presidents or ranking administrators were interviewed to provide insights into the hiring practice decisions during each of the three presidential administrations (Myron Augsburg, 1965-1980; Richard C. Detweiler, 1980-1987; and Joseph Lapp, 1987-2002) that governed during the 35-year span in question. The natural separation of the three presidential administrations was used to group participants generally throughout the course of the study.

Selection of participating faculty was based on stratified random sampling and stratified convenience sampling aimed at including faculty based on three significant criteria: length of employment, era of employment, religious tradition (Mennonites versus non-Mennonites), and educational background (alumni of Eastern Mennonite versus all other undergraduates). Of the selection criteria, era and length of employment was the primary determining factor for inclusion in the study. Because faculty as a collective group, not faculty individually, are the subject of this study, constructing a participant pool that reflected the variability of the length and era of institutional service was vital as a means to explore the impact of membership change on group bonds. Length of service was grouped in four categories: those who served for five years or less; for six to 10 years; those who served 11 to 15 years; and those who served for more than 15 years. Thus grouped by term of service, faculty members were further divided for selection by the three presidential eras. Selection was loaded relative to the proportional number of faculty and length of era: approximately 16 faculty members were interviewed from the Augsburg era, 8 from the Detweiler era, and 16 from the Lapp era.

Religious background (Mennonite versus non-Mennonite) is significant because the inclusion of non-Mennonites signaled the introduction of new religious rituals, or at least members who are not familiar with the religious rituals common to Mennonites, which in turn altered faculty bonds on numerous levels. Finally, the two educational variables of undergraduate institution and professional degree were significant for different causes: the first because familiarity with the institution resulted in pre-induction into educational and religious rituals as well as social bonds. Second, exposure to alternate educational rituals and standards of professionalization as part of their academic training as doctoral students represents a diversifying element. Participant selection maximized variation of these four variables. Final participant selection from among these categories was random for faculty still with the institution, and convenience for former or emeriti employees.

*Permission.* The President of EMU granted permission to proceed with this study after the Institution Review Boards of both The College of William and Mary and Eastern Mennonite University cleared the proposed study. The President of the Eastern Mennonite University also granted permission to identify the institution for the purposes of fulfilling degree completion requirements. However, EMU will be given the opportunity to review the final dissertation prior to granting permission to identify the institution in future publications.

#### *Data Collection*

As a historical case study, the primary data source was faculty interviews with four categories of informants. First, current, former, or emeriti faculty were interviewed for approximately one and a half hours each. Second, presidents and administrators were interviewed once for approximately one hour, due to their limited contribution to this study. Third, one focus group made up of long-time employees (those who served for at least 15 years)

was conducted to directly address experiences of ritual change and the way collective faculty bonds impacted perception of what it meant for the institution to be Mennonite. Fourth, three cultural informants were interviewed for a minimum of one hour. Cultural informants are individuals uniquely positioned within the Mennonite community who can provide narrative insights regarding the social forces at play within the institution and the larger Mennonite church. Finally, a review of archival materials related to hiring, employment decision-making, institutional policies, and faculty rituals provided an alternate source of data to aid triangulation of interview accounts.

Audio recordings were made of all interviews, whether by telephone or face-to-face. All interviews were transcribed and inserted into the qualitative analysis software, *Envivo 7*, for coding, and thematic development.

*Interview methods.* Interviews with faculty sought narrative and personal responses to simple questions that illuminated experiences of faculty solidarity, cohesion, ritual, and the way that faculty group bonds shaped their view of the institution. A quasi-structured, open-ended interview style was used (Rossman & Rallis, 2003) with all four participant groups, although the specific nature of questions varied based on position of the informant relative to the focus of the study. See Appendices A through D for interview protocols for the faculty interview protocol.

*Document collection.* Archival materials such as administrative hiring minutes, faculty handbooks, accreditation reports, and annual reports were analyzed to provide historical reference points, verification of hiring practices and data regarding faculty hiring. Additionally, faculty and administrative documents and faculty minutes, notes and programs that describe ritual events provided further insights into the forces that shaped group bonds.



*Data Analysis.* Data analysis methods are designed to provide a layered, iterative process that will allow broad descriptive and explanatory themes to emerge out of the wide cross-section of data. The conceptual framework designed for this study provided the structure for analysis. Data were continuously coded as interviews were completed. Six initial codes were taken from the conceptual framework, although several additional codes and sub-codes were developed as well: culture; faculty hiring; insider/outsider dynamics; institutional identity perceptions; ritual; and solidarity and cohesion (for a complete list of codes, see Appendix G). Using the Nvivo 7 software, a system of tree nodes (codes with sub-groups) and free nodes (unrelated codes) was constructed to parse out the nuances of the six major areas of research interest. Coded data were then reorganized and compared by era, length of service, educational background, religious background, etc. Finally, based on comparisons of coded data, sub-categories emerged that provided conceptual and explanatory links between the main categories.

Through the coding process, I preserve both codes and themes that occur frequently as well as a pool of outliers that do not fit initial explanations. An example of this is the stories of individual persons who represented cultural catalysts, defying my emphasis on group identity. Preserving outliers maintained interpretive tension as a reminder that meaning-making is a construct set upon social events, not intrinsic to them. Additionally, re-introducing outlier elements into the central themes as they developed provided a more robust understanding of the phenomena in question. Ongoing field notes were kept to provide an immediate forum for reflection and impressions gathered from the data and participants. At the end of the interview stage, field notes were compared to the interview themes developed as an additional method for checking interpretations and renewing ideas developed in the field. In the final analysis, themes developed under the categories of ritual, solidarity, cohesion, and culture were compared to

understand the inter-related nature of the concepts, the changes that occurred over time, and the implications for institutional perception based transitions in group identity.

### *Data Verification*

Although demonstrating the rigor and authenticity of data gathering and analysis is important to all research, familiar verification standards of reliability and validity are inappropriate for qualitative research due to the social and contextual nature of the studies (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Instead, the guidelines of *trustworthiness* and *authenticity* provide a framework for describing the standards I maintained (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). This research is trustworthy through a commitment to ethical conduct and practice (described below), and through rigorous methods that include four steps. First, through audio recording and transcribing, I represented the data entrusted to me by the participants as accurately as possible. Second, by providing transparency in concept, process, and conclusions, through clear descriptions of interview protocols, codes, themes, and analyses, my work is available for the scrutiny of peers interested in “naturalistic generalization” (Stake, 1995) that is, comparing my result to their similar contexts so that the work may benefit others. Third, transparency also allows those who wish to carry out similar studies to understand the conceptual and interpretive decisions made that explain the variance of results between one research project and another. Finally, I approached the data objectively, allowing conclusions to arise that do not fit my expectations. Objectivity does not deny that I have a perspective that shaped my interpretation. It does assure that I recognize that as a social researcher, I can only see through a dark glass dimly, but I am committed to a revealing all findings honestly.

*Ethical considerations.* The second part of trustworthiness is ethical treatment of participants and commitment to ethical behavior. Regarding participants, I was honest about my

research intentions and in my behavior toward those who have agreed to take part in this study. I did not intentionally harm or deceive participants in any way. Several specific steps were taken to ensure that this standard was upheld. The research proposal was approved by my dissertation committee and by human subjects review at The College of William and Mary to assure that it met design expectations for ethical treatment of participants. All participants signed a statement of informed consent that fully described the extent of their participation, allowing them to exclude themselves from the study at any time and for any reason, and assuring them of the confidentiality of their participation and anonymity of their identity in any future publications. Their identities have been kept anonymous, and all documents linking them to the study will be destroyed upon completion of the study (see Appendix E).

Ethical behavior extended to my handling of data and in the process of analysis. This included a commitment not to hide or suppress data that does not fit my preconceptions. Data was handled in a careful, organized manner that assured that nothing was lost or overlooked. Finally, data was represented honestly through the analysis process, and the results of the study are here revealed for the scrutiny of others.

CHAPTER FOUR  
SHIFTING EXPRESSIONS  
OF CULTURAL, RELIGIOUS, AND INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY

“In 1966, the faculty signed written contracts for the first time.” (Pellman, 1967, p. 242)

Eastern Mennonite College was not immune to the cultural upheaval reshaping American society in the late 1960s. The effects, however, were filtered by the remnants of the still powerful cloistering lifestyle that had exemplified the early twentieth century Mennonite commitment to Biblical nonconformity. The object of nonconformity was a rejection of those values and practices thought to be representative of “worldly” citizenship, as opposed to Kingdom citizenship, to which conformity was the expectation. Yet in subtle and significant ways, representations of a unique community gradually shifted from visible symbols of nonconformity primarily intended to sustain the community internally to service, justice, and peace-making activities in the broader culture as outward expressions of commonly held convictions. As a result, new directions for professional and institutional reinterpretation emerged, providing new avenues of meaning-making in this tradition-rich community. Chapters four and five lay the groundwork of historical context of the institution, the local Mennonite constituency, and the changing faculty population.

De-symbolizing: Clothing, Pianos, and Intramural Sports

As an institution owned by Virginia Mennonite Conference, Eastern Mennonite College in the 1960s was a visible platform for the delicate dance between Church policy and constituent practice. The uneasy relationships among the policies of the local church and regional districts, the expectations of the College to uphold those standards, and the individual accountability of faculty and students left unclear the burden of responsibility for assuring traditional practices

continued. Not only unclear, but the rules that were expected to pervade all segments of community life became unenforceable as well. As one top administrator from this era noted:

I remember going up to talk to a bishop in Lancaster [Pennsylvania] to hear some of their concerns at the time. We were much plainer then – the women all wore coverings – and [the Lancaster bishops] would say “You're not enforcing this down there”. And I remember chuckling and saying, “It would be interesting for you to know what happens between the time they leave home ‘til they arrive at Harrisonburg”.

During the 1950s through 1970s, many of the physical symbols of separation began to lose their salience as Mennonites started to redefine the terms of nonconformity. Manifest examples included dress as well as entertainment. Representing simplicity and the rejection of materialism, men wore lapel-less plain coats, while women clothed themselves in plain cape dresses and mesh head coverings that symbolized humility. Prohibitions against the use of musical instruments, and radios, (later movies, then televisions), participation in theatrical productions, and intramural sports addressed self-serving entertainment and temptations of various vices. A ban on the use of fiction was in place, according to one faculty member, “because [fiction] wasn't true”. However, it would be an oversight to construe the process of change too simply. Neither wholesale rebellion nor sanctioned revisions in advance led to new practices. A long-time Board member, bishop, and local pastor noted the cultural lag between policy and practice:

Changes in the Church almost always happen by default and not by design. I don't know of any change that has happened where they said, “Music is starting to come in and before it does, let's do something to accept it”. ...It doesn't sound good, but that's the way I think the College made a lot of its changes. Not in a stubborn rebellious spirit, but

we started using color slides and colored pictures projected on the wall before we started using films. You don't just wholesale change the idea of using visual arts. So I guess I'm saying the changes come by default rather than design. But to me, the saving factor of all these changes is the fact that [the Church and the College] were willing to talk together and analyze its impact and evaluate it and walk together.

Indeed, conversations were frequent, but frequently indecision instead of directive policies resulted. In his history of the College to 1967, Hubert Pellman (1967) notes that in the early 1960s, the Religious Welfare Committee (RWC), an advisory body established by Virginia Mennonite Conference to monitor issues of theology and nonconformity, expressed concern regarding “the growing number of prospective teachers who have no convictions for separation in attire” (p. 209). After pointing to several positions for and against the restrictions on dress, Pellman confirms the reluctance to act. “For some time neither the College nor the Conference officials took the responsibility of making a decisive change on the dress issue. The complexities of official action resulted in change only by reluctant permission” (p. 210). Thus, by special session on April 5, 1965, Conference agreed that requirements of garb would only be “encouraged” for teachers, but would continue as a requirement for ministers in the conference.

Pellman (1967) charts the gradual relaxation of other trappings of nonconformity as symbolic sign posts of shifting community boundaries. In 1956, the use of motion pictures was approved for teaching use only and was carefully regulated by a special audio-visual aids committee. In 1960, the RWC permitted musical instruments to be used in dormitory lounges for recreational purposes. Two years later it approved the College's radio station, WEMC, to broadcast instrumental music, albeit forbidding jazz, “music in the popular idiom”, “hillbilly songs”, light gospel songs, spirituals of irreverent character, and “music...unacceptably

performed” (p. 216). No doubt they had specific examples in mind. Regarding “the problem of dramatics and other disapproved entertainment” (p. 216), in 1955 the RWC allowed the use of purposeful dramas that were in keeping with the requirements of Christian stewardship of time, money, and energy. However, by the early 1960s, producing a small, but significant fissure, students gradually began producing full-length plays without official sanction (Pellman, p. 217). Finally, although the recreational value of sports had long been acknowledged for its benefits of cooperation, leadership, self-subordination, obedience to authority, and respect for rules, the College constitutional prohibition against “all contest games with other schools and organizations” was reinterpreted in 1963 to mean membership in leagues with “competitive finals”, opening the way for “a limited number of extramural games as approved by the administration” (p. 217-218).

The revised policies on dress, media, music, and recreation were neither the first choice nor the last word as the strict application of the nonconformity standard that gradually lost its support among most constituents. The shift away from physical representations of values by those charged with guarding the symbols of simplicity signaled that the transition, at least for the mainstream membership, was complete. One faculty member from this era related:

...you had the styles of that era coming in. [College President] Myron [Augsburger], somewhere in the late 1970s, actually came before the chapel group in a laid-down collar, but with the plain vest inside. So we saw him make his transition. [A senior faculty member] was a liberal thinker, but he kept the plain coat going even after he didn't have to. He was wearing some [of his coats] out, I think. [laughs] By the time he died in 1974, he had changed to a laid-down collar and tie. They expected certain things, like a prayer veil on women students who were Mennonites, and the faculty women in chapel –

that was the last place you had to have your covering on – in chapel. Somewhere along the line that changed.

The highly regulated lifestyle of Mennonites in higher education was beginning to change. However, although magnified among Mennonites, the prior era of regulation was not a Mennonite phenomenon alone. James<sup>3</sup>, a faculty member who began teaching in the early 1950's explained:

At George Washington [University], this would have been the summer of 1958, in summer school - it wasn't a very big summer school - I was appointed to the summer school picnic committee and we met four or five times to plan that, and I remember one time the faculty rep there - he was also one of my faculty members - was speculating whether students should wear shorts at the picnic, because they had a man who had been president for 30 years, and I often noticed that in the summer the women students often wore raincoats to walk across campus. Well, they were not permitted to walk in public with athletic shorts. This was a public university four blocks from the White House. I'm trying to illustrate that that kind of regimentation of what is proper, the Mennonite colleges tended to be a little bit behind the times. But now in describing George Washington University, it wasn't much different.

The moral code that held much of American society in check through the 1950s was not grounded in the same ideals of nonconformity and simplicity that motivated Mennonites, yet as this story illustrates, some of the regulatory expressions were parallel. From this era of regulation, the cultural transformation of the 1960s, muted at EMC by the layers of community ties, religious practice, and authority structures, nevertheless provided a fulcrum that shifted the

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<sup>3</sup> All participant faculty members selected pseudonym first names that are used in this study.



momentum gradually away from traditional expressions of biblical obedience and toward interpretations of greater social engagement.

Faculty members from the 1960s were self-aware of the nature of this change of values expression, though many felt that values themselves were held consistently. Elmer, a faculty member in the late 1960s and again in the 1990s, commented:

Change in the expression of values. I don't think our values have changed a whole lot – that's a good way of stating it. Our values are not fundamentally changed in the past half-century, but the way we express our values and the way in which we engage the culture around us, locally and around the world. For example, faculty members were very much involved in starting the *Gemeinschaft* program [a home for reintegrating former prison inmates]. Some of those members occasionally attend church at [a local Mennonite Church] and elsewhere. So yes, our values haven't changed about the way in which we're willing to engage the culture, and we address culture not from a point of isolation, but from a point of involvement and choosing to cultivate and express our values from within the culture instead of trying to isolate ourselves from the culture.

The shift of emphasis away from visible symbols of nonconformity and toward social engagement provided the impetus for new programmatic expressions of values as well. Founded in the 1990s, the Center for Justice and Peace attracted participants from around the globe and from many different faith traditions. Parallel to the strict expectations cited at George Washington in the 1950s, once again Mennonites found kindred spirits in practice who did not share their theological presumptions. Yet from the 1980s on, the symbols of separation were far less prohibitive to cooperation.

The potential repercussions of policy and practice changes in the 1960s no doubt alarmed some members and excited others, yet the full weight of the change was scarcely anticipated at that time. Anthony Cohen (1985) observes that symbolic boundaries are as much for insiders as outsiders. This dual function of symbolic boundaries was undoubtedly true of the practices of nonconformity in the Mennonite community. However, when the symbols that divide inside from outside are as pervasive as those held by Mennonites preceding this era, and when the personal costs of conformity and membership are considerable, the participation of non-Mennonites in the College community was understandably rare. Reinterpreting nonconformity and simplicity values in ways that softened barriers of symbol and practice, and adopting an increasingly external social agenda with activities that increasingly aligned with those of outside individuals and organizations paved the way for the greater participation of non-Mennonites at EMC.

#### New Leadership, New Directions

Just as the 1960s were a moment when Mennonite values were undergoing reinterpretation, presidential power shifted from the 16-year guidance of John R. Mumaw to a man who had yet to graduate from college when Mumaw's administration began. Thirty-five year old Myron Augsburger, already well known and well positioned from his ten-year career as a traveling evangelist, pastor, and author, began his tenure as president of EMC in 1965.

According to one faculty member employed at the time:

By about 1963 there was a fair amount of faculty unrest feeling that [President Mumaw] should resign. And Myron Augsburger was appointed, a year and a half or two years before 1965. When Mumaw resigned and it was common knowledge that Myron was ready to go, and with the changes that were coming in the Church and the community and

the College, I remember a Board member used to say “Brother Mumaw we can't let you leave” because he kind of had things under control.

A similar illustration of the presidential transition was related by Horatio, an emeritus faculty member:

Well, I might say there was a change in Myron's administration like this: that Mumaw... was against drama except as a subject for teaching. In the [College] constitution it said that too. The constitution also said that it was wrong to have intercollegiate sports, and you're supposed to wear plain clothes.... Mumaw had dammed up, and he had just held the line on all of that. And finally, when Augsburg came in he said we might as well guide this thing, and so we had musical instruments, we had intercollegiate athletics, we had drama, and whatever else. He said in effect, “Let's be realistic...”.

According to Steve, who was in a junior rank during this period:

One of the gratifying things was we were growing and becoming more sophisticated.

Myron Augsburg was young, very cosmopolitan compared to earlier presidents, and he threw open a lot of doors and started moving toward change. The words he used a lot were “interpretation”. We have to interpret for our times, and keep the future in mind for our Anabaptist Mennonite position to the students and to the Church as well.

The administrative change entailed not only a reinterpretation of how values ought to be expressed, but President Augsburg's national experience as an evangelist, his idealism, and his hands-on leadership style contributed to a culture of innovation and a broadening sense of institutional identity. President Augsburg brought a vision for a redefined college, focused on ecumenical cooperation instead of institutional sheltering. He actively engaged both the local community by joining the Ruritan Club, and Christian higher education generally, as one of the

founding members of what is now the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). The change in leadership also brought a change toward institutional self-determination, as President Augsburgers signaled that he was no longer at the behest of local constituents with an axe to grind. James commented:

Myron was opening the doors. I'll give one illustration. There was an old man – I knew who he was – who would spend his Sunday mornings calling [President John R.] Mumaw and telling him what was wrong with the student activities on the weekend. [It would] usually be something about drama or, I remember one time, a group of students, just happen to travel to Messiah College and just happen to play ball with Messiah College. [laughs] And this really worried some of these older people that we are going to become worldly, and we are going to do intercollegiate athletics. Well, this man used to call Mumaw and Mumaw would give him his ear. I remember hearing [President Myron] Augsburgers say “The first time this man called me I said ‘thanks for the call, I'll look into it, goodbye’”. And the guy quit calling him. So Myron began to move out, and the time to move out was right, and this guy did not follow. So this is kind of a transition time. Myron knew how to make changes, and he had the support of the public.

Augsburgers' institutional vision represented both a continuation of the authority of rule and a change in the boundaries between Mennonites and other Christian groups. An emeritus faculty member described the change of leadership in these terms:

Augsburgers was totally different. I shouldn't say totally, quite different from Mumaw. Mumaw also was a preacher and evangelist of sorts, but Myron was an evangelist and he was proud to go into all kinds of churches and so he was much freer to assert his Mennonite-ism. In fact, he told me “I am first of all an evangelical, rather than a

Mennonite”. It almost shocked the shoes off me because this was so new. Your question is “Did the faculty go along”? I think they did, most of them. It was a while until most of them got behind him.

As this faculty member suggests, President Augsburger’s aggressive style occasionally led to conflict with the faculty on theological and administrative issues. And the places in which he might take on these conflicts varied. As a forceful speaker, Augsburger’s frequent chapel addresses occasionally allowed him to tweak faculty members he felt were out of line. Alan, an emeritus faculty member recalled:

One thing I do remember...was when Myron Augsburger was president, and we would tangle with him about issues, and one of the unpleasant things was he would take us on in his chapel talks and you couldn't reply. [laughs] So that was disgusting....

Yet it would be unfair to characterize President Augsburger as the lone harbinger of change. Myron was product and purveyor of both a growing spirit of collaboration and a vocal critique – an activity that would have been far less accepted in earlier times. With increasing confidence, faculty members voiced their views under the active leadership of President Augsburger. One expression of this new-found involvement was the creation of a faculty senate in the early 1970s, borne of clandestine meetings of faculty concerned about the lack of communication on issues such as faculty hiring. Steve characterized the change in attitude in this way:

Some of the young Turks respected the Church, basically they did I think, but you heard them talking more about critiques. [pretending to quote] “Though I respect the Church, and am a happy member of the Mennonite Church...” this and this and this about the Conference and about some practices or the administration asking us to do this or that –

there was deep critique, and there should be. Our College faculty ought to be thinking and critiquing. But some of them had a bit of being young in their late 20s or early 30s, a strong critique, and it had sort of a critical bend, not just constructive criticism all the time in my opinion. But they thought they were being constructive. But they'd reacted to things that they thought were too rigid or too conservative, and they voiced it, sometimes in faculty meetings and informal settings. And Myron would invite it – it's not like Myron was clamping down and not letting us talk.

The spirit of change and excitement of institutional possibilities was connected, at least in part, to Augsburg's willingness to take action and make changes consistent with his vision for the College. Several faculty participants in this study noted Augsburg's willingness to deal with issues once they became clear, no matter what his prior position. According to one senior faculty member:

But Myron, good as he was, I loved him because he was the first one who raised my salary and I got what I considered a decent salary for the first time in my life.... It was an unbelievably good salary, because four of us professors were talking about salaries one day, and [another faculty member] said "I don't think we get paid as much as [faculty at] Goshen [College, another Mennonite institution]", and the rest of us said that we thought we did. And so he said "Alright I'm going to talk to Myron". Myron said, "Yes we are". [The faculty member] said, "Well call them up, call the president [of Goshen College] and see". So Myron called them up and we were not being paid as much. So he said "OK, I'll pay you". He had considerable freedom which wasn't always, it didn't always sit well with the rest of the administrators.

Even as significant changes in pay scale, curriculum, and administration occurred, the pervasiveness of the Mennonite community, wrapping and intermingling College and Church, remained a constant theme through Augsburg's 15-year tenure as president. This quote by Rosa, a faculty member who joined the College just after the Augsburg administration ended, bears on this point:

What some people would say, Myron Augsburg brought the school into the twentieth century, but there was still a lot of that feeling when I came [in the early 1980s], but anyway it felt like a very close to Mennonite world. Although I grew up in that, I'd been away from it so long that it wasn't how I saw the Mennonite Church, although what helped me develop was, it was a sort of supportive safe environment. As far as the safe Mennonite thing, I got tired of it. You get to see where you feel a little smothered by it....

*Richard Detweiler*

In 1980, Richard Detweiler began his seven-year term as the sixth president of Eastern Mennonite College. After Augsburg's energetic and at times autocratic leadership style, Detweiler, as is often the case in leadership hiring patterns (Hollander, 1997), represented a more traditional selection of a conciliatory pastor with deep roots in the local Mennonite communities, rather than a more mobile and outspoken evangelist. One top administrator characterized the difference like this:

Well, Myron always had a vision of an evangelical college, along his evangelical understandings. So the Houghtons and Seattle Pacifics and those Christian College Coalition schools were his models, and he wanted EMC to become much more aggressively evangelical and so he sort of introduced, Myron was very good in that he

always emphasized peace questions and never slighted that kind of thing, but he had this great vision of what he'd like this place to become. I think he, he probably gave it up.... Richard Detweiler had a very different perspective. He was a churchman, and he thought in terms of EMC and the Church, and what EMC could do to provide leaders for the Church. So he was less preoccupied with this vision or schools or the Christian College Coalition.

Detweiler guided EMC through several difficult years of cutbacks and a major campus fire. Despite these challenges, his style and abilities contributed to positive relationships with the faculty and with constituents outside the College. An administrator from the 1980s said:

I think [the faculty] liked him very much because he was really articulate. He could get up in a public assembly...make a really good speech and it would make sense, it would be academically respectable and, so my impression was that the faculty were very happy, and he was very personalistic [sic], you know Myron was always a little bit daunting, you sort of kick the door opened and wait until...[laughs]. With Richard, he was just a kind old man, and so faculty actually liked to go to him, and did. He was good for faculty morale.

Another top administrator highlighted Detweiler's deft touch with constituents:

I think Richard, because he was deeply trusted by the Church, he wasn't a president very long at EMC, but it was at a time when I think there was a good deal of suspicion by some of the Pennsylvania constituencies and to a certain extent Mennonite higher education has always had its skeptics in the earlier years when people weren't sure if the Mennonites were leading the people down the wrong path. Well, Richard knew that from the pastor's perspective and the conference leadership perspective. But, he had a great



wisdom in knowing how to deal with it, so that he could pacify people rather than antagonize them. And that was a great gift to Eastern Mennonite because at the time he was president we needed a lot of bridge building with the Church and Richard was superb at that. And that helped with the faculty hiring thing and the criticism that would come about faculty teaching. Because Richard understood from the Church's side why the concern, but he understood from the academy side how we had to educate the Church. And he was very very good at that. So good in fact that I watched him help educate some faculty who were, I don't remember if they were prospective or current faculty up for tenure, but he had a way of helping them understand how they had to say something if it wasn't going to be misunderstood.

Due to ongoing health problems and a greater affinity for pastoral work, Richard Detweiler's term as president was relatively brief. However, it was his conciliatory touch that mollified tensions between faculty and constituents as the Mennonite community sought new expressions for and found new partners in their cultural and religious values.

### *Joseph Lapp*

Joseph Lapp, as seventh president of Eastern Mennonite College, represented both old guard and new directions for the institution and the Mennonite Church in general. Lapp was an alumnus of EMC and served on the Board of Trustees from age 30 – the youngest board member in EMC's history – and thus he was deeply familiar with the organizational culture, the history of the institution, and the fundamental values that, although redefined in many ways, remained the pillars of College and Church identity. Lapp was also an attorney, and the first EMC president who did not carry Mennonite ordination. Mengistu, an emeritus faculty member characterized the change in this way:

And I'm not part of it now, perhaps [the College values] are not emphasized as much now as they were when the older generation were churchmen. Joe Lapp was very good for this institution, but through no fault of his own he is not a theologian. I think with Myron [Augsburger] and [Richard] Detweiler, they were presidents, but they were sort of pastors, and when Joe Lapp came along, he was not a pastor but a president only, and so who fills that pastoral function on campus...? I know Joe Lapp, Joe Lapp is a believer, but he does not articulate theologically the way the other two did.

However, a College administrator of many years offered a different perspective of the impact of President Lapp's background:

Well one thing I will say about Joe Lapp was, I think he was the first EMU president who wasn't a preacher, and from that point of view he was much more approachable.... Joe had quite a sense of humor, and so he was easy to talk to and not that there is anything bad about the others, but they were fine people, but it was just something about the atmosphere he brought with him that was different.

After the steady hand of Richard Detweiler, Joe Lapp entered the position with a desire to grow the institution through visionary leadership. Said June, a current faculty member:

Well, those were years when we were dreaming. What year did Joe come in as president? 1987. And he came around after a year, he came around to every department and wanted to know what our dreams are, and we were one of the last ones and he walked in, I remember we started talking and he said, "You know what? I have all these departments and their dreams aren't very big". He didn't say quite in those terms, but he was saying "You dream too small people, I'm frustrated; I want dreams!" And that just stuck with me....

As the economic prospects of the institution improved in the 1990s, President Lapp's vision supported the growth of graduate programs in counseling, education, and business, and an institutional name change to Eastern Mennonite University, reflecting a desire for institutional professionalism, recognition, and international connectivity. None of these initiatives occurred without resistance and the story of faculty solidarity and cohesion told through this research bear the marks, both positive and negative, of this expansionist era. Yet in addition to the social role, the programmatic and organizational changes made to the institution during this era illustrate the continued reinterpretation of Mennonite values. In the professional lifetime of a single generation of faculty, the institution transformed from a conservative haven to a professional marketplace, though not without reservations or critics.

#### Engaging the Professional Marketplace

The retirement of Chester K. Lehman, Dean and Bible professor for 32 years, and D. Ralph Hostetter, science professor for 43 years in 1966 signified a generational faculty transition, as the old guard of one era began to retire. The incoming cohort of young academics returned to their alma mater with doctoral degrees and a desire to infuse the mission of their beloved institution with new scholarship and programs that drew from the international experiences many had received through their recent alternative service to the military draft. In the late 1960s, President Augsburger began an initiative to "upgrade" the faculty, stressing the need for more terminal degrees. According to one top administrator from that era, Augsburger (and subsequent presidents) recognized the need to "grow" their own faculty by supporting their attainment of doctoral degrees, since attracting highly qualified faculty was very difficult due to low salaries and Church membership requirements. Consequently, the College offered an increasing array of

interest-free or low-interest education loans, sabbaticals, release-time grants, and other programs to encourage current faculty to return to graduate school.

Although strategies for increasing the number of terminal degrees from the inside were new, Steve commented that the pressure to improve credentials was not:

I had a real feeling that there was, in the late 60s among the students and some of the faculty, [a feeling that] we need to get really serious and strengthen the professional programs.... Suddenly the pressure was on to get your doctorate and that wasn't a new thing. In the 1930s and 40s, C.K. Lehman, he was Dean to 1956, he was pressuring certain faculty members to at least move sooner than they wanted to off to graduate school and get that doctorate. I talked to one senior faculty member one time, who said "Some of us resented it. He tried to push us too fast". ...but in those days in the late 1960s, they would take persons who just had a masters and sometimes assistant teachers had bachelors only, and masters not only strongly in their field, or someone who wouldn't have been your strongest graduate school star, but you had to be Mennonite and that kept the pool smaller. When we became more liberal and opened things up to other church groups, and you had a bigger pool. I think we strengthened academically fairly rapidly, the credentialing of the faculty.

Indeed, the College made gradual but steady progress, increasing the percentage of faculty with terminal degrees from 10% in 1948, to 30% in 1967, stagnating for most of the 1970s and 1980s, and gradually climbing to 40% of full-time faculty at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (EMC/EMU Fact Book, 1975; 1985; 1995; 2000). Yet as one faculty member of that era suggested, the College was still filling holes with faculty who were more willing to serve than

capable. According to Gerald, senior faculty member who arrived on the heels of the professionalization push in the 1970s:

But in the very, very early years we really didn't have what I would consider to be qualified faculty members to teach [a particular discipline]. So, it was only about three or four, four years before I came that [another faculty member] was the first Ph.D. in [that discipline] on the faculty here. And that gave a kind of level of expertise and professionalism. Whereas the other persons before that maybe took a course or two in [our discipline], or felt they were getting along with people and taught by the seat of their pants and thought they knew things about [our discipline], and maybe they did. But when you start to have someone at the Ph.D. level teaching in a department that brings a whole different kind of attitude toward what's going on.

For faculty members hired with advanced degrees, their recent graduate school experiences frequently combined with their international exposure to introduce new curricular expressions of the service mandate that was such a central part of their own EMC experience. In particular, the sciences, inhabiting their own newly-constructed building on the east side of campus in 1968, began to rethink the traditional focus on preparing medical professionals for service positions. According to Jack, a long-time science faculty member:

Well, I think the philosophy of the College was really to educate people for service within the context of the Church. Medicine, teaching, then business came along and we were more professionally oriented than liberal arts and those values are still there. And I think what some of us try to work at is expanding those - there are more things than just four or five occupations. Is it morally higher ground to prescribe pills than to create

them? We're very good at training "ambulance drivers", but how about prevention of the accidents? ...and that makes a difference in how you focus your programs.

Although teaching loads were heavy and viewed as the primary task of faculty, the College encouraged faculty scholarship in part by celebrating the release of books with receptions (1965), breakfast book discussions (1978), and a "Creative Scholarship Celebration Day" (1998/1999). Noted one faculty member:

There is actually something that happened, and since stopped, but there was a period of time in the late 1990s in the early 2000s when...whenever faculty members would publish a book, at the end of every year, they would have some kind of recognition for authors. We would come and have a little ceremony and they presented the books. So that was nice and that helped emphasize again the seriousness of the University...it was a nice way to come together and celebrate.

Although the 1979 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation self-study report makes no mention of faculty scholarship, the 1989 report states that the previous year, 29% of full-time faculty published a book or a paper. The College recognized the promotional value of faculty engagement beyond the institution as well. The 1979 EMC SACS accreditation self-study stated that 65% of faculty members belong to two or more professional associations. Both reports emphasize the engagement of faculty in service activities to the Church and to the community as desired contributions valued by the institution.

Despite limitations of resources, faculty professionalism as a matter of degree and vocational posture was clearly on the rise, impacting how faculty viewed the expression of values in curriculum and in scholarship. This is not to suggest that the faculty, en masse, suddenly professionalized or that the shape of professionalization was not, to a great degree,

molded by the identity of the institution and the broader Mennonite community. Yet the acceptance of professional standards and lauding of professional accomplishments smoothed yet another path connecting outsiders with the institution, and the institution with the local, national, and international professional world. Remarkd one long-time faculty member about the changes toward professionalism in the 1990s:

Well for one thing, I think earlier teaching and the integration of faith and learning in that kind of stuff was seen as, well to make it really generalized, our first mission task was a Church task. We were first of all a school that was accountable to the Mennonite Church. And now I would say we're more of an academic institution...He [an administrator in the 1990s] saw EMU as an academic institution, and secondly affiliated with the Church. Where I had grown up with the idea that if we are not affiliated closely with the Church, then that takes away our reason for existing. So I would say the evolution is toward more professional, more academic, higher standards. And it's too, in general you see yourself, the general direction is to an identity based on academics, and academic understandings rather than on a subculture.

#### The Lurch of Institutional Growth

Through a unique theology, EMC's curricular roots established a pattern of identity and development that channeled institutional growth throughout this 35-year period. In 1915, Mennonite educational advocate Daniel Kauffman stressed three areas of study for the proposed institution: Bible, Christian service, and "industries" (vocational work). According to Pellman (1967), "He considered 'academic work' necessary to make the two other areas of study most profitable and to prepare students for 'teaching or whatever other position they can fill to the glory of God and the help of fellow-men in their respective communities'" (p. 28). By the 1950s

vocational preparation in service-related fields where professional preparation was prerequisite led to undergraduate pre-medicine, nursing, elementary education, and home economics programs, among others (Pellman, 1967). As a junior college in the 1920s, courses at EMC were arranged in four categories: general, biblical, educational, and classical; the pre-medical course was added in 1929. Nevertheless, the emphasis on service and the lingering conservative anti-intellectualism in the Mennonite community placed the liberal arts in a competitive disadvantage, a reality visible in enrollment figures and resource allocations as the sciences received a new building in 1968 with current plans for renovations, but music remains in the basement of the chapel to this day.

From the 1960s through 1980s, the professional departments - nursing and the hard sciences in particular - provided the feast and famine of undergraduate enrollment. In 1966 the Virginia State Board of Examiners gave tentative approval for a nursing program, and through a partnership with King's Daughters' Hospital in Staunton, EMC enrolled 27 nursing students that first year (Pellman, 1967). As the only nursing program in the geographic region, the program expanded exponentially, growing from 13% of the College's majors in the 1970-71 school year, to nearly one-quarter of all undergraduate majors just five years later (EMC Fact Book, 1976). After a slight drop off in the late 1970s, nursing crested again in 1982 at approximately 20%. Denied at an earlier time, EMC's state-run counterpart in Harrisonburg, Madison College (now James Madison University), finally received permission to initiate its own nursing program in the mid-1980s. The effect was a dramatic 50% decrease in the percentage of EMC students in the nursing program in 1986-87 (EMC Fact Book, 1990). Concurrently, the biology major lost significant ground to business and psychology majors in the late 1980s, after briefly reaching a high of 18% of total degrees in 1985, but declining to 10% in the three years afterward.



Although not the only factor, EMC's loss of its local nursing education monopoly echoed through the College's demographics. Between 1975 and 1980, EMC's overall undergraduate enrollment steadily climbed from 840 to over 1000, subsequently falling to approximately 760 by 1985 (EMC Fact Book, 1985). During this period Mennonite student enrollment declined by 16% (down approximately 110 students from a high of 660), but non-Mennonite students, many of whom would have been nursing majors, fell by nearly 200 matriculates. Enrollments recovered somewhat during the 1990s, fluctuating between 900 and 1000 throughout the decade (EMU Fact Book, 2000).

Repeated in each decade between the 1960s and 2000, these cycles of want and plenty caused several rounds of programmatic and employment cut-backs in response to variations in the local and national markets. Throughout these decades, however, the professional majors (as grouped by the institution), nursing, education, business, physical education, and social work, maintained 50% to 60% of the total academic majors, with the sciences (chemistry, biology, math, and psychology) between 20 and 30%, and the humanities (art, Bible, language and literature, music, etc.) between 10 and 20%.

Naturally, the enrollment-driven finances of a small institution meant that when student numbers dropped, cuts to programs and personnel followed. Ella, a former faculty member hired in the 1970s, observed that faculty contraction, although always painful, had a distinctive impact by decade due to changes in overall structure of the institution:

Back then [in the 1970s], we were all undergraduate, and now we're undergraduate, graduate, and seminary. Well, we had seminary then too, but they were more separate, and I didn't hear people in the 1970s and 1980s, saying we ought to get rid of the seminary. When did I start hearing that? Maybe in the 90s and certainly in 2000, but

now undergraduate is worried whether the others are doing their part.... There were some cuts of measures that I knew caused lots of angst from people that had to leave our numbers – some practically crying down in a faculty meeting. I remember there was a lot of angst there because...people were leaving and losing their jobs...there never was as much angst as there was this time around. And I think a lot of the reason is the competition between parts of the university. We became more complex and so there is more of a sense of competing for resources, and in the past, it was that we were more in this together.

As Ella suggested, the development of the graduate programs in the 1990s caused considerable celebration and consternation among various segments of the faculty. Although this study focuses on undergraduate faculty, the social ramifications of this organizational expansion cannot be ignored. For the undergraduate faculty, the graduate programs represent alternately a sign of professionalism and institutional advancement or an example of over-expansion and mission drift; a vital stream of revenue and community outreach, or a drain on institutional resources. Besides the fiscal reality, some undergraduate faculty members perceived a change in social dynamics that accompanied this growth. Addressing a question of shared faculty values, one emeritus faculty member commented:

Well, I think one of the things that was very much shared among the faculty was, we're going to do a good job, we're going to give the students an excellent education. There is very much concern about that. I don't know that it's changed a lot, but there's a certain sense in which that might have changed particularly with those who do a lot of travel, building up their professional expertise. That's more the graduate program, I don't think that's as much in the undergraduate program. But as we've moved more into graduate

programs, the undergraduate program may have suffered some in terms of prestige. I think the effect of the graduate program on the undergraduate program, I think it's going to affect it. I think there is a certain feeling among the graduate program people that they are sort of superior, superior people. And they're certainly getting a lot of fame.

Gene, a faculty member who strongly supported the graduate programs, experienced first-hand the social impact of structural changes, despite attempted safe-guards to address concerns that institutional fragmentation may occur:

So that was one of the big things that I think really affected our ability to communicate across departmental lines and to socialize easily, because we introduced a structural inequality into our program, that even though each graduate program when it was approved, the program had to promise that it would not take the best faculty members from the department and [the graduate programs] would actually benefit the undergraduate program, they were going to have classes together with undergraduates and graduates, and as soon as you, as soon as those two populations mixed, well in conflict transformation just for an example...students average close to 40 years of age. So you get someone in there who is 18 with a 40-year-old student. And you have a set of 40-year-old students who may come from different parts of the world in different experiences, the richness of life experience. No 20-year-old is going to be able to handle that if you try to mix those people in class. It's just impossible. So after a year or two it became evident that we weren't going to have undergraduate and graduate students together and so you had another divide. And so a lot of structural things happened, particularly in the 90s that actually built in impediments to easy communication in the graduate program was a big one. It wasn't that people hated each other; it's just that they

moved in different circles. So if you're going to be working with 40-year-olds and teach one undergraduate course, it's really like moving into a different world. So finally the faculty members said I can't do this I have to do one or the other.

Whether the actual culprit or not, the graduate programs gradually became a symbolic foil for the challenges of an increasingly large and diverse institution. Including the graduate programs, the faculty population ballooned to 124 by 2000, more than doubling the faculty body of 1965. In reflection, reinterpretations of Mennonite distinctiveness inspired programmatic expansions consistent with the service-oriented professional programs of nursing and education that had been initiated in the 1920s. Despite EMC's clear commitment to the liberal arts and frequent attempts at innovative general education standards, the professional programs remained a central institutional driver, supplying much-needed students as the Mennonite undergraduate population slowly declined to just over half of the total body through the 1990s (EMU Fact Book, 2000). Thus, the question of what it means for Eastern Mennonite to educate for service when service is not the primary motivation of most students added an additional layer to the ongoing process of redefinition.

#### Institutional Oversight: Changes in Governance

From the inception of the College in the 1917, regional governance and responsiveness to Mennonite constituents in Virginia, Pennsylvania, and to a lesser extent, Ohio, and West Virginia was the basis of institutional support, and the target of institutional service. This tradition of local governance established a legacy of cooperation, criticism, and mutual responsibility between the local Mennonite community and the College community. Although the extant Mennonite Board of Education (MBE) represented a national organizing body of the Mennonite Church capable of oversight, College leaders, in part reacting to the perceived

liberalism of Goshen College, felt the MBE was not sufficiently entrenched in conservative orthodoxy to maintain adequate distinctiveness, should both institutions be brought under the same governance structure (Pellman, 1967). As a result, control of EMS came under Virginia Mennonite Conference and drew board members from the regional Mennonite clergy.

#### *College Oversight and the Board of Trustees*

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s Virginia Mennonite Conference began a process of transferring formal oversight to the MBE as the potential benefits of increased cooperation with the Mennonite Church and the desire to be considered more than a regional institution outweighed the concerns of an earlier era. One Board member characterized this shift as a positive development:

The shift was healthy, and two things happened: one was where we shifted accountability to the Board of Education, rather than the local conference, and secondly, we downsized the trustee board and made it more of a working board.... I don't have any negative memories about the shift to the Mennonite Board of Education. Another reason for it was the governance of Virginia Conference, how shall I say this so it doesn't sound negative, Virginia Conference went through a conservative restrictive period in the 1950s, and in the 1930s through the 1950s requiring plain coats, very strict restrictions on the use of musical instruments and films and education, so that in a sense, I think that was sort of a burden for the Conference and the College to have that relationship, because the Conference was trying to maintain at the school the same kind of lifestyle in the congregations, and the congregations having mostly people who aren't trained, they tend to be more of a conservative mindset and so for educational institutions to be progressive threatened some people in the congregation.

With this shift, institutional oversight added several new national players, but kept the downsized Board of Trustees as owner and operator of the institution. By 1985, the Mennonite Church General Board (renamed the Mennonite Church USA Executive Committee in the 1990s) topped the new organizational tree, appointing the Mennonite Board of Education, which in turn appointed the majority of the Board of Trustees. Due to the loss of local constituent input, a new advisory group called the Constituent Conference Committee (CCC) was formed to honor the role of local leadership and provide a communication mechanism with the regional religious community. The CCC tangentially connected the MBE with the Board of Trustees. These structural changes, along with the transition of Eastern Mennonite College to Eastern Mennonite University in the mid-1990s, caused many faculty and administrators to feel that new institutional possibilities were now in reach. One Board member from this era explained:

But on how some of my peers would have reacted: I think it was done right, I think it's something that brought EMC into its full bloom so to speak. I think if you read the minutes I either made the motion or seconded the motion that EMC move to a university. And again I, in my own mind, and my own experience, I thought this is...a moment for this institution to provide more options for higher education, because we already had a master's program with the seminary, so why not move into business and education and counseling was the next one, I guess. So, that's all been positive.

In the span of a decade, the school had both solidified its formal commitment to be a Mennonite institution through cooperative oversight with Mennonite Church, USA, and had taken deliberate steps toward shedding many of the ultra-conservative practices that had characterized the interpretations of Mennonite educational identity of an earlier age. This twofold process was not accidental: according to a top administrator, during the 1980s and 1990s

the MBE was very aware of the recent scholarship by George Marsden (1994) and James Burtchaell (1998) describing the disengagement of colleges from their religious roots. As a result, the MBE emphasized the importance of hiring Mennonite faculty and worked at strengthening ties between the Mennonite Church and constituent higher education entities.

### *A Shift in Constituents*

Organizationally, Virginia Mennonite Conference has historically functioned more like a federation of independent bishop-led districts, than a centrally-legislated body of constituent members. Consequently, reforms frequently occurred at a variable rate with the Conference in a reactionary position. As one local observer commented:

So [because of disseminated authority structures], some of our districts were able to credential women before Conference. Conference never said they would approve or disapprove it, they said we will [allow] our districts to make their decision. So we had one district that [was] very strongly opposed to the ordination of women. They were very, very strong that women should wear the veil, and anyone in leadership should wear a plain coat. So that district was in Conference until 1972.

In 1972, the conservative West Valley District requested release from membership in the Virginia Mennonite Conference. As the source of some of the most critical voices toward the College, the loss of this conservative element largely ended a series of heated debates regarding the use of regulation garb and other symbols of nonconformity that much of the conference no longer adhered to. A former Board member of the transition explained that:

The records will show that there were special sessions of conference to deal with issues at EMC. There are minutes of the special sessions because there was a lack of trust in the conservative stance that the conservative district [West Valley District] wanted.... But in

1972 when the conference released this district then the relationship between EMC and the Conference deepened and became more appreciated. We no longer had the elements that were dissatisfied with what was going on at EMC, and primarily in dress.

A top administrator from that era characterized the departure of the West Valley District as “quite a loss”, and the decision to break off removed a conservative voice from organizational participation, altering the balance of constituents and displacing a significant segment of members outside the institutional identity conversation. However, some critics of the College continued to jab at institutional practices, forming The Fellowship of Concerned Mennonites and publishing a newsletter through 2007, decrying the shortcomings of the institution that educated many of their leaders.

#### *The Religious Welfare Committee (RWC)*

Included in the second reorganization attempt in 1914, the RWC was to serve as an advisory group, selected by Virginia Conference, with limited direct authority in relation to the Board of Trustees. In the 1924-47 College constitution installed the RWC as part of the Board. However, through the 1950s and 1960s the increasing tensions over issues of nonconformity regulation placed the RWC, again an extra-board body, in a central role, setting policy on acceptable dress, activities, and media usage. Perhaps most importantly, the RWC had the last word on faculty hiring, and gained a reputation for running some prospective employees through a theological gauntlet. According to an administrator from the 1970s:

[The RWC] interviewed every candidate that was brought by the administration to become members of the faculty and their interview was merely about their spiritual commitments and faith orientation. The Dean and the President were responsible to secure people who had adequate training. This meant for a small college, we saw a lot of



persons who were alums who had gone on to higher education and who were motivated to come back and teach.

In the 1950s and 1960s the governance issues between administrators, Virginia Conference, and the RWC became increasingly pronounced. The 1952 College constitution stated, in nebulous terms, that the president should work with the RWC on a “consultative basis” (Pellman, 1967). A revision in 1963 made the president the secretary of the RWC, and incorporated the committee into the Board of Trustees (Pellman), returning the RWC to its original position within the Board, though now it was elected by Conference.

Although for many faculty the experience before the RWC was less than pleasant, in the 1970s information gathering transitioned from a face-to-face inquisition to a written survey of open-ended faith questions (followed by an interview) designed to probe personal positions rather than test assent to Mennonite doctrine. According to an administrator from this era:

Well, the pattern of the religious welfare committee, which was responsible to work with the president and the dean in hiring faculty, that changed. At first it was a rather rigorous kind of experience. One of the men who is still here, he went out from that interview saying “Well, they pulled me through a knothole”. It changed to where it became more of a pleasant kind of interview experience, and then the committee itself was dissolved, and the Board did not work in the same rigorous way.

In the late 1970s, the existing RWC was dissolved, and replaced by the Faith and Student Life Committee, prior to restructuring under the MBE. New faculty continued to be interviewed, though due to logistics, interviews now took place following hiring during the first year of employment, prior to renewal of the initial one-year contract. Non-Mennonites received an

additional second level of board interviews to assure their fit. I asked a top administrator from the 1980s how the Faith and Student Life Committee functioned in faculty hiring.

I don't think that that interview ever resulted in anyone having their employment terminated during my tenure. Often the issue revolved around whether the people were Mennonites. If the prospective faculty was a Mennonite, that gave them more entrée than persons who were other than Mennonite background, because of the nature of who we are and because of our denominational connection and our preference in that way. So, we had issues of being Mennonite, we had issues that the board committees were interested in of the Mennonite identity and whether they understood Mennonite faith and practice. However unpleasant, the transition of the RWC away from a rigorous theological investigation signified the loss of a ritual several faculty members referenced as a significant cause of institutional solidarity. Responding to my question about values perpetuation, a faculty member pointed to this experience:

How are [values] perpetuated? Well you know, and how do they stick... well, I don't want to be really naïve about this, who is hired makes a difference. Because there is a screening process and I would say the screening process has been fairly, fairly true to those same values along the way...

Lynnwood, a non-Mennonite and former faculty member, recalled his experience:

...and I submitted [the written portion of the interview], and finally I got a notice as to when the committee would meet. And I knew President Myron Augsburg and I knew the chairman of the Board of Trustees, who would also be on the Religious Welfare Committee. I walked into that room and there stood these five guys and I thought I'm dead. But [we had] the most interesting theological discussion that I've probably ever

had at EMC in 25 years. We spent two hours going back and forth. They questioned me and they never once tried to say to me that you're wrong or that this is a wrong position. They really put me to the test as far as explaining and giving reasons for and finally one of them stood up and reached across the table and said "Brother...you use terms and words differently than we do, but really, we don't find you're that far apart from us. Welcome to the faculty". I could've dropped dead.

The relative terror of the RWC was also linked to the degree to which a perspective faculty member understood the theology of the institution and how to manage the experience. Janice, a former faculty member who grew up around the College and was employed in the 1970s explained: "What was it, oh dear. I think when I sent in the questionnaire...I tried to be as general as possible. To me it wasn't a big deal." Ella took a similar approach:

I always said that if the Religious Welfare Committee had really known where I was when I came here they would not have hired me. I was involved with cultural anthropology where I was introduced for the first time to the idea that religion was something that people created. I didn't run into these ideas at EMU.

Incoming faculty from outside the local Mennonite community did not have this advantage, despite their Mennonite heritage. Bertha told of her spouse's experience of mistaken theological assumptions. The exchange occurred while Eastern Mennonite High School (EMHS) and EMC were part of the same institution:

When [my husband] came, they ask him to come and interview for the position at EMHS and he almost did not get the position. I think that's fair to say because when they asked him about the mode of baptism, he said though, "I think both are fine - immersion is fine with me, and sprinkling is fine with me". What he didn't know was that Virginia

Conference was having a problem with the Brethren Church at the time with the immersion, and they did not want to be identified with that at all, whereas in Pennsylvania you would have been fine. So it was the Religious Welfare Committee ...there was really a question or whether they could accept him on the faculty because of what he said. I don't know how it came about that.... But he told them at that time, and that was just at the time when faculty were beginning to wear ties and did not wear just the regulation code. He said that he would wear the regulation code at the high school but would not wear it to church. And so there were those two things but they didn't seem to have as many problems with the latter as they did with baptism. So that's just one thing, and from then on things began to grow there quickly, and then you began to, you can begin to see where EMU is now. It was very, very different there, but it changed quickly.

In this situation, membership in the local sub-culture provided insider information about the ways to handle a potentially harrowing entrance process. The RWC experience, as a rite of passage, eventually gave way to a less severe experience. However, even the later faith statement that faculty members were asked to sign had a similar impact. According to Katherine:

...we all signed a commitment to...the statement of faith, and I think there has to be some level...even though we aren't all Mennonite I think that most everyone here can at least agree that God is God and in the holy Trinity. And I think we can agree on the value of our students, valuing education, and in valuing, valuing each other as colleagues, valuing the mission of the university.

Another faculty member remarked:

An effort to reinforce common values would be the faith statement, which I think is still required a faculty candidates. I get the sense that there is more latitude in accepting people whose faith statements don't use quite the same language or have the same ideological content as was traditionally considered appropriate. So it's mainly a matter of monitoring the front and then it's an expectation that they understand...

The knowledge that colleagues have also passed through the initiation rites of the RWC interview gave faculty members a certain confidence that common beliefs and values were held in common across disciplines and generations. As entrance criteria have been relaxed somewhat, at least in process, that moment of mutual consent to a theological statement and a commitment to specific values still provided a reference point for a combined religious and academic community.

#### Eastern Mennonite: The Crossroad of Religious and Academic Identity

The process of reinterpreting Mennonite values described thus far was a familiar theme in similar communities through the decades following the 1950s. Eastern Mennonite College, as an institution of the local church, retained a strong sense of regional connection despite the formal transfer of authority to the MBE in the 1980s. The regional religious community had, in the defense of its peculiar way of life, constructed dual organizational structures, first to raise its youth (through the local church supported by Virginia Conference), then to educate them for service and vocation (via the College), and presumably, to return them to the care of the Church thereafter. These two intertwined interpretive communities were hardly distinguishable from one another in membership, due to the size of the community and the investment of local leaders in both organizations. A former pastor and Board member commented:

There were enough overlapping memberships in the faculty that it wasn't a matter of leading or following. There was enough crossover between professors and clergy, many of the faculty were in Church leadership like John Mumaw. And our presidents were church leaders, you know, Myron Augsburger was a noted national evangelist, and faculty were involved in enough church things that you couldn't use "we" and "they" language. That's probably what [it is that] caused a kind of balance that it was not a push and shove kind of relationship. And I'm not sure that's been true of other private colleges where churches started colleges but this one has....And I think that's been a great factor in keeping the Church and the institution together as they have. Some of the dual roles of both faculty and administrators had. I mean right now, [current College President] Lauren [Swartzendruber] is highly respected in the Church, and is running an institution. As this Board member suggests, the links between religious community and academic community continue to be substantial. However, as the focus of the religious community shifted incrementally away from outward symbols of Biblical nonconformity (such as the head covering and the plain coat), expectations that EMC enforce the conservative status-quo diminished. Although very much ingrained in the Mennonite community, an increasingly professionalized faculty felt less inclined to see themselves as operating at the behest of less educated constituents. Instead, they viewed themselves as innovators and leaders. According to a former faculty member hired in the late 1960s:

We were a Christian college and a church college, and we also wanted to be, how should I say, a reputable college and a university and I think we worked hard at that. The older generation worked hard at being a church college and a Christian college and at the same time. We didn't want to just be a Bible Institute, and there was some tension there. I think

there would be some tension with some of the sciences, and some of the science professors, and I don't mean this negatively. They would have some tensions that I wouldn't feel because I was not exposed to that kind of education. I think the older generation, grew up and felt the Church maybe not in the same way that the older generation had. A lot of growth happened during Joe Lapp's time, and he let it happen, and sometimes gave vision for it.

Some faculty members railed against expectations of conformity to the religious community, expectations that once would have been a natural part of institutional life. Mary, a faculty member from the 1980s, commented:

I can remember a faculty meeting where I was really upset about, I don't remember what the issue was, but I just felt like we were kowtowing too much to constituency concerns which are related to financial concerns rather than being a prophetic voice. We are supposedly being asked to be leaders in thought and education and all that kind of stuff. And we are supposed to be training their young people, but I felt like sometimes I was getting the message that we want you to train our students, but we want you to turn them out so they are exactly the same as when they left home. And I didn't see the need to quite bend to that as much as maybe the administration felt like they needed to for whatever reasons.

Thus, the reinterpretation of religious and cultural values within the larger Mennonite community required a concurrent reinterpretation of the relationship of the Church and College. In the 1980s, EMC took purposeful measures to maintain a sense of connectedness between faculty and constituency. On several occasions, several van loads of faculty traveled as far as Canada and spoke in churches. June commented on the need for this ongoing connection:

I think philosophically and theologically, at an institution like this we grow more because that's what its nature is. It's curious, and obviously more than what churches grow, because most of them are not working in anything and not thinking about all that sort of stuff at all and so that discrepancies can get larger and larger, and that's what happened in most institutions in what we do. But I believe the problem was and is that we don't and we still don't. I think you can have that difference if you have people who will go talk with them.... That probably would have been during that time, I used to go speaking churches, and I think that was helpful. They would say "Well, it's good to hear from you because I've been worried about EMU". ...So it's a language that you use, sometimes it's just switching languages in terms of what it is and finding your commonalities and then they're going to be more tolerant about some of the iffier things.

June alludes to a new division of labor, and a need to communicate between Church and College because of that divide. Faculty members naturally spend a great deal of time pondering and debating issues, some of which are a cause for concern in the local congregations. As this faculty member notes, conversations between constituent groups provided transparency, a greater sense of ownership, and trust that the College was on the right track. That face-to-face ritual exchange in a religious service reinforced solidarity and gave EMC what Edwin Hollander (1997) describes in leadership literature as "idiosyncrasy credit", or the benefit of the doubt when questionable issues arise.

In the 1960s, this shift of faculty role coincided with increasingly urgent conversations regarding the nature of academic freedom at a higher education institution owned by a religious community. In 1964, Dean Ira Miller acknowledged a start of a transition in the position of the College from faith defender to faith interpreter with his statement on academic freedom:



It means, furthermore, that the classroom is not the citadel for limiting or excluding discussion on certain issues, but rather the forum for examining and defending within our constitutional boundaries those which are basic to the improvement of our way of life.

(Pellman, 1967, p. 250)

The complete version of Dean Miller's comments on academic freedom appeared in the 1969 *Faculty Handbook*, and continued to be referenced as the institution's official policy on academic freedom with only minor editing through the 2000 edition. Dean Miller's statement acknowledges a fundamental contradiction between unfettered scholarly inquiry and the theological framework set upon higher education institutions by their founding and supporting churches, suggesting that the meaning of academic freedom itself must be defined in reference to the first principles of the community. Concluding his statement, Dean Miller quotes Tilman Smith, Director of the 1969 EMU Self-Study at length:

It is commonly understood at EMC that the great central truths of the Bible properly exegeted [sic] add a quality of truth and freedom entailing greater responsibility, compassion, and sensitivity than would be commonly understood in a more secular use of the concepts. (EMC Faculty Handbook, 1969)

Official position statements are informative, though the way the academic freedom issue is handled by faculty on a regular basis is more meaningful. Toward the turn of the century, the conversation over academic freedom intensified. According to one faculty member, opinions varied widely:

Sometimes the faculty would debate, and more recently, there would be this debate and it became a hot issue over the past 10 years over academic freedom tied into the homosexuality theme. Did we really have the degree of academic freedom that we

should have? There would be people across the spectrum on that. Some of the older fellows especially would say that we have plenty; it's not a problem - we will talk about various kinds of theological beliefs and belief systems, but we make it very clear what we believe. [Older faculty members argued that] faculty members by some standards shouldn't say what they personally believe, but I also remember them saying that even if we aren't coming out against a doctrinal Mennonite position, it's who we are, our soul and spirit that they catch, and if that's Christian, and we should be working to be sure that we are good Christians, so that they feel it.... However, there was a concern, I think I have a concern over the past few years, because of the strong arm of the denomination at times, coming into the faculty and the campus. There is a restriction of academic freedom. Academic freedom can be a complex and slippery kind of thing.

That academic freedom became a debate at all is an indication of a shift in faculty posture linked to the redefinition of the Church/College relationship and the increasing inclination among faculty to view themselves as voices of authority connected to, but not entirely deferential to the Church. Indicative of the shift from strong to weak ties (Granovetter, 1973; Lindenberg, 1998), group standards and boundaries once enforced through community pressure now depended on the willingness of individuals to recognize the value of boundedness and self-submit for perpetuation. Or, failing that, members tended to perceive that the cost of a loss of community is greater than the personal cost of electing to support the group. Indeed, throughout the timeframe of this study some faculty members made the decision to depart. However, for those who stayed this latter transition may also signal a gradual shift from an affectively-based solidarity of intense emotional relationships (Heise, 1998) to a calculated cognitive decision to

remain in a community due to the desire for continued access to mutually-produced, excludable goods, such as participation in a unique higher education setting (Hechter, 1987).

A change of bonds in practice is not nearly as tidy or complete as the comparison between these models suggests. As I will explore in depth later, the deep history of involvement in overlapping social, religious, and educational environments formed the foundation for the experiences of faculty life of one generation, and the backdrop of change for the next. However, even in the 1960s and 1970s, this process of values reinterpretation clearly impacted the dynamics between School and Church, and opened the way for the participation and influence of non-Mennonite faculty to the benefit and detriment of institutional culture.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### EMPLOYING CALL

In this study, the annually shifting membership of faculty provided the context for changes to ritual, solidarity, cohesion, and culture to take shape. Social bonds, as the primary phenomenon of interest, depend in part on the membership of the faculty at a given time, since their histories, personalities, ideological commitments, and other interpersonal and group variables contribute to a particular collective faculty identity and experience. The individual identities of new hires interact with the sub-text of an accumulated faculty culture as one factor among many contributing shape and direction to the constant and subtle realignment of group identity. Therefore, factors such as hiring practices, faculty retention, salary levels, and labor markets that influence the specific cohort of individuals that constitute the faculty from year to year are highly relevant and are considered in this chapter.

#### Interpreting Call

Recent scholarship on the careers of faculty presents strong evidence that the motivating factors in employment decisions for many faculty members includes a sense of fit and belonging even at the expense of institutional prestige and material resources (Finnegan, 1993, Matveev, 2007). The ability of Eastern Mennonite to attract faculty members and the desire of prospective faculty members to accept employment and persist through lengthy careers has, to a great extent, depended on the engagement of both parties in the use of *call*.

To be called or to call someone in the vocational sense is a provocation or attempted provocation to action. The process and outcome of calling or receiving and responding to a call carries separate implications for faculty and administrators. By way of a basic definition, to be called (the position of faculty) or to extend a call to someone (the position of administrators) is to

have or cause a desire to take action, amalgamated from a cognitive evaluation of fit and an affective motivation of values fulfillment. Often, one element of feeling called is a desire to respond that supersedes cognitive concerns that may otherwise dissuade a person from following a call, though the impulse to follow call is not without limitations. However, to place a call on someone is to recognize a certain congruence of ability and values between the called and the organization that the caller represents. Furthermore, the caller must speak from a recognized position of authority or organization that legitimates the call.

### *Faculty Call*

Although I present call as essentially an action-oriented event, recognizing the elements of the call process is important since the experience of call varies greatly from faculty member to faculty member. The taxonomy of affective response to education objectives by Krathwol, et al. (1964) provides a framework for understanding the parts of call response. The most basic category of attention is *receiving* with its subsets of *awareness*, *willingness to receive*, and *controlled or selected attention*. Applied to the concept of call, awareness of call is not as simple as choosing to answer or not answer the door when the College comes knocking. Awareness is first of all an ontological position, i.e., call is part of an individual's construction of reality, attributable to an expectation of supernatural intervention (a *religious call*) and/or an individual value set that makes the concept of fit a central feature of how one experiences the world (a *professional call*). A religious call may be a general call of God or it may be a specific denominational call, such as many Mennonites experienced from EMC. The concept of call has to be congruent with the way a person views reality for call to be a reality.

The second general level of the affective taxonomy after receiving is *responding*, with three parts: *acquiescence*, *willingness*, and *satisfaction in response*. In terms of faculty

experiencing call, the three aspects of responding for some individuals may function as phases of a process as they evaluate and reflect on the implications of response, and how they imagine responding will impact their lives or fit with their values. Willingness to act on a call may be mediated by life circumstances such as family obligations, geographic preferences, or financial concerns. However, the ontological position of call and centrality of the concept may make a potential faculty member more willing to overlook impediments to call, and thus more willing to at least entertain the possibility of call. This situation is reflected in the employment story of one senior faculty member hired in the 1970s:

I was planning to go to Harvard to teach with one of my [dissertation] committee members when I was called by the Dean who asked me to think about coming to EMC to teach. I didn't really want to come, but I came to talk. [The department chair] told me that if I came he would do whatever he could to support me in doing whatever I wanted to do. It felt like the right thing to do, so we came.

Jay, a faculty member hired in the 1980s, shared his experience of re-evaluating his priorities of professional training in light of an opportunity to fulfill specific religious and educational values:

One of the issues I struggled with when considering whether to come was [that] I was being trained to do something very different than to teach at an undergraduate school. But one thing that struck me, I suppose, I remember from my interview with [the department head], he commented about how life transforming his experience has been here as a prof in the sense of relating to students and talking to students about career decisions, personal spiritual issues, that kind of thing, and he made this off-the-wall comment. He said this morning I talked to a student and the student made 180° turn and is now going a different way. He said that's invigorating when you're part of the broader

Church in doing this. Those aren't his words, but that's the idea I got that made an impact on me, along with the realization that at a Christian institution I could do something that I've long wanted to do and that is to integrate faith into teaching and you can't quite do that in the same way at James Madison or state U or were ever you are....

For a prospective faculty member who is unsure of their level of commitment, any of the categories of response may be a point of entry from which a greater sense of call may be developed.

The final levels of *valuing* and *commitment* (and accompanying stages) further speak to the ongoing nature of call even after a position is accepted. In this sense, call is also the reason to remain despite hardships and difficulties that may not have been anticipated. Valuing is the basis of institutional commitment, arrived at by many routes but necessary for the survival of small colleges like Eastern Mennonite.

#### *Administrative Call*

For administrators as representatives of the College, call as a process functions very differently than it does for faculty. Although human resources departments and standardized institutional policies formalize the hiring process in many ways, the idea of call from an institutional perspective remains a potent informal tool used to prod and persuade attractive prospects. At smaller institutions where general prestige or remuneration cannot be counted on to attract and secure desired candidates, call is the means of attracting faculty who otherwise would not be interested. Attracting and retaining desirable faculty is accomplished by appealing to the potential for solidarity of values between prospective faculty and the institution. As a result, call requires a level of familiarity with the desired employee, including an understanding of their abilities, values, and readiness to receive, or at the very least, to listen to the call. To

place a call on someone requires not only a cognitive argument for fit, it is simultaneously making a case of the burden of responsibility for the contribution a faculty member could make and the exuberance of possibility for what the position might hold. From the institutional perspective, then, call is a strategic tool, though for both parties the air of possibility is undoubtedly emotional as well.

Both solidarity and cohesion contribute powerfully to the concept of call, although personal history, existing commitments, and existing relationships result in a variable role for social bonds in the process of responding to a call. Solidarity is a cognitive and affective bond to an ideology or group of people based on commonly held beliefs, values, or ideological commitments. Call, in some situations, is an opportunity to act on a pre-existing solidary bond, either with the institution itself or with the values and beliefs held in common with the institution. Cohesion, however, may also motivate a response to call. For some faculty members, returning to their alma mater was in part attractive because of the pre-existing network of relationships (cohesion). Although the majority of alumni-faculty were also solidary with the institution and with the values and beliefs held in common, some non-Mennonite alumni-faculty were cohesively-linked and institutionally-solidary, but not necessarily in solidarity with the beliefs and values of the Mennonite church. For other faculty members, particularly non-Mennonites with no prior institutional affiliation, becoming employed created departmental cohesion that may or may not have contributed to solidarity with the institution or with the ideological values affiliated with Mennonites.

#### Confounding Call

Even as EMC professionalized and the expectations by the Mennonite community for the institution changed, securing qualified faculty continued to be a challenge for the College



throughout this 35-year span. Although Church and institutional loyalty made call a potent means for filling faculty posts, three factors in particular complicated faculty hiring: *salary levels, institutional uniqueness, and market forces.*

### *Salary Levels*

Throughout the history of Eastern Mennonite, low salaries have been a primary impediment to faculty hiring. Accreditation visits provided occasions for the College to come to grips with this situation and justify practices that were viewed as unacceptable elsewhere. College officials argued that faculty membership was widely accepted as a service role, superseding normative salaries for positions that are purely professional in nature. Reviewing EMC's development, the 1989 SACS Self-Report notes:

During its early history, EMC regarded service to Christ and the Church as the primary incentive for teaching at EMC. Minimal financial compensation was regarded as necessary for institutional survival; it was not seen as incentive for employment. The College did not sense an obligation to make its salaries competitive with other institutions. (p. 4-4)

Although faculty salaries were, according to the College officials, low by necessity, the willingness of faculty to work at a reduced rate also functioned as a kind of litmus test of loyalty, making it less likely that prospective employees were seeking positions purely for professional reasons. However, this precipitated the opposite problem of Mennonites clinging to positions because of institutional affiliations and not because of professional ability. Several veteran faculty focus-group participants described how a dean in the 1970s "let go" a number of employees from one extended family that had deep roots in the Mennonite community in part because of their lack of teaching prowess.

Despite the justification of low pay offered in the SACS reports, salary levels were a source of consternation for all parties involved, as the College struggled to raise pay levels and attract properly credentialed faculty. One top administrator in the 1960s explained that:

We were quite low then even in comparison to others around, but people responded...because of the nature of the school and their common conviction. And that's what things were like when I came aboard. As the College began to grow and [we] added more faculty in the 1960s, it was difficult to find Mennonites who were achieving their graduate degrees who would accept a position at our salary level.

He continued:

The fact that we had in this community a number of institutions of higher education had a bearing on that. We found ourselves at times even competing for some faculty. We lost a few to James Madison. They had higher salaries.

Faculty responding to the institutional call did increase the numbers of instructors in the late 1960s. Even as administrators made headway in raising salaries, the low pay compared to peers served as a kind of institutional saga and symbol of loyalty to the Church first and institution second. At the same time, faculty with professional degrees increasingly felt justified in their desire for respectable pay, even if it were low by national standards. One emeritus faculty member recalled his early days of employment:

I was paid \$1000 a year when I started in 1941. As late as 1960, I was paid something like \$3000. And finally, to get into the Southern Association [President] Mumaw had to agree to pay, he worked as hard as he could not to, but he finally had to agree to pay \$4000 to some of us who had Ph.D.'s, and were professors. That Ph.D., that status, oh, he paid the \$4000 but he wondered if we wouldn't give some of it back? So...for two years

I gave \$600 back. As you can tell I'm not very happy about it. Imagine living on \$3000 in 1960. Now that was before 1970 when things took off financially, but it was still a pittance.... I came across a statement by Dean Lehman saying that they're so sorry that the salaries are so low, but – this is quite some logic – that is all the more reason we need to be prepared professionally to teach to keep the standards of the College up. Well of course, he's right but he is also wrong.

Janice, another faculty member hired in the mid-1960s highlighted the inequities of a salary scale originally designed to provide base subsistence for each household rather than pay distributed on the basis on merit. The College and the faculty were professionalizing, and although service to the Church was still a primary source of call, antiquated practices from a pre-professional era required updating:

...I came at the change in President, and he reformed the whole salary scale to some degree, but elements of historically, everyone got a minimal base salary, then you've got increments for a wife or X number of children. And so it was very loaded towards married male faculty. It was purely a matter of subsistence, so single women were really out in the cold. So even though a lot of progress was made after that system was replaced by more of a rank-determined [scheme], they still lacked for quite a while, before they really caught up.

In the 1980s the attitude toward salary scale continued to change, and administrators no longer relied on call as a justification for low salaries. College administrators pointed to academic excellence as the driver for increased pay, which may be code language for their acknowledgement of the limits of call alone. Significantly, the reason to raise salaries was not

for the sake of a reasonable standard of living for current faculty, but for the benefit of institutional improvement:

Although the motivation of service remains central to EMC's self-understanding, the administration now recognized that EMC can no longer accept sub-standard salaries. EMC's commitment to academic excellence and current financial status of EMC's constituency make it necessary and possible for the school to increase financial compensation for teachers. (SACS Self-Report, 1989, p. 4-4)

Accordingly, by 1989 EMC had closed the considerable salary gap against peer institutions, trailing the median of CCCU (Council of Christian Colleges and Universities) professor-rank salaries by just over \$4,000 (\$25,300 to \$29,600), and by just under \$2,000 behind Mennonite competitor college Goshen (\$27,200) (SACS Self-Report, 1989, p. 4-10). By 2000, salaries for full professors topped \$50,000 for the first time (EMU Fact Book, 2000, p. 8-8).

Despite these gains, the problem of attracting qualified faculty through call alone persisted, as standards among peer institutions as well as national benchmarks continued to rise. A top administrator in the 1990s noted:

Yes, among people who were Mennonites that went off to get Ph.D.'s, they can often get more money than they could by coming back to EMU. And that played a role that was always a factor because our salaries were low.

### *Institutional Particularity*

Even as pay improved, salaries were not the only impediment to hiring. The desire for representative faculty to model the prescribed theological positions of the Mennonite Church consistently limited the pool of potential faculty, although criteria gradually shifted in concordance with new interpretations of service and nonconformity standards. For example, the

1969 *Faculty Handbook* explicitly described the College's expectations of faculty. In the listing of hiring prerequisites, following clause 1 requiring professional competence, clause 2 states:

All faculty members shall be members of the Mennonite Church, in full sympathy with her doctrines and practices, being examples of the believers in spirituality and general separation from the world including expressions of nonconformity as interpreted by Virginia Conference. (p. 11-12)

By 1973, membership requirements were relaxed, and the language of membership was notably softer. The shift in wording reflects President Augsburger's terminology preference of Mennonites as evangelicals:

It is expected of EMC teachers and their spouses that they be promoters and defenders of the evangelical faith as understood by the Mennonite Church; and that they at all times represent in their manner of life the modesty and simplicity of Christian discipleship which has characterized the Anabaptist tradition. (EMC Faculty Hand book, 1973, p. 4)

By 1979, EMC required all students, staff, and faculty to sign a statement with following phrase on membership as preamble:

Eastern Mennonite College seeks to relate Biblical Christianity to the liberal arts, sciences, fine arts, professional programs, co- and extra-curricular activities, the community, and to one's own personal life. It is, therefore, assumed that all members of EMC community desire meaningful involvement in liberal arts education in a Mennonite context. (EMC Faculty Handbook, 1979, p. 4)

The statement concluded with a commitment to values written in the first person. With slight revisions, this statement remained in use through the 1999 Faculty Handbook.

Clearly, the role of Church membership had shifted away from a firm expectation to an affiliation of values and beliefs. James Burtchaell (1998) points to this as one indicator of the marginalization of the founding religious community in a larger process of religious disenfranchisement. However, for institutions such as Eastern Mennonite, the cultural and religious ties in addition to organizational restructuring that vested control of the institution with the broader Mennonite Church through the MBE provided several mechanisms to balance the obvious relaxation of faculty expectations. The MBE, aware of this general tendency toward drift, emphasized the importance of hiring Mennonite faculty. According to one top administrator from the 1980s:

So, when we had any other than Mennonite candidate who was very strongly committed to Anabaptist values and understood the mission and purpose of the institution we took that candidate seriously. And, on occasion we hired them. There was a kind of a quirky process that maybe was, well, I'm sure it is not the same anymore, because Mennonite Board of Education (MBE) no longer exists. But, MBE was a strong oversight; let's say a super board, to be sure that the Mennonite colleges didn't go the way of former religious-affiliated schools that no longer held their religious affiliations very strongly.

The desire for increased faculty qualifications and harmony with institutional purpose represented a potential contradiction ameliorated by shifting assumptions of fit from those claiming Mennonite heritage to those with an expressed desire to promote a particular set of values and beliefs, whether the applicant was Mennonite or not. Nevertheless, administrators through the 1990s clearly felt that religious identification needed to be stressed for faculty to fit the institutional culture. I asked one top administrator from the 1990s how fit and qualifications were balanced in the hiring process:

It was an issue, for the most part in the screening process in advance. We could identify that as an issue. I was very upfront about institutional culture. When I did the phone conversation saying this is who we are and unless that is something that's attractive to you, I don't want to waste your time or our time coming in for an interview.

In response to a probe asking if some applicants then withdrew, the administrator continued:

We had a least one person who said "Yes, it's not going to work for me"...and there's no reason to go further, rather than have people come and be surprised...I try to give them as much information upfront [as I can].

The decision to hire Christian faculty with degrees who may not have been familiar with or fully in sympathy with Mennonite values occasionally resulted in those individuals leaving the institution. According to a veteran faculty member:

I think earlier teaching and the integration of faith and learning in that kind of stuff was seen as, well, to make it really generalized, our first mission task was a Church task. We were first of all a school that was accountable to the Mennonite Church. And now I would say we are more of an academic institution. And I felt that a little bit when [an administrator] came. He saw EMU as an academic institution, and secondly affiliated with the Church. Where I had grown up with the idea that if we are not affiliated closely with the Church, then that takes away our reason for existing.

Thus, despite changes to the specificity of language in the faculty handbooks and Church membership requirements, faculty and administrators recognized that explicit religious beliefs and implicit cultural values created boundaries that the institution tended for the benefit of the College and faculty community. Boundaries were reinforced as well for those individuals seeking employment who may not have found Eastern Mennonite to be a good fit over time.

Although it was largely purposeful, this self-awareness of institutional peculiarity created an additional confounding factor in the faculty hiring process.

### *Market Forces*

The ebb and flow of institutional needs and faculty availability throughout higher education in the United States in the 1960s through 1990s caused some institutions to pursue highly-qualified faculty who may not have been a good institutional fit, simply because the market was momentarily favorable for the buyer (Finnegan, 1992). This was seldom the case at Eastern Mennonite, where the combination of poor salaries and restrictive religious and cultural expectations sufficiently constricted the applicant pool to limit the periodic downward drift of over-qualified faculty desperately seeking positions. There were exceptions. According to a faculty member employed in the late 1960s who later returned in the 1970s:

I was surprised when I came back after my master's degree, my pay had almost doubled and Myron was really trying hard to make pay at EMC respectable. It has changed to the extent that now you have people from all over trying to find jobs, and so that has changed the complexion of EMU drastically. I'm not saying it's bad, it's made it competitive.

However, concurrent with the labor market collapse in the mid-1970s, the rate of hiring at EMC slowed due to falling enrollment numbers and the existing surplus of faculty hired in the late 1960s, so this general trend did not impact EMC as strongly as it did other institutions. Despite these caveats, administrators from all three eras noted that other market forces played an important role in the shape of the faculty in two ways.

First, educated Mennonites were increasingly drawn into other types of vocations. Concurrent with new interpretations of the service ethic within the Mennonite Church as well as a growing acceptance of professionalized higher education as an acceptable vocation among



educated Mennonites, the range of academic fields and disciplines broadened quickly in the 1970s and 1980s. Even though increasing numbers of Mennonites saw terminal degrees as a viable option, the market itself was opening, providing jobs outside of higher education.

According to one top administrator:

I think since the time of the faculty who are now going off the scene and came here in post-World War II, and were the stalwarts through the 1960s and 1970s, there became a much larger educated group of Mennonites. Some were ready to teach at college, but others were going into many other different places, and other opportunities. And so coming here, or working for us when they could go to a pharmaceutical company or go to another university for much larger salaries. So you have Mennonite faculty scattered all around the country at other places, and we were at salaries substantially less than other places.

Second, as educated Mennonites looked to apply their skills in other markets, the lack of qualified faculty in specific fields and disciplines became problematic. EMC's commitment to professional education as an expression of its service ethic led to the creation of academic degree programs in nursing, education, business, and pre-medicine by the early 1980s. However, filling faculty posts in these applied areas was a constant challenge, according to one administrator from the 1970s:

So we had that difficulty, and it would depend on the discipline also: history faculty were not in as big a demand as faculty in the sciences or in mathematics or in business. And so when you try to get people in those disciplines, really capable persons, you really had to find someone that was called in to teach at a place like EMU. And so the labor market or job market for capable people was, was a great detractor from bringing people here.

Changes in the labor market and in the resources of the institution created fluctuations in the amount of faculty hired year-to-year. Still, some professional positions in particular were always difficult to fill due to the scarcity of individuals with both qualifications and a sense of call. An administrator commented:

I think [difficulty in filling certain positions] was pretty much of a constant. I think it was [difficult] particularly for trying to get business people. It was hard to get business people. We took a sociologist to chair the business department. That was the beginning of re-creating the business department. I think it's been pretty constant. I would say the sciences and business were probably the hardest, and nursing as part of the sciences.

#### Phases of Faculty Hiring

Despite the powerful lure of call, low salaries, institutional uniqueness, and labor market forces combined to limit severely the available pool of prospective faculty at Eastern Mennonite throughout this 35-year period. This confluence of internal and external forces, in conjunction with the institutional vision of the Board and administrators, created three general hiring phases between 1965 and 2000: *the RWC phase* (1965-1975), *the professionalism phase* (1975-1987), and the *expansionism phase* (1987-2000).

#### *The RWC phase (1965-1975)*

Nationally, the 1960s was an era of impressive expansion of undergraduate education due to the increase in total population and improved participation rate of the 18-22 year-old age group. Although the majority of institutional growth occurred in the public sector (Finnegan, 1992), the explosion in student population concurrent with a large cohort of retiring faculty resulted in a hiring-to-retirement ratio of 5 to 2 (Cartter, 1970, p. 234).

National enthusiasm for higher education fuel by the boomer generation caught on at the little Mennonite college in the Shenandoah Valley, personified by their charismatic young president, Myron Augsburger. Under President Augsburger the faculty expanded in number from 54 in the 1964-1965 school year to 78 in 1979-80 though this rate, outpacing student enrollment growth, could not be sustained. By the middle of Richard Detweiler's administration in 1985, the total was 80 full-time faculty members (EMC Catalogs; 1964-65; 1979-80; and 1985-87).

President Augsburger's desire for institutional growth combined with the breadth of his national religious connections contributed to an era of faculty expansion despite the hindrances of salaries, market forces, and quite notably, the dogged conservatism of the Religious Welfare Committee (RWC). Despite Augsburger's penchant for impromptu interview invitations, the RWC was the gatekeeper of strict religious compliance through the early 1970s, resented by many faculty members and restrictive of Augsburger's desire to make the institution Mennonite and ecumenical.

Nevertheless, stories of President Augsburger's hiring tactics regaled by faculty and administrators, often highlighted his impromptu recruiting methods, borne of personal enthusiasm and economic necessity: "There used to be a story that Myron Augsburger would travel around and see someone and like someone and say 'Why don't you come and teach for us?' And we would hire people that way" said one administrator. Although unusual today, in the tightening labor market of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the lore of the lone college president, contracts in his coat pocket, keeping a weather eye for eager young academics was not an unfamiliar scenario. According to another former faculty member:

...and there were these kind of stories about [Augsburger] hiring people all over the globe. You know, he would run into somebody in East Africa – you know these are just kind of myths now I think – but Myron had a very keen passion for getting people that were qualified and committed that he wanted to be part of the faculty, so he was quite active.

Many faculty members – particularly those in fields where Augsburger felt knowledgeable – were personally invited for interviews without applying. Increasingly however, a wider net was cast through the use of religious and professional publications. Position announcements began to be published in the *Gospel Herald* (a weekly Mennonite publication succeeded *The Mennonite*), although advertisements placed in national education trade papers such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* were infrequent at this point.

The level of faculty involvement in the hiring process during this era varied depending on department and specific time. Although it does not appear that Augsburger hired without consultation of some form, the clear inconsistency in organizational practice typical of a small, president-dominated institution frustrated faculty who sensed the need for regularized communication channels and administrative protocols. Janice, a faculty member from the 1960s highlighted the issues of organizational process:

Some issues were, like the hiring of faculty, and in the departments where that was an issue, it would go something like this: he [Myron] would know we needed a faculty person in that department and he would be out in the field and would invite people to come for an interview or something like that, and never talked about it with the department head. That's the way it was represented to us, I don't know. When our group was talking about these things I said I don't have that problem. I find my own people.

But then again, he didn't know anything about my field. If Myron thought he knew something about these fields and had in mind some kind of person, he would just go ahead. There's one department head who said how frustrated he was, that it was causing so many problems for him. Well I felt for him because I knew it was happening.

Regarding concerns with the hiring process, she continued "It was fine if Myron would see people and come back, and tell the department head 'You might want to check this [person] out' but it wasn't that way".

The faculty population stabilized in the early 1970s, but organizationally, the structure and process for hiring and administrative communication reflected the gradual bureaucratization of the College. As I have discussed already, the role of the RWC changed as well, though its position in the hiring process was emblematic of the lingering insistence by Virginia Conference on adherence to specific orthodoxy and practice in keeping with traditional Mennonite expressions, and the expectation that the College be an institution that followed religious directives.

#### *The Professional Differentiation phase (1975-1987)*

This second phase represents a new approach to balancing religious and educational identities in an era when professional programs dominated faculty hiring. Four events characterize this era: the overall reduction of hiring, the growth of professional majors, the change of leadership, and the increasing professional emphasis. Most significantly, as the stigma of outsider participation as a detrimental factor faded, and the College began to recognize that an increased pool of faculty was available through a new emphasis on common values from commitment rather than values from socialization.

Freed from the heavy hand of RWC but encumbered by an undesirable student-to-faculty ratio due to sluggish enrollments and overly-optimistic hiring in the late 1960s, the majority of hiring during this phase occurred in the professional majors, reflective of the national emphasis on vocational and specialized education (Geiger, 1980). This institutional situation was further exacerbated by national economic trends, reducing resources available for investment in instructional positions in the liberal arts. The professional differentiation phase highlights the division and proliferation of administration and changing identity of the Board. As a result, the basis of faculty fit shifted to beliefs and values congruence as well as Church membership. Although this hiring phase was significantly different than the previous one in the amount, type and entrance process of hiring, the institution relied as heavily on the success of call as it had in the previous eras.

In the early 1980s, President Detweiler attempted to balance new interpretations of Mennonite values with adherence to core beliefs. The mounting expectations that faculty have top credentials, particularly in scarce fields such as business and nursing, combined with constituent pressure to hire faculty who were committed to Anabaptist-Mennonite beliefs and values made locating acceptable candidates difficult. An administrator observed that Detweiler's own perspectives put him in sympathy with these goals:

I think Richard [Detweiler] was very committed to hiring very strong Mennonite faculty, but he also understood the need to be practical and meet several goals simultaneously and some of those were contradictory. You know, increase the qualifications of the faculty, bring on more Ph.D.s, bring on more women, and have them be Mennonite. Well, those didn't all come together always.

During President Detweiler's administration, departmental participation in the hiring process became regularized, and the faculty senate was gradually phased out as the administration worked more cooperatively with faculty to address concerns. A top administrator during this era noted that the coordination of hiring between faculty and administration was far more predictable and amiable than it had been under President Augsburg. Characterized by one faculty member as "a churchman and a scholar", President Detweiler did not continue the active presidential hiring role of his predecessor. Under Detweiler's administration, responsibility for hiring reflected a differentiation of role between the president and the top academic administrators that had not been as strongly emphasized in the prior phase. An administrator from this era said:

I think by the time Richard Detweiler and Joe Lapp, who were not academics, you know Richard was a minister from Franconia [Conference, in Pennsylvania], and Joe was an attorney. I think under their leadership the academic vice president was expected to give the leadership there in the hiring. I wouldn't say [Detweiler and Lapp] weren't interested and I wouldn't say they weren't very involved. It's just that it would not have been at all heard of that they would have gone out and hired somebody without the dean being there.

The restructuring of the College under the Mennonite Board of Education (MBE, and later, the Mennonite Education Association, or MEA) in the 1980s provided a different kind of hiring accountability than the Religious Welfare Committee (RWC) that was absorbed (by function but not by membership) into the Board of Trustees prior to the new board configuration. Unlike old RWC populated primarily by churchmen, the Board was itself increasingly professionalized and sought to emphasize Anabaptist beliefs and values more broadly. Thus, during this phase when professional majors dominated faculty hiring, the reiterated commitment

to the Mennonite Church through organizational structure represented a broad awareness that hiring mattered to institutional identity as a professional and religious institution. According to one top administrator:

They began to get some trustees who were very much in tune with the academy. [They brought in] prestigious board members from institutions, academic institutions who really encouraged the administration, so we had some cheerleaders. It wasn't just the administration trying to jack up the Board and say, "Look, you've got to support us in getting higher qualified faculty". The leadership was at the board level. And that was a very encouraging development. No longer was the Board made up of and here I am speaking not specifically, but more generally, no longer was the Board made up of just ministers....

Increasingly, positions were posted in Mennonite publications as well as national trade journals, requiring additional efforts to be explicit about institutional identity. However, the regularized hiring process put into place enabled the faculty to sort applicants before investing in a campus interview. One top administrator related this story, illustrating the new difficulties encountered by expanding the faculty search to mainstream publications:

I remember one, this was in the period of time we were desperate to find qualified business faculty and we got scads of applications. And one, I think this was probably a [*Chronicle of Higher Education*] ad, and in spite what we tried to say I contacted one person, I think he was out of state, who was interested in our business position. And the phone interview which I did with some of these people before bringing them to campus if, and you weeded out a lot by that. I remember him telling me that he was Buddhist, but it didn't matter because that, he would never bring that to the classroom. And, of course,



he didn't understand at all the very point of having strongly committed faith-based faculty is that everything that has to do with their support for the mission and faith values is a part of the classroom experience. So, that's just one kind of example I remember where some of these applicants had no idea what we were talking about when we were talking about an institution that was committed to Anabaptist faith values.

New administrative emphases, new professional programs, and new interpretations of traditional values initiated during this phase continued to be formative elements of the hiring process through the end of the century.

#### *The Expansionism Phase (1987-2000)*

The momentum toward formal hiring processes and employment criteria based on faculty sympathy with institutional values carried through this era. Faculty hires for the new graduate programs as well as for the traditional liberal arts where a significant cohort of veteran faculty were retiring, helped raise the total number of faculty over 125 by the year 2000. As with the professional differentiation phase, formal leadership played a formative part in the hiring of faculty in the expansionism phase. As a member of the Board of Trustees since 1973, President Lapp was quite familiar with the ongoing development of faculty hiring procedures, board professionalization, and revision of criteria for hiring fit. Like President Detweiler before him, President Lapp took a supporting role in the hiring process, serving as one of several interview checkpoints to assure institutional fit. According to one top administrator:

I think it changed quite a bit from the expectation that [prospective faculty] meet some more rigid objective criteria to a broader view of looking at their educational qualifications, and also their faith commitment in a more evangelical light, I would say with a small "e". I think it became more of a faculty thing rather than an administrator's

thing. I think, at least in my time, the recruitment of faculty and the hiring of faculty very much involved the departments. The department chairs and the department members and the deans. ...I think it changed so that rather than being an administrator's role of hiring, it developed out of the need of the department and the academic programs, and came up that way.

The expansionism phase included a growth of numbers and an enlargement of the definition of fit. Administrators from this era insisted that hiring Mennonite faculty was a priority, but the history of faculty who left the College highlights that an increased flexibility in that standard resulted in some faculty feeling they were not accepted or were not able to perform as desired. Indeed, several faculty members pointed to tension between the president and an academic dean over institutional vision that was manifest in the hiring process. Faculty members observed that the edges of the religious/educational community were pushed to accommodate qualified faculty with little institutional familiarity. Fit was, in the estimation of some faculty, compromised for academic flair. June, a veteran faculty member, commented:

... [one academic dean] gave a sense that we can be, he talked about being distinctive and we can be the best, and we can be better. And he hired really good people because people were really impressed with him when they came in. So he hired some really good people who didn't last very long, because the milieu wasn't quite ready for them yet.... He was snowed by their energy and their ideas and their vision, and he wasn't as good at picking up that fit that takes someone from here to here, instead of trying to go here [illustrates small and large differences with hand gestures]. And where he wanted to go philosophically was a far different place than where EMU is today probably. ...We probably wouldn't be a Mennonite institution then, if we had taken it to the fullest....

In 2000 the academic dean departed, and two years later, President Lapp resigned as well. In a scant 35-year period, the primary burden for assuring religious compliance had shifted away from an autonomous local committee of churchmen and toward administrators and faculty in administrative positions. Responsibility for assuring faculty fit with the institution traded hands but also gained partners, including a new board governance structure with academics more attuned to the balance of professional standards and religious commitments. Ironically, the same aspects of religious and educational culture that pinched the flow of potential applicants also intensified that narrow stream, providing a smaller, though highly committed pool of faculty. This resource – the ability to mine the depths that the institution helped to dig – was not lost on administrators who utilized the concept of being “called” to the institution in faculty hiring to powerful ends.

#### Leveraging Call

From administrators’ accounts it is clear that the College was not able to secure all of the faculty members it desired to hire. Yet attraction to the mission and the sense among Mennonites that the College, as an arm of the Church, had the authority to summon individuals to service provided many capable employees. One administrator said “[t]here is an attraction to our mission. People are attracted to who we are, even if they didn’t grow up [in the tradition.]” As the College faculty and administrators professionalized and traditional values were reinterpreted, the constant impediments of salary and market forces were met by pursuing candidates for whom serving the Church through EMC would supersede other concerns. One top administrator from the 1970s recalled:

As I said a while ago our salaries were very low compared to a lot of others. And we talked about this as a service role; you’re serving the Church by serving here. So as a

consequence, there are persons that I'd have liked to hire and who have gotten jobs at state universities, and so on, with salaries that we cannot manage.

This idea was echoed by an administrator from the 1990s:

...they could make a lot more money than we could pay them. That was always a factor. You had to talk about the mission and the culture and community of the institution in order to offset, as a selling point... that's important for a place like EMU unless you have that, you can't keep people here....

### *Historical Faculty Experiences*

The employment stories by faculty who felt that call to come to EMU reflect the themes of missions and service suggested by administrators. Faculty recount how, in the early years leading up to the Augsburg administration, a strong sense was felt by the faculty that employment at EMC was a call to the mission field. An emeritus faculty member and his wife discussed their experiences:

Wife: ...and people didn't apply for jobs, you were asked.

Husband: ...no you didn't apply here, that was wrong.

I ask why it was, at that point in history, considered “wrong” for someone to apply for a faculty position at EMC.

Husband: That was wrong because it was proud to think that you could teach at a place like this... I came across a statement in one of the administrative minutes that said that, quote, “action: that we invite [the faculty member] for next year.”

Another emeritus faculty member explained that the dean invited him and a classmate from EMC to return to the College to teach.

Well that is a totally different experience than the present day. Now you apply for jobs. When I came it was more like an ordination from the Church. Not that you wouldn't [have] thought "I would like to teach", but they chose me and they chose him and they chose anyone.

Through the 1960s Augburger's legendary "shoulder-tap" slowly gave way increasingly to formalized processes by way of regional, then national faculty searches. However, the strong sense of joining a mission remained. According to Marie, a faculty member hired in the 1980s:

When I started teaching here, when I think back I was teaching here with a master's degree. My first year salary was \$12,000 and I remember someone asking "Have you ever thought about going into the mission field?" And I said "I go there every day".

#### *Drawing From the Alumni Pool*

College administrators have long understood that recruiting a faculty body could be done through their own pool of alumni. Already socialized to the cultural and religious values EMC cherished, alumni were tracked through graduate school with the aim of gathering them back into the fold upon degree completion. Jack, faculty member hired in the 1960s related:

They sought me. I had gone to school here, and I lived around here, so I maintained contact with the institution and they sort of followed me through graduate school, and let me know they are waiting for me to get done and it was an opportunity to work in a church context.

This pattern continued through to at least the 1980s. "I always felt I would come back here to teach. After I moved back from Richmond, I worked at James Madison University part time for one year, then was hired on nursing faculty [at EMC]." Into the 1990s, faculty members

such as Elaine felt a kinship with the institution and volunteered and willingly responded to the call:

I had a positive alumni experience and thought I might like to teach at a Mennonite school and was contacted by the Dean, but I went to another school for four years. I felt like coming to EMU was a way to give back from the best of what I had to God, and I saw it as a mission and it was a good time for my family to go as well.

For both administrators and faculty, call had a function beyond the sentimentality of a positive alumni experience. It connected to a broader sense of personal motivation and identification with a mission and with an institution where fundamental values could be expressed and perpetuated, regardless of salary. Thus, these feelings of attachment, the sense of purpose, and the parallel values positively affected solidarity among the faculty. Insaige, a faculty member hired in the 1960s said:

Everyone knew you were at EMC or Messiah because [you] believed in the institution, or you wouldn't be there, because you're making about half the money you'd be making a public institution. So that's one thing that drew us, was that you were all in the same boat. [We were] all there for the same reason. You're there for a calling, not where can I get the most pay. Everyone knew, you knew, why you were there. Like I said I never even thought about it or minded the amount of pay that I was getting sometimes.

Sometimes, I didn't know what I'd get the next year.

Shared experiences of suffering or enduring difficulties can contribute to close interpersonal bonds (Hogg, 1992). In an odd way, welcoming employment as a service opportunity with meager remuneration had the secondary effect of promoting cohesion among faculty who all knew they were underpaid and overworked, but chose to labor on, regardless.

Katherine, a faculty member from the 1990s said:

When I came, I came from a post-doc position and took about a third of a salary cut as an associate professor. And so you didn't come for the money. It's the same kind of thing that if you responded to a call to be a mission worker in Bangladesh, or something, you want some sustenance to provide for yourself, but that's not really going to go to make you money, so that's been a shift.

A senior faculty member hired in the 1980s emphasized:

When I was getting my doctorate my adviser said to me, because I already was teaching here, "Why do you want to go back there? I can get your jobs here and here and here..." And then, I just said "Well I've spoken at different universities and been part of this and taught little things here and there and did that, and I just don't have the energy for not having a deeper mission that is overtly expressed".

### *Choosing to Follow the Call*

As the above quotation illustrates, the willingness of alumni to return to their alma mater combined with religious convictions that established vocational service as a spiritual calling resulted in a potent draw, most significantly for prospective faculty members who had other fruitful prospects. Although thin on resources and prestige, the lure of an environment that facilitated values congruence between institutional purpose and personal ethos was highly attractive to some faculty, regardless of their professional marketability.

However, in some cases, receiving the call was as far as a prospective faculty member intended to go, though the attractiveness of the call became more apparent as the hiring process progressed. Jay, a twenty-year veteran faculty member told this story, illustrating the emergent

nature of call, as a place that was initially a stepping stone and an obligation, became his professional home:

I was doing a post-doc at [a major research university], and [EMC] had an open position and I was asked to apply. I didn't really want to apply here but I said I would send my resume and that would be my good deed for the Mennonite Church. I was asked to come for an interview, and after a lot of soul-searching, when position was offered I said I'd come for two or three years.

The ability of Eastern Mennonite to hire highly qualified faculty based on fit and mission rather than prestige and pay contradicts the dominant assumptions of the academic marketplace (see Finnegan, 1992). Hiring through a sense of call rather than institutional visibility highlights the disconnection of values between those high-profile faculty for whom personal career advancement is the primary focus, and those, like some EMU faculty, for whom participation in an educational enterprise where expressing group values is paramount. Furthermore, to have a faculty body with members who, though potentially mobile, choose local investment instead contributes a strong sense of desirability and purpose for all colleagues, regardless of potential mobility.

The institutional loyalty of potentially mobile faculty can contribute powerfully to a sense of faculty solidarity, as younger faculty observe skilled professionals who choose to remain at a given institution because they believe in the educational and relational values they have found. For example, an administrator related this story:

I remember, for example, Dr. Daniel Suter, he headed the Science Center and developed one of the strongest pre-med programs in the country. Before I came here when I was working on my doctorate, [Dr. Suter] was [at the University of Virginia] working on a



sabbatical, and they tried to hire him to stay at [UVA], but his commitment was to Eastern Mennonite and the chance to reproduce his commitments in the lives of the young people, and he came back here to a salary one third of what they would have given him. That gives you just a little indication of the motivation for some of these faculty members.

This story, repeated by several faculty unprompted (and with varied details), serves as a kind of faculty myth of service and intrinsic motivation. Regardless of the specifics, this faculty saga reminds employees that individuals with prospects choose to come to EMU and do great work. Furthermore, that for the faculty who follow in these footsteps, continuing their legacy is a high calling. Steve, a faculty member employed in the 1960s and 1970s explained:

...You realized that these veterans around here, they had committed their lives to this little place at low salaries. There was an ethos of hard work. Myron said that bluntly, to me, he said, "If you come here you will work". That was the essence of it. We work hard here. We had heavy loads, and there were a lot of expectations to live an example.

You're [a] moral life example before the students - that was a high standard.

### *Service Salience Questioned*

Although quite a few faculty hired in the 1980s and 1990s described a strong sense of attraction to mission two institutional shifts related to call appeared to occur. First, a number of current faculty expressed concern that this veracity of the service call, or the interpretation of call in the lives of faculty, no longer held the power it once had. A faculty member hired in the 1980s lamented:

I think the faculty doesn't see themselves as much as, as a service or a community or a commitment, to this institution. The old guard, as we affectionately call them that came

when they were in their 30s and this is what they were going to do and they came to EMC to teach and they figured they'd be here forever. We get a lot of young faculty members now who come, but I don't know that they come in saying "I'm going to be here forever". Now there are some, they want Mennonite higher education, and they chose EMU, they might go to Goshen, but they're not using this as a stepping stone. But I see a lot of young faculty and who come in, and they come for a couple years and they don't really want this setting. They needed experience, and then they go on to something else. And I think that has changed the dynamics and I think that's a reality of where we are. Some people would say it's a money issue, I think it's more a philosophy or commitment to do, what kind of education you want to be in.

This tendency to question the commitment of the new generation is common to many contexts where a group identity is passed on to a new cohort that views institutional participation differently. However, several long-time faculty members noted that they had not planned to stay more than a few years when they began their initial contracts, but their social bonds and institutional commitment grew as the years passed. One faculty member who was hired in the 1960s said that he had discussed faculty enthusiasm and persistence with C.K. Lehman, a dean who began teaching in the 1920s. C.K. Lehman replied "No, there's not a big difference. There were always short-term faculty, as spiritual as could be or not too spiritual. They come and go". Whether there is indeed a shift of institutional commitment underway or if this is simply a different point in the generational cycle of faculty is impossible to tell. However, the perception of what it means to be a faculty member and the impression of common commitment is significant. In the same way that the Daniel Suter myth buoys the sense of the gravity of

employment, perceptions of turnover may have had an opposite effect on institutional loyalty and faculty solidarity.

Determining the staying power of call and the institutional loyalty that often results is difficult, however, the second shift related to call may be the result of a broader reconceptualization that may have contributed to the first. By the late 1990s, many new faculty members suggested that the act of following the call of God was related to their vocation generally rather than a response to the call of the Mennonite Church, whether locally or nationally. This belief may have been a joint product of the denominationally-diverse faculty membership and the removal of local Mennonite oversight and service expectations present in the previous generation. The difference can be thought of as *cosmopolitan call* as opposed to *local call*, to borrow Alvin Gouldner's (1967) terminology. The implications are significant: although both types of call result in faculty participation, cosmopolitan call, or the call of God generally, is not tied to any particular institution or denominational affiliation. Thus, a faculty member may feel called to EMU as an expression of a general or cosmopolitan call, but that call may lead elsewhere in the future. The local call has been exhibited by many faculty members for whom the call of God was the call of the local church, and as an educator, the place to express that call was naturally the local institution of higher education.

Thus, EMU should perhaps expect that faculty members will continue to be drawn to the institution from a sense of calling, but not expect that this sense of call will necessarily make them loyal, or at least, less willing to bear the sacrifices of prior generations. Of course, local call may, and occasionally has resulted in faculty pursuing service through other expressions such as relief or development work with Mennonite Central Committee, or foreign evangelistic efforts through a variety of other agencies nested in the Mennonite Church. Nevertheless, call

has long been the instrument through which the faculty body has been populated, and understanding this potential shift in the way call is received and interpreted is significant for institutional leadership, since behavior in response to call may not match what administrators traditionally expected.

### Outsider-Insiders

In the secularization literature, the faculty have been implicated for their contribution to the loosening of bonds between a college and its religious moorings (Burtchaell, 1998). Through the 1980s, EMC's Board of Trustees, aware of this historical trend, emphasized the importance of hiring faculty who were supportive of Mennonite values and beliefs, though they stopped short of reclaiming the previous requirement that all professors be members of the Mennonite Church. Nevertheless, faculty membership at Eastern Mennonite changed dramatically from 1965 when there was no full-time non-Mennonite faculty, to 2000, when a recognizable minority of faculty were non-Mennonite.

Non-Mennonites have served in instructional roles at EMC for quite a long time, despite their absence from the full-time faculty cohort. For decades, administrators recognized a need for qualified individuals with expertise who could not be hired because of the policies concerning religious affiliation, but found ways of including them nevertheless. According to one top administrator from the 1960s:

As far as what I know of my predecessors when we talk, they follow[ed] basically the same [practices]. There have been a few times that [EMC had] particular needs, when they couldn't find a person in the faith community that they wanted, they hired some part-time faculty who were not necessarily Christian even in some cases, to teach. But to my knowledge, never full-time faculty. And I don't think any faculty member [could] move

toward tenure and a permanent position who didn't qualify in terms of our faith ideals. I think in one sense, we were more flexible...than some of my colleagues in some other colleges, where to join their faculty you actually had to join their church and denomination, and that's still true in a fair number of Christian colleges, but we did not do that. We didn't ask people to change denominations, but what we asked was answers to that series of questions, how they would relate to our denomination with convictions on peace and nonviolence, which were other than their backgrounds and other things I could mention especially mission.

An organizational transfer from strong ties to weak ties (Granovetter, 1973; Lindenberg, 1998) usually includes, at some stage, the acceptance of new informal cultural norms followed by new formal structural rules for maintaining group boundaries and initiating new members. Although the decision to begin offering tenure-track positions to non-Mennonites was not taken lightly, none of the faculty I spoke to who were employed in the 1960s or 1970s levied an objection, so long as new faculty were committed to the same base values. In other words, the formal proceedings of the Board did not force a policy upon the existing faculty that they were not already, given desired safeguards, prepared to receive. I asked another administrator whether hiring non-Mennonites occurred out of necessity without formal conversations by the Board:

No, there were formal conversations. We discussed this with the Board at some length and the Board really wrestled with this because accountability to the Church and the way the College was structured at that point.... The Board wrestled with what it meant to answer to their constituency, for us to include other faculty members than from our denomination. We had to be very clear that we were sure they were committed to being Christians. I think that basically continues to the present.

The drive for improved credentials and the introduction of new professional programs, along with reinterpretations of non-conformity values that eliminated regulation garb opened the way for the hiring of non-Mennonite faculty. Initially, the non-Mennonite faculty who were hired were close denominational relations; members of the Church of the Brethren, Brethren in Christ, and other historic peace churches that were considered more acceptable than Christians from Protestant or Catholic traditions.

The College practice of tracking and hiring recent alumni was soon extended to the increasing pool of non-Mennonite students. Non-Mennonite students were recipients of institutional socialization and were at least familiar with the educational and religious culture the College wished to perpetuate. This made them a less culturally threatening constituency than otherwise unknown non-Mennonite applicants as well. Additionally, potential emotional ties to the institution developed as a student provided further leverage for the use of call to attract non-Mennonites who would not have been enticed by the idea employment as service to the Mennonite Church.

By the 1990s, professional programs such as nursing had hired significant numbers of non-Mennonites, and the College once again emphasized the importance of hiring adherents to Anabaptist-Mennonite beliefs. However, as the Mennonite Church became less insular, the College found a significant pool of potential faculty who were in sympathy with the values of peace, service, and community that the College had long espoused. Hiring criteria shifted to emphasize EMC's new openness to those who stood in ideological sympathy with the College, regardless of their cultural or denominational differences. According to one top administrator from the 1980s:

[The Board of Trustees] were very committed and expected the administration to be committed to hiring the best qualified Anabaptist values-type person we could hire. They understood the realities. So when we had any other-than-Mennonite candidate who was very strongly committed to Anabaptist values and understood the mission and purpose of the institution we took that candidate seriously. And, on occasion we hired them.

Although the College was increasingly open and enthusiastic about non-Mennonites with congruent religious and educational values, the Board of Trustees and the MBE nevertheless put additional measures in place to vet potential non-Mennonite faculty and assure that concerns of fit were properly considered. A top administrator from the 1990s reflected on the process:

There was a process in place that when we had an other than Mennonite candidate who'd pass the qualifications, met all of the qualifications, that we could take this to our Board and if it was someone that was really far up field, not like Church of the Brethren or some related group, I think there was a process that had one of the Mennonite Board of Education administrators also interview the person. I think for a period of time, there was that level of involvement with other than Mennonite hires.

Through the 1990s hiring Mennonite faculty continued to be a priority although by this point, the professional positions and burgeoning graduate programs at the institution made hiring of non-Mennonite faculty a necessity, and less of an ordeal for them as well. A top administrator from this era described the challenge of choosing between a better-qualified non-Mennonite with a lesser-qualified Mennonite. He concluded "We were trying to get Mennonite folks.... I think we did defer to Mennonites when we could. I don't think I can be very clear about all the criteria that we used".

Based on public records and the testimony of top administrators, through the era of this study EMU never established a quota system for hiring Mennonite faculty members across the institution, although administrators and faculty kept a constant eye on the composition of departments. Several faculty and administrators commented that the diversity of the Mennonite Church in beliefs and practices reduced the confidence in automatic fit that membership had once provided, requiring a similarly thorough review process for Mennonite and non-Mennonite applicants alike.

### *Negotiating Culture and Call*

Although many non-Mennonites felt called to EMC, the cultural induction of non-alumni tended to fall into two categories: those who were fortunate enough to receive some manner of cultural mentorship, and those who were left to their own devices. In later years, formal mentorship programs were established, yet translating their response to call into a commitment to call often came down to the positive or negative experiences had with the faculty as a group.

Marie, a long-time non-Mennonite faculty member recalled:

I remember going home [after] the first day of faculty meetings and saying to my husband “How bad do we need this check, because I have no idea what they're talking about. I can't do this”. Another faculty member said [to me], “I can help you”, and so he brought me a book, probably from the historical library, and a calendar, it was in an anniversary of 400 years [of Anabaptists]. And on every page were people impaled on sticks or boiled in oil, and I said, this won't work. But he meant well....

Louise, another veteran non-Mennonite faculty member explained that her success at the institution was due largely to her need for housing. Finishing a degree across the country when she was hired, an administrator was charged with locating a place for her to live. Although no



housing could be located, the administrator offered her space in her home for the semester.

Louise credits this relationship with the success of her integration into the College:

Looking back, I think that was really critical. [The administrator] spent many evenings explaining Mennonites and women's athletics in the Mennonite Church...I look back now and I know that that was a real enculturation and ability to talk about what needed to be going on. I had to meet with the Board of Trustees and that was a big deal back then, they still had their plain coats, and Myron was there, and we laughed about it. And I said okay, we'll have an inspection before we go, we talked about what I should wear, she gave me questions, she said they are going to ask you these kinds of things you need to be honest and upfront. So I don't know if without that support, if I would've had a sense of the big mass of what was going on here. I've told people, they have new faculty orientation now, and they didn't have it then, but I had my own personal introduction to the Mennonites in the Mennonite world.

Not all introductions into Mennonite higher education went this smoothly, and some faculty felt marginalized by the cultural divide, despite their sense that they were committed to the institution. Frequently, non-Mennonite faculty found comments about their outsider status or lack of cultural knowledge stinging and exclusionary. One former faculty member told this story:

...my wife and I went to a dinner - and it was a College sponsored dinner - and they asked us our denominational background and the person hosting the dinner said "Well it was your people that martyred our people". At the event. It was not a joking comment - it was a pride comment about their martyrdom, but it was kind of an exclusive comment, you know, as far as how we felt excluded out....It impacted you know, I kind of took the

attitude a lot, because of my commitment to Christian higher education, that [comments were] not going to keep me out of being engaged. But those kinds of comments were consistent the entire time we were [at EMU].

The process of introducing non-Mennonites into the faculty produced both lifelong friendships and bitter memories, as institutional leaders made educated guesses about faculty fit and many non-Mennonites negotiated foreign cultural terrain. In my participant group, one-quarter of the 40 faculty participants were hired as non-Mennonites (although three joined Mennonite churches later); four in the 1990s, four in the 1980s, and the other two in the decades prior. The majority of this non-Mennonite participant group belonged to the cohort that had integrated with some measure of success, yet they too had stories and scars from the boundary-enforcement of insiders. In chapter six, issues of non-Mennonite inclusion and exclusion are discussed at length. Nevertheless, the gradual inclusion of non-Mennonites represented a massive change in the purpose of Eastern Mennonite as a homogeneous haven, and an equally significant transition in the basis for the bonds between faculty members.

## CHAPTER SIX

### RITUAL IDENTITY SPACE

Chapters four and five set out the changing institutional and hiring contexts that contributed to the membership of the faculty at Eastern Mennonite. As a social organism under continuous revision in membership and identity, the faculty collective is set in the multiple and similarly shifting contexts of Mennonite religious, educational, and cultural communities. These tripartite communities are themselves part of a larger religious, educational, and cultural milieu. The scene constructed thus far highlights the repositioning of an educational institution in relation to a set of central values which, through the process of reinterpretation, are also marginally revised as well.

Although situated in a particular historic period, establishing a chronology of events is not the aim of this study, nor could the goal of this research be accomplished through an organizational timeline. Rather, the point is to understand the undulations of social bonds and the implication of these changes for how members understand their institution. Recent postmodern thinkers critique the modern implementation of time as a tool for anesthetizing history to fit tidy explanations of linear change, relegating spatial dynamics to the role of static subtext (Popkewitz, 1997). Of the relationship of space and time, Thomas Popkewitz writes:

The revision of space is also a revision of time; each is set in relation to the other. A modern notion of the single universal moment of time is revisioned as a time in which multiple strands “move” with an uneven flow. (p. 23)

Defining change as altered, non-linear, reconfiguring space opens new possibilities for understanding organizational transition, and represents a defining interpretive framework for this study. Consequently, another way to conceive of the purpose of this study is to consider it as an

examination of the change in metaphysical space experienced by faculty throughout the course of this 35-year period, in which physical space plays a formative role.

### Physical and Metaphysical Space

The benefit and encumbrance of employing space as the metric for change results from the multiple facets included in the definition. The theoretical foundations of this study make two particular angles germane: space as a physical territory is essential to the ritual event, requiring the co-presence of participants (Collins, 2004). Metaphors must be used with caution: space is not a blank canvas (even a painted canvas is static), or an empty stage (although some ritual behavior, similar to theater, is prescribed). It is rather a dynamic ecosystem, and as an active partner in the ritual process it facilitates identity-forming rituals and shapes them through variations in proximity, environment, and the cultural meaning imbued by its inhabitants. In some cases, such as the reconfiguration of dorm rooms into office space in the old Ad Building, the physical space itself is rearranged. This may facilitate new rituals, or new expressions of existing rituals, and may add unforeseen wrinkles to ritual activities. In other instances, such as the construction of the Science Center, new spaces may result in new rituals or the translation of old rituals into the new space.

A clarification of terms is important at this juncture. Rituals always imply physical space. The term *event* will be used loosely as a synonym for ritual, such as “the Science Center lunch event” when ritual is understood in the broadest sense that the ritual definition allows. Event may also be used to refer to a specific ritual occasion or type of ritual enactment, such as “the chapel ritual event”.

Second, metaphysical space is nonphysical, and describes the dimensions of identity and social bonds often facilitated by physical space. During the course of a career, the space between

faculty members and their colleagues, administrators, students, and even the institution itself will change as formal and informal rituals are interpreted and identities are reshaped. For example, the ritual of the hiring interview with the RWC changed dramatically in form when the questionnaire was introduced, and again, when the RWC was dissolved into the Board of Trustees. In this case, the physical interview space may have persisted, but the metaphysical space between participants changed, creating less hostility and resentment and allowing faculty to reinterpret the relationship between themselves and the Board. Similarly, enduring the RWC interview continued to reshape the metaphysical space between faculty members, and between faculty members and the institution. According to one long-time administrator and faculty member:

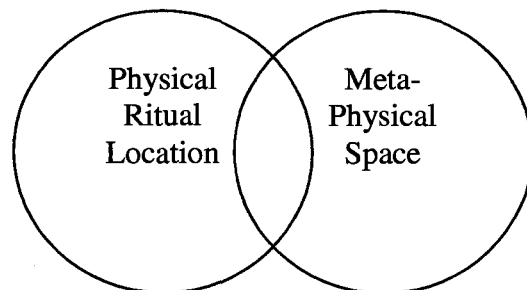
So the effect of [the RWC] was to make, create a faculty that in some ways had a high *esprit de corps*, but fundamentally did not respect the institution because it was so backward. It's a legacy we didn't really get over until the 1990s. And even now it shows up occasionally.

When I asked if the process produced something other than compliance, the administrator further explained: “Yes, yes resentment and the feeling like... EMC was too austere and too rigid.”

Thus, in this study, the emphasis on the physical location of ritual (Collins, 2004) and the conception of change, identity, and relationships in terms of metaphysical space (Popkewitz, 1997) are united to provide the conceptual basis for a non-linear explanation of cultural transformation free from chronology as its primary evaluative element. Several inter-related terms used through the remainder of this paper require explanation. The concept of space has been divided into metaphysical and physical space, as described. *Identity space* is a linking overlap between the two types of space, indicating a physical ritual location that contributes to

the creation or alteration of self- or group-conception. Thus, ritual identity space is both a place that facilitates identity and an idea of personhood and group-ness that results. For example, the chapel identity space indicates a ritual location in which a particular aspect of group identity is facilitated, formed, or supported. A basic Venn diagram (Figure 6) illustrates this relationship. The overlapping space between the two circles represents identity space.

*Figure 6:* Identity space as the overlap between physical and metaphysical spaces.



This chapter explores several aspects of metaphysical space at Eastern Mennonite that form a backdrop of identity categories and boundaries through which the various manifestations of ritual space can be understood in subsequent chapters. The bases of metaphysical space include the Mennonite cultural network, the labels assigned to non-Mennonite faculty, and features of generational change.

#### The Mennonite Cultural Network

“Marley was dead, to begin with.”

In this opening line from the classic novel *A Christmas Carol*, Charles Dickens (1858) announces that recognizing the postmortem status of Ebenezer Scrooges’ business partner is vital to understanding the rest of the tale, “...or nothing wonderful can come of the story I am going to relate” (p. 2). So too, the pervasive Mennonite culture beyond Eastern Mennonite College is a necessary context to explain faculty group identity formation, perpetuation, and the participation of non-Mennonites.

### *The Centrality of Congregations*

To be born into a Mennonite family in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century usually resulted in an immediate and lifelong cultural immersion in which the religious subtext was present in all parts of life. Characterized by strong ties and dense networks of relationships, members were ensconced in multiple levels of practices within the Mennonite community, from regularized and formal religious observances to spontaneous and informal social interactions. Sociologist Calvin Redekop (1989) stresses the centrality of the local church congregation in what he terms *the community model* typical of many early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Mennonite groups. Redekop explains that family life, congregational life, and the larger social system influence one another, however:

The ancillary social structures – the family, informal friendship networks, the community, and cultural structures – are in one sense the consequences of the congregational dynamics; that is to say, religious authority and life have permeated the mundane aspects of life which are necessary for the religious to exist (p. 72).

Thus, the influence of congregational life and the accompanying religious ethos was felt in school life, youth activities, social events, neighborly exchanges, and nearly any other social interaction. Mennonites certainly interacted with non-Mennonites in the public and private spheres, but symbols of nonconformity and accompanying rituals served to remind both groups of differing worldviews.

A number of faculty members from Eastern Mennonite highlighted the importance of congregational affiliation as a central source of connection and the basis of social interaction, frequently with other faculty members. This local religious connection provided a context for relationship building that reinforced loose connections from their workplace. For many non-

Mennonites, the dual impact of belonging to a religious community unrelated to the Mennonite cultural network resulted in a distinct separation of professional and social affiliations, and a strong sense of outsider status as well. A Mennonite faculty member commented:

Well it's just that other faculty went to the same church, and you served on committees [with them] there, or the various activities of the church. For example, there are people I rarely saw on campus, but I see them often at church and we talked during a coffee break, and that's about the only time. We'd usually talk about school, we don't always talk about school, but we often do. And if it wouldn't be for that I probably wouldn't see [a particular faculty member] a whole lot. Even though I knew him when he was a student here and I knew him quite well, I feel like. And I wouldn't see him that often on campus because they are up there and we are down here. And there are other people like that.

For some non-Mennonite faculty members, such as Scott, the lack of participation in an aspect of the Mennonite cultural network resulted in a sense of exclusion. It also produced for him an epiphany about the social bonds he did and did not experience:

The thing that never happened was, and I didn't notice till I came [to EMC], but people who go to Mennonite churches, those people are your family and your home. They're your social group, and they don't go outside that social group, and I didn't know that until I wondered why socially I never saw these people. And then I realized the church is everything.

Not all Mennonite faculty participants had this congregational experience for a variety of reasons; some experienced it by choice and others by chance. Even for faculty members whose Mennonite congregational experience did not further embed them in the cultural network, other sources of cultural ties, such as their alumni status, kept them frequently connected. Further, as



the overview of physical space will show later, some non-Mennonites, despite a certain sense of exclusion, were quite comfortable with a clear separation of professional/social life from religious/social life. Whether this delineated social network was experienced as negative or not is ancillary to the shift away from the previous alignment of religious, educational, and social realms that had been a hallmark of faculty experience at Eastern Mennonite from the start. Certainly, faculty experiences of these overlapping domains varied depending on career stage, individual experience, professional affiliation, congruence with Mennonite values, and other factors. However, the increasing presence of a faculty cohort who were not privy to the entirety of this network indicated the beginning of a transition away from certain cultural assumptions as the basis for faculty culture.

One way to conceive of the relative importance of an individual to an organization is to plot each member on a *gradient circle*, that is, a circle whose maximum density is in the center, and whose edges dissipate infinitely in all directions. Each member occupies a unique position in the circle, although those who are most central to organizational function and stability are closest to the center, and marginal members are closest to the nearly invisible edge.

Congregations, like other types of groups, are a gradient circle of member centrality. Some individuals or families are more vital to the culture and identity of the group than others. However, through the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the high level of inter-related activities within congregations facilitated frequent interaction and as a result, many affiliates were clustered closely to the center of their membership circle. In tightly-bound groups, frequent interactions established dense layers of interpersonal understanding as well as high expectations for participation and cooperation (Cohen, 1985). Cultural rules for acceptable living included norms

for the use of economic resources, treatment of insiders and outsiders, attendance of religious functions, participation in social events, and general industriousness.

The intensity of group involvement, in turn, facilitated increased commitment to community values and practices. Michael Hechter (1987) suggests that the greater the amount of personal resources one commits to a group voluntarily, the greater the level of connection with and commitment to the group. Mennonite communities frequently exemplified this sort of personal investment, braiding religious practice, social circles, and educational institutions into a nearly continuous investment of time and energy. Mennonite values of service and simplicity emphasizing self-sacrifice and giving of time and resources at the same time discouraging actions perceived as selfish ambition and made disengagement less likely, since it would violate these communitarian values. Certainly, this explanation is general at best, and important distinctions of theological interpretation, vestment of local authority, and ritual practice existed between communities and between sub-groups in geographic areas. However, for many Mennonites raised during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, religious community life had a centripetal effect (Ahrne, 1994), drawing members to greater involvement and self-sacrifice, even as other forces, both internal and external began to pull Mennonites toward new expressions of traditional ideals that did not necessarily support the existing cohesion.

### *The Mennonite Game*

In part, the Mennonite network was perpetuated through genetics and tightly-coupled circles of interaction, further facilitated by values that emphasized kinship ties and shared Mennonite cultural experiences. Mennonite communities tend to contain several extended family lines with last names that insiders find familiar. Traditionally, maintaining physical proximity to family served communitarian values, and as a result, many Mennonites are

acquainted with multiple generations of extended family. As Mennonites met at summer camps, colleges, voluntary service work, and other occasions for travel, disparate enclaves of Mennonites developed the practice of seeking common connections with Mennonites they did not otherwise know.

Often, Mennonites who are strangers to each other or Mennonite groups separated geographically can quickly establish common roots and heritage. Among themselves, Mennonites say somewhat jokingly that “within five minutes we become aware of our Mennonite commonality; within thirty minutes, we are able to establish a family and bloodline relationship”. (Redekop, 1989, p. 84)

This practice, widely referred to as *the Mennonite game*, functions in four significant ways. First, familiarity with the Mennonite game itself and the ability to place oneself in a geographic Mennonite community indicate general insider status. Based on this status, participants can expect behaviors in keeping with common values. Second, assuming general insider status, subsequent layers of information – state, town, church, family, and so on – provide important social, economic, and theological cues, serving to further delineate connections or even to provide warnings if the person in question hails from a congregation considered to be theologically suspect. Third, the Mennonite game provided initiates, often somewhat reticent outside their own community, with a set of talking points in social encounters that can easily lead to extended conversations and provide new points of connection for future Mennonite game occasions.

Finally, assuming no grand impediment is discovered, the Mennonite game serves as a transfer mechanism between the general solidarity of a common Mennonite heritage and value system, and the cohesion available through specific social connections. For example, if I find

out that your cousin married a Showalter woman from Dayton, Virginia, I may ask what congregation they now attend, and trace that my brother and your cousin attend church together and know each other. Although this connection may appear somewhat extraneous to the outsider, through this exchange we have established a social network link that serves as the foundation of trust through a sense of mutual understanding and recognition of values. For adept Mennonite game players, second and third cousins several times removed may be invoked to establish social and familial network connections. In sage, a former faculty member from the 1960s reflected on this practice:

Although we went through a period of time in the early '70s when the Mennonite game was not very popular, we find now that that is coming back. The kids say, "That's neat, you mean you went to school with my father or you taught my uncle?" And people say where they're from – this is more true back then – if a kid came up and said they're from Lancaster County, I would say "Name the street and town...".

Mennonite higher education served as one of many collecting pools, where streams of Mennonite young people from diverse geographic areas met, formed bonds, and added new names to their arsenal for future occasions of the Mennonite game. Some of these young people later returned to faculty posts, adding another generation of familiarity. This commerce of social connections perpetuated group identification, even when members interacted outside of the immediate community. Ella commented:

So how did we stay socialized within the church? Well, we grew up more separate. Back in the '60s, Mennonites were still valuing their separateness and their nonconformity and so we grew up like that. I still never feel fully comfortable in non-Mennonite settings. With all the meetings I go to I'm much more comfortable, and that's

why I stay – this is where I'm comfortable. And I think if you didn't grow up like that, then maybe you have more problems feeling comfortable here, because you're never quite ever accepted unless your name is this or this.

The intensity of these overlapping communities and the relative homogeneity of experience, combined with the internal networking mechanism of the Mennonite game provided a nearly seamless transition from the solidarity of common beliefs and values, to cohesive networks based on extended familial and congregational connections.

However, even among Mennonites, the Mennonite game was not always popular. Veteran faculty members in a focus group mentioned that despite these numerous connections, pockets of Mennonites unknown to prominent Mennonite cultural centers such as Lancaster County and Elkhart, Indiana may not be conversant in the local names and experiences if they are not sufficiently visible. Within the larger gradient circle of Mennonites nationally, the Mennonite game can create class divisions, and for that reason, some Mennonites, either out of a personal sense of marginality or empathy with others, choose not to play.

The symbolic value of the game itself reminds members of the value placed on community connections, although it also represents the paradox that a practice engaged to create bonds could also be used to alienate both religious insiders and outsiders. As traditional values were reinterpreted and the intellectual, religious, and cultural contributions of non-Mennonites were increasingly appreciated, symbols and practices of exclusive community, like the Mennonite game, received increasing scrutiny. On another level, the identity space traditionally created through homogeneity and separation that was historically viewed as a positive attribute now had a twofold effect: first, it created unwanted distance between Mennonites and others with whom they now desired to relate, and second, in an era of increasing cooperation and integration

with sympathetic outsiders, it bifurcated the cultural aspects of religious practice that served as an impediment to cohesion with non-Mennonites, from the religious and educational aspects of Mennonite practice that attracted interested outsiders. Thus, within Mennonite higher education, the Mennonite web of culture served both as a cohesive force among insiders and occasionally, a regrettable impediment to outsiders.

#### Generational Transition

In his typology of Mennonite societies, Calvin Redekop (1989) follows the *community model* category of the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century with the *individualistic model*. This subsequent model characterizes a step beyond revising expressions of nonconformity values to where Mennonites divest themselves of "...undesirable traits, since these marks identify them as being adherents of a deviant group" (p. 87). In essence, Redekop claims, these Mennonites have become mainstream American evangelicals, save for familiar last names and a few lingering cultural customs.

Reintroducing Durkheim's (1893/1933) model of solidary change, it is very easy to assume an incremental, evolutionary process moving Mennonites from the highly circumscribed community of mechanical solidarity with its emphasis on similarity and conformity, to the individualized diversity of organic solidarity, or perhaps the dissolution of solidarity of any kind. In terms of metaphysical space, the close proximity of insiders, aided by overlapping social, professional, and religious domains was certainly aided by a perpetuation of physical symbols that assured members of continued compliance. However, one of the attributes of symbols is their ability to mask underlying intentions and motivations, and it is likely that in each community there were participants marginally committed to religious values by culturally bound

to continued participation, in part due to the inconvenience and pain of disentangling themselves to achieve disassociation.

Similarly, as parts of the Mennonite community transitioned from symbol-based boundary maintenance to values expression through outward social involvement, those members who were previously on the margins though cloaked by adherence to physical symbols did not engage in the practices that had, at least by intention, been at the heart of previous symbolic expressions of religious values. Many adherents were refreshed by the freedom of values expression gained through the removal of the old symbol system. However, the transition from strong ties toward weak ties led to the disengagement of some peripheral members into Redekop's (1989) individualistic model.

Certainly, individuals experienced the shift toward individualism for many reasons, and some left the Church, either in body or spirit, as a result. However, for mainstream Mennonites in the United States, the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century represented an epoch of transition and reinterpretation. For individuals and entire communities, the position and expression of traditional values, both religious and cultural, continue to be renegotiated with vastly varying outcomes. Some conservative groups retrenched themselves in the traditional symbol systems, and some liberal groups discarded even the word "Mennonite" from their names. However, for many Mennonites, hybridized compromises between past practice and new interpretation guide organizational and personal life.

### *Identity Space Renegotiated*

Although it is in part a phenomenon of physical space and distance, the Augsburg generation of faculty members (those hired between 1960 and 1980 and retiring after 1995) experienced a unique journey of metaphysical space from cloistered, rural communities in

Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Virginia, to graduate school, selective service overseas during wartime, and back to Eastern Mennonite as changed people to a changed community. The impact of this history is not lost on faculty, new or old. The extraordinary physical and metaphysical distance traveled produced new ideas for education as professionals. For many of them, the journey also invoked a desire for the continuation of the intimate culture they had left behind. According to Rosa, a veteran faculty member hired in the 1970s:

Well, you know, the faculty when I came...were Mennonites off the farm. Most of them would have grown up on farms. You're saying how it shaped my view [of EMU] as a Mennonite institution? I would say because it was so Mennonite and they were so embedded in that Mennonite farm tradition, which they got away from then - a lot of them served overseas, and so you have these people who were exposed to other cultures, but then they came back to a safe Mennonite environment, albeit an educated environment, a lot of the same ways that that used to be with their farm community.

The identity of the college itself became a space under negotiation between the faculty of the Augsburg generation who returned from life-altering international experiences and re-formed the cohesive community they departed, and the Lapp generation (1987 to 2000) of younger Mennonite and non-Mennonite professionals who experienced a very different career path and often did not desire the same sort of all-encompassing community. Loren related:

You go from story after story of a farm boy who is tapped on the shoulder to go, the first person to go into higher ed. It's sort of the uniqueness of - I grew up on an Iowa farm. I spoke Pennsylvania Dutch before I went to school. I came from a very close extended family and ended up living in Paris a couple of years, learning French, doing a Ph.D. in



French. The discrepancy between what my dad did and I did is pretty great and so that effects your identity quite a bit, and your willingness to talk about it.

In an environment where, for so long, a common Mennonite heritage established a powerful point of continuity from one era to the next, the rapidly shifting identity space experienced by this transitional generation, in its accumulation alone, created immense solidarity with those who had passed through similar trials on the way to institutional membership. As is commonly the case with war veterans, the contrast of new experiences and old at such a formative age cemented the values that sustained them. These values became foundational for the rest of life's pursuits. In the case of Mennonite faculty hired in the middle decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, values of service and internationalism that arose in the field found purchase in a newly-formed semester abroad program, one of many curricular inventions. According to Jim, a veteran faculty member "That was the most important thing that occurred in our lives, was the MCC [Mennonite Central Committee] overseas experience. [It] often directed and affected our academic program".

The collision of the cultural roots of old and young, though both Mennonite, required a process of institutional soul-searching to articulate a renegotiated identity. I asked a veteran faculty member how the introduction of new faculty impacted the institutional culture. She replied:

It's made it a lot more open as a Mennonite place, and I do think this whole work with a shared vision was good work to do, to bridge a sort of that generation gap of – okay we are no longer cloistered as the community used to be. And I think the whole work on the vision, the reason it was so, the reason it took so long, was we really had a clash of how we are Mennonite as part of those discussions, because those guys would have still been

here. And it may have been women in other departments. And this was under [President Lapp]. So I think that's why it took us so long to redefine who we are as a Mennonite institution. Because there is really a clash of those two by people who had not been raised so much in the isolated communities. Faculty members who were children of professionals are not farm kids anymore. In some ways, I never thought about it before, but it was probably good work to be done to take us forward.

Many participants explained that the experiences of younger faculty members reflected the removal of many community boundaries that reduced the sense of metaphysical space between Mennonite youth and society at large. As a result, the younger generation was more conversant and less clearly differentiated than previous generations.

#### *The Identity Space of Institutional Loyalty*

Organizations such as Eastern Mennonite contain physical resources that give an impression of continuity. However, the identity of the institution itself is under continual revision as those who are involved with the College make meaning of the actions of other members and of the network of social bonds that constitute the human side of the organization. In this way, then, the identity space of the Eastern Mennonite, as a location of rituals and of institutional identity perception, underwent a generational transition as well. In this section, the alteration of loyalty is analyzed as a generational shift, as internal and external forces contributed to new definitions of loyalty, and new interpretations of how loyalty should be expressed.

Veterans and recently hired faculty agreed that the institution meant something different to those hired in 2000 than it did for those hired in 1965. However, participant faculty found characterizing the cause and effect of that change to be challenging. Both groups of faculty

suggested that this shift could be described as *a difference in loyalty or the expression of loyalty toward the institution.*

Six principle factors were frequently identified as contributing to a change in institutional loyalty. First, general societal change was cited by Rosa, Jay, Paul, and others as a source of socialization to broader secular communities that allows younger Mennonites to feel more at ease in non-Mennonite settings. As a result, faculty members felt less bound to the institution when they feel they have other viable options. Second, institutional size disperses faculty geographically around campus and makes it less likely that the cohesive network of any one faculty member will include all other faculty members. This change exacerbates faculty isolation and might reduce a sense of belonging to a collective faculty. Third, many veteran faculty members acknowledged the high level of disciplinary skill that new faculty bring. However, Gene noted his concern that faculty professionalization meant that many newer faculty viewed EMU as a stepping stone, and not as a place they intend to stay. Fourth, although each generation of faculty progresses through the child-rearing stage, female faculty members in particular cited the life stage of faculty as a reason for redefined loyalty. Laurie claimed that she is loyal, but that she sets up boundaries between work and home life for the sake of her family. Fifth, changes in Mennonite culture generally and a shift from strong to weak ties reduced the social pressure within the group to conformity and support of group-internal organizations, freeing faculty to look elsewhere for employment and social engagement. Finally, veteran faculty such as Alan, describe a strong sense of call to serve the church through employment at EMC. Many younger faculty members view their sense of call more generally, particularly as the population of non-Mennonites increases. As a result, loyalty might be less strongly held as an aspect of that call to a vocation, instead of a call to a specific place.

The products of these six factors were particularly important to the identity space of the faculty collectively and the individual faculty to EMC. First, in combination, these six factors encouraged compartmentalization of identity space between the home space that is personal and reserved for family and personal interests, and work space, in which the needs and demands of the employer are satisfied. Mennonite faculty, particularly from the Augsburg generation, for whom social, religious, and vocational worlds intersect and intermingled were less likely to conceive of these segments as mutually exclusive in the way that some younger faculty are inclined. Second, when the identity spaces of work, home, and church were not clearly and exclusively defined, the College, as both an educational and religious organization, was able to make claims on the time and resources of individual faculty beyond the typical work week. As these three domains became distinct, it also constricted what the College could ask of its faculty outside of professional expectations. Alan, a faculty member hired in the 1960s, reflected:

I think we were over committed. I think, even though we enjoyed it, I think we really felt like it was the only way to do it because I think we all felt like it was a calling that we had to be here.... I don't question whether we needed to really think seriously about coming, and...I would hope and I like to believe [newer faculty] also do. But also society at large has also changed in that way. EMU is not alone in that...

The overlapping commitments to religious, social, and educational communities resulted in an intense focus of activity. For the older generation, *call* was not a request for employment only, but an induction into a life-consuming vocation. As a result, high institutional solidarity combined with high faculty cohesion to produce extraordinary acts of service. An emeritus faculty member told this story of the renovation and subsequent fire in the old Administration Building in the early 1980s:

I remember too, when they were redoing the building—I forget when the building burned—we were remodeling it and one job was to put a new roof on the building. And I was up on top of that roof putting shingles on. I can hardly believe I did that.

When I asked if a lot of faculty participation in working on the building, he replied:

Yes. I remember the first thing I ask, when [his wife] went past the burning building, and she called me up and said “The administration building is on fire!” And I said “Did the roof burn?” [laughs] That was my first question. We put all that work into it, but of course, it was completely gutted. I wouldn't be surprised if more than half the people up [on the roof] were faculty.

This story is remarkable on several accounts, most notably the casual way this faculty member notes he was atop a four-story campus building helping to shingle the roof the way most people would talk of working on their own home. Upon hearing of the fire, his tragic but comic response belies the intimate space between himself and the institution. Although it is difficult to generalize about the shape of the space between faculty (collectively or individually) and institution, for some more recent hires, the intensity of the professional commitment, though still a calling, required different space carved out for the rest of life's priorities.

Many faculty members of the Detweiler and Lapp eras self-identified themselves as loyal to the College, however, they also drew limits on what that loyalty implied. Each faculty member conceptualized the relationship between work, home, and church differently. These identity spaces, from the descriptions of newer faculty members, were increasingly distinct, and they reserved space explicitly from the claims of the college. Even among faculty members who had been employed for at least a decade, loyalty began to mean something different than it had in the past. Laurie commented:

I'm still loyal to EMU, but my whole life is not EMU. My life is my family. My life is my church. My life has many different things and I'm not going to give 150% to EMU. I will do my job, and I love doing it. And I will do it well, but I'm not going to go beyond because I need the balance of life. My kids and the stuff I do at church. So I think I would say it has changed. I'm not sure when it was - maybe it's just with new people coming in. Maybe it's the new era of both people working. That's an interesting question. I still really believe in EMU and what we stand for and what we do, however there is a line. But I'll say "No, I can't do this after hours. No I can't come in at seven o'clock in the morning because I have to take a child to school. My husband has to go to work. I have to leave at three to go get my son" – you know those kinds of things when you only have one... when you have two people working. The mom and dad are working in the family definitely changes things.

*Generational perceptions of institutional loyalty.* In addition to making a point about institutional loyalty, Laurie is pointing also to a change in the generational alignment of faculty. The younger generation of faculty only experienced the advanced career phase of the older generation when children no longer complicate schedules, and faculty had a maximum amount of time to dedicate to those academic interests they had cultivated over years. The assumption by the younger generation as evidenced by responses from several younger professors is that the traditional divisions of household labor existed during child-rearing years, allowing the (mostly male) faculty to be as committed then as they appear now. For example Rosa commented, half joking, that faculty pot lucks were more popular when faculty members had wives at home to prepare food for them.

However, Steve, a faculty member hired during the 1960s, disputed the stereotype of the gender roles and suggested that a sizable number of male faculty had married women who pursued their own career interests, and that low salaries may have made a second income of some kind a necessity:

No, very often, I'd hate to make a guess, but probably [in] the majority [of households], the wife was working. One was a nurse. One was a home economics professor. There would have been some others that were stay-at-home moms. It's a mixed picture there.... I know there was a good scattering of teachers and nurses among the faculty wives, as I remember thinking about them. That may be partly because they had their profession and they wanted to do their thing, but the salaries of EMC faculty and staff in those days was, they were low.

Retired and emeritus faculty gave a mixed reaction when I asked whether the younger generation of faculty were loyal to EMC. Many faculty members indicated that a change of expression of loyalty had occurred. As discussed, part of the transition in loyalty that faculty members expressed was the increased attention to personal and professional boundaries. Another change in loyalty was the increased focus on departmental interaction and identification over an institution-wide loyalty. Departmental loyalty, as the locus for faculty identity space, depended on several factors. First, departmental loyalty was emphasized by faculty in isolated physical spaces. Second, non-Mennonite faculty members with fewer cross-institutional connections tended to focus their loyalty on the group that reflected their professional affiliation. Third, younger faculty in an early career-stage of sink or swim desperation often focused their attention on their closest disciplinary colleagues. Finally, the relative size of the department

mattered to faculty – larger departments tended to foster more of a sub-culture and engendered faculty loyalty. Alan commented:

Of the new faculty that I know, and particularly in [my department], they're very loyal. I just think they're tremendous people and very loyal, and I think they are doing their innovative things, but it's within their department, rather than institution wide. The expression is "compartmentalized" and it has to do with the training that they've had – they're much more specialists than I was. So that whole specialization is also a factor that the persons trained to be nowadays is a highly specialized person.

Other veteran faculty members were not as generous in the characterization of the loyalty of new faculty. As some faculty members conceived of it, loyalty was not repositioned from an institution-wide to a departmental phenomenon, rather, faculty members changed from viewing employment as institutional service, to employment as self-service. Personal values trumped institutional loyalty, as family needs and professional ambition pressed faculty to remain aware of professional opportunities. This perspective, shared by several faculty members, might be the most cynical, but it also speaks to a growing identity gap between the employment motivations of two different generations. According to Gene:

People come to EMU now as an entry point into the profession, not as a field of service and you can come in at the entry level and have salaries that are comparable to the entry-level. So you gain that experience while you're here, and we put more emphasis on publishing and things like that so you are able to compete and as you gain experience, and after 10 years you have moved to another institution that is more prestigious or pays more because your family has greater needs and things like that. So we really become a step in the professional scale, rather than a field for lifelong service, and that affects how



much people want to commit to the institution. How much are you willing to do for the institution? That's very different, and if you're basically here because of a professional track that you're on, you will relate to your other colleagues differently than if you're here for lifelong service. That has changed. I don't lament that, but it's certainly different. In fact, I've always said EMU does its faculty members a disservice if it doesn't constantly enable them to leave the institution. The last thing you want are people who are teaching here because they have no other option.

This quotation segues into the issue of what the institution can ask of faculty as a second outcome of altered institutional loyalty. The link between call and employment as service to the Church made self-sacrifice an expectation. Ironically, poor pay as a manifestation of hardship endured in the name of service, despite occasional grumblings, increased faculty willingness to endure heavy class loads and scarce resources. As several faculty members noted, improved salaries, although certainly appreciated by the faculty, increased expectations of professional treatment, and at least facilitated an expectation of better access to resources. By extension, institutional demands were increasingly limited to professional requests, as faculty membership shifted from a service profession, to a profession with aspects of service attached. Rob, a faculty member hired in the late 1990s commented:

...looking back at history, something that contributed to the sense of community may have been the common sacrifice that we make together. We are not exactly called on to sacrifice as people probably previous to us did. What have I given up by being here and not being at JMU? Maybe a few thousand dollars per year or something like that, but it doesn't seem like the huge sacrifice...we had back at that time. It looked to me that we are not in a position that we're suffering adversity.

A faculty member hired in the 1970s observed that changing institutional demands are a two-way exchange. The institution was increasingly limited to making requests of faculty time restricted to professional requirements only, and requests that did not impinge on faculty time away from the College, such as early morning meetings, or weekend retreats. However, just as the institution was restricted in what it could ask of faculty, so faculty sensed that the institution was less willing to sacrifice for the good of the faculty. As a result, some faculty expressed a depleted sense of loyalty to and from the College. Rosa commented:

Now, I think it's true generally, I mean, it's a fair thing, because organizations don't feel they owe their people, they don't demonstrate loyalty to their people either. I would say although we don't have a tenure track, well... I was going to say that most people feel pretty loyal to EMU [anyway], but I'm not sure that's true anymore.

At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many faculty members expressed loyalty to EMU, even though personal definitions of loyalty varied from a strong sense of service and life-long commitment, to a general sense of call and departmental connection. However, the emergence of a significant conversation regarding the state of faculty loyalty at all is noteworthy, and demonstrates an increasingly distanced and compartmentalized identity space in which professional service at EMU is restricted in a way that few faculty of a prior generation would have experienced.

#### OTM

In the 1970s and 1980s, administrators noticed a steady decline in the population of Mennonite students, both in total numbers and in proportion of the total student body. To better track the various sub-groups, students were demographically divided between those who were Mennonite and those who were not. Although it is not clear where and when the term *other-than-Mennonite* first was used, administrators felt the label “non-Mennonite” was too exclusive

and preferential, hinting at exclusion by comparison. Gradually, other-than-Mennonite became part of the EMC lexicon and received the acronym, *OTM*.

Two further transitions occurred. First, OTM was applied to faculty, as the number of non-Mennonite faculty who were hired increased during the 1990s. Second, after OTM was briefly used in reference to faculty for an internal survey and for other functions, by the end of the 1990s, faculty and administrators recognized that OTM also served exclusionary purposes, and strides were made to eliminate the use of the term. Its usage has proved to be quite resilient based on the frequency of use in participant interviews. One former non-Mennonite faculty member reflected on the use of the OTM label:

I learned to take it well, because when I started here [in the 1990s] we still had to fill out forms that had classifications on them where you checked whether you were “Christian” “Mennonite” or “Other”. And that was the categories and then the term OTM was used to classify a small group of us that were not. That was actually a term used publicly. So we get comments like, “Well, that's not a Mennonite name”. So I started in that era, so it didn't seem extreme to me. And then I think we went through a transition when we changed and it wasn't present in about 1996 to 2000. When they stopped using that language, and then people that came after 2000 had that feeling that the language wasn't used. So because I had the language and was labeled I could just laugh it off and accept it.

OTM is a conceptual and linguistic category that lingered in the consciousness of faculty. Anthony Cohen (1985) asserts that symbols in a community are not important for what they mean, but for the meaning that can be made of them and as a result, the way they bind or divide individuals. At Eastern Mennonite, the label persisted in part because it served as a dialectic

space where the ongoing differences between those who were Mennonite and those who were not played out. In part, the OTM dialectic space was a Mennonite issue of what aspects of heritage were worth retaining and celebrating, and what parts must be compromised in an era of increased cooperation. However, it is also symbolic of the depth of cultural difference which non-Mennonite faculty negotiated. Even for non-Mennonite faculty members who were sympathetic and enthusiastic about Mennonite values, the ethnic rituals and identity cloaked under the OTM term created a sense of relational distance between insiders and outsiders. Mary, a non-Mennonite faculty member hired in the 1980s, said:

I think it's just one of those things. What's odd about it is, in this sense, I do identify a little bit with the community. Even as a child growing up, my mother wore a covering to church...they weren't Old Order [conservative Mennonite], but definitely on the conservative side and so in a sense, I kind of feel connected. But in another sense, when I hear OTM, I think "Why, why do you say it where we're all here for the students, we're all here to be a university of higher learning?" Who cares whether you're Mennonite or not, that's sort of my opinion.

Mary's sense of solidarity with Mennonite religious beliefs and therefore, with the institution itself was deterred by a label that distinguishes cultural heritage from religious adherence.

Although Mary highlights her frustration with a categorical difference she views as immaterial to the educational task at hand, the OTM label persisted in part because for some Mennonites, the label reminded them of an extensive and deeply-rooted chain of rituals that provided them with identity and purpose, even though it also served as a boundary of exclusion for others. Some non-traditional Mennonites who embraced Mennonite values and community nevertheless found

that reminders of cultural boundaries distanced them from a religious community they had embraced. Louise, a non-traditional Mennonite faculty member, commented:

I think it's when we get into looking at, someone will talk about something that happened in the church or who knows this person, some common thing that they remember. It just reminds me that there are parts there that I don't know what to do with. You know, they all went to camp together, it's all only who knows this person and who went to this place or whatever, and professionally, I know people, but I don't have a family saying where their family knows my family because of my aunt and their uncle. [I] feel like I'm still not there. So there's times when I feel like I'm not part of it. I think the new faculty, you have to be really careful because [we're] really good at [saying to them], who are you related to? Especially if the new person comes in and they have the Mennonite last name, whether Mennonite or not, and then people say well, you have to be from... and they are like, "no".

As Louise alludes, faculty members who are unable to play the Mennonite game feel the OTM category whether the words are spoken or not. As someone who decided to join the Mennonite Church but did not grow up Mennonite, for Louise, religious membership did not always bridge the cultural gap, potentially compromising both her sense of solidarity with the institution, and her cohesion with specific individuals who may label her.

Lucy, a non-Mennonite faculty member hired in the 1980s, reflected on the tension between acknowledging the identity of the institution, and struggling with the Mennonite cultural elements:

I made myself understand that there are certain things I could never be a part of, because I'm not from that community am not Mennonite. ... [My department] was considering

someone for a position that was opened, and so many [faculty members] knew so much about that person and I could never participate in that [since] I didn't know anything. And I understood at least in those days where maintaining a sense of community as an identity was enormously important. And it was unrealistic to think you could do that totally in the student body. It was the faculty that made this place go. ... So if you can't get a complete community of Mennonite students, you do everything you can to maintain that within your faculty and staff, and I do think in that regard, in those years I was very much a minority, being an OTM.

The importance of EMU as an expressly Mennonite institution, and the expectation that faculty play an vital part in holding that line meant that over the course of this 35-year period the attitude toward non-Mennonite faculty shifted concurrent with their inclusion. The emergence of the OTM label was a natural consequence of Mennonites processing their own collective identity and its implications for institutional life. However, the boundaries and cultural symbols perpetuated by many Mennonite faculty members burdened cultural outsiders with a significant and frequently unexpected identity space negotiation process. Although the OTM label began as a method for clarifying Mennonite demographics and identity, it became another reminder to non-Mennonites of a status thrust upon them by virtue of an ancestry of which they had no choice.

#### *A Model of Non-Mennonite Participation*

Based on conversations with Mennonite and non-Mennonite faculty, the perceived role of non-Mennonite faculty members relative to the dominant Mennonite culture shifted concurrent with the level and nature of non-Mennonite participation at Eastern Mennonite. The model in Figure 7 explores this relationship. As non-Mennonites became a stronger presence and

Mennonite cultural elements became less pervasive, Mennonite faculty and administrators reacted variously to ensure the “Mennonite-ness” of the College. The institution generally and faculty members specifically recognized the personal and professional contributions of non-Mennonites, and attempted to be welcoming through interpersonal relationships, departmental participation, and institutional recognition of accomplishments, among other efforts. However, the general cultural reaction to the escalating presence of non-Mennonite faculty members was often, in subtle ways, to marginalize some of the same outsider faculty that the institution also attempted to welcome.

The model begins with the decision by the Board to hire non-Mennonite faculty. In the early 1970s, the first full-time, tenure-track non-Mennonite faculty members were hired, first from closely affiliated historic peace churches, then progressing further afield to other Protestant traditions and to Catholicism. Non-Mennonite faculty members generally felt a great deal of acceptance after the hurdles of admission were cleared. Due to their few numbers and the layers of reinforcing social, religious, and educational practice, non-Mennonite faculty members were welcomed, though within the College they were novelties and stop-gaps for hard to fill positions. Non-Mennonites were appreciated for the hint of diversity they provided and simultaneously embraced easily. This first stage is the *token phase*, and it extended though the mid-1980s.

The second, or *values phase*, occurred as institutional leaders, aware of the secularization literature, intensified efforts to hire Mennonite faculty whenever possible. However, EMC also had come to value the abilities of non-Mennonites and shifted its emphasis from hiring faculty based on meeting church membership requirements, to hiring faculty based on the harmony of values and beliefs, with less regard for denominational affiliation if the applicant was a non-Mennonite. Increasingly, non-Mennonite faculty members were relied upon to buoy many

professional departments. This phase was characterized by high faculty morale and institutional optimism as graduate programs emerged as new expressions of Mennonite values. Mennonite culture was still quite strong, though in many ways the tide had begun to turn and the institution was increasingly distinguishable by its outward focus on service, peace, justice, and internationalism rather than an inward focus on non-conformity and external physical symbols of faithfulness.

At the end of the values phase in the mid-1990s, institutional expansion and professional ambition was manifest in the name change to Eastern Mennonite University. The dawn of the *identity phase*, a third era that extended through the year 2000, found an institution asking newly urgent questions about what it meant to be a Mennonite higher education institution. Certainly, this question had been asked before, but in prior reviews, the Mennonite segment of the query was seemingly clearer, and the application to higher education was not. Many faculty members, particularly veterans, were comfortable that they understood the answer.

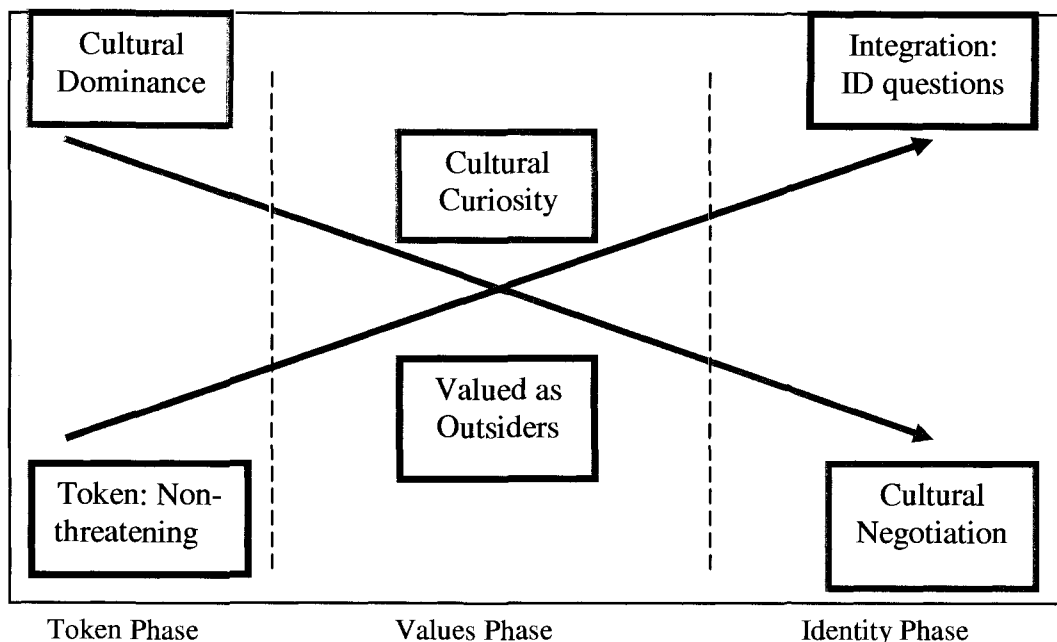
Although the majority of professors were still Mennonite, two issues arose. First, College officials became concerned about public positioning of the institution as an accepting place. Second, the cohort of non-Mennonite faculty felt they were limited in their access to leadership and decision-making positions due to their cultural and religious outsider status. Together, these issues created a new kind of dilemma and new suspicion. No schism within the faculty occurred; battle lines were not drawn. However, as the number, necessity, and participation of non-Mennonites increased, subtly, traditional Mennonites were forced to work at articulating institutional purpose in a new way because the faculty, collectively, no longer was sure what it meant to be a Mennonite institution that was not Mennonite only. In addition, generational changes and internal Mennonite diversity pressed the issue of identity clarification.



Concurrently, non-Mennonites, now a stable presence in the institution, collided with the cultural elements of Mennonite identity with varying reactions. For some, the existence of the Mennonite game and other artifacts were, in a social contract mode, an expected part of an institution with a unique religious identity. As Mary noted, she told herself that she would never be part of certain aspects of the institution. Others did not yield the cultural right of determination to traditional Mennonite practice, and attempted to make changes or to take an oppositional stance. Several Mennonite faculty related stories of individuals bent on changing the culture, who ultimately did not last. Still other faculty, with a mix of interest and annoyance, made their way through the cultural maze, occasionally stung by comments related to their OTM status, but believing in the institution either because of their strong departmental orientation (in the case of faculty members such as Katherine and Lucy), because of an interest in Mennonite religious values (such as Rob and Annie), or because of their general support for Christian higher education (such as Scott).

Figure 7 illustrates this three-phase process. As the number and participation of non-Mennonites rose, attitudes frequently changed and questions regarding those aspects of traditional Mennonite culture that should be preserved or discarded intensified. The OTM tag was one manifestation of that tension of identity space. Although still very Mennonite, not all parts of institutional life were assumed to be Mennonite cultural territory. EMU was now a space under negotiation.

Figure 7: Position of non-Mennonite faculty relative to Mennonite cultural identity.



*Legend:* the green line represents the centrality of cultural identity; the red line represents the relative position of non-Mennonites

Many Mennonite faculty members were oblivious to the tensions and negative experiences of some non-Mennonites, as several faculty participants confessed. The privilege of insider status, true of most culturally-central groups, is the luxury not to think about the position of power until it is threatened. Mennonite faculty provided varying perspectives on the difficult dialog of identity, some feeling like the institution, as a whole, continued to avoid directly dealing with the conflicts of difference, while others located the true source of tension with economic or leadership issues.

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, faculty numbers were still dominated by Mennonites, although exact percentages are difficult to ascertain. However, the model in Figure 7 provides a general sense of the changing interpretation of diversity as the participation of non-Mennonites escalated. The increased legitimacy of non-Mennonites in organizational decision-making processes also provided them with a say in matters of Mennonite cultural significance as well,

particularly in the identity phase. Although faculty relationships became more complicated and a sense of collective faculty identity waned, the points of faculty cohesion that persisted became even more significant, as I will explore in chapters eight and nine.

#### The Implications of Metaphysical Space Transitions

The overlapping commitments of Mennonite culture, religion, and education found expression in a variety of practices. The Mennonite game is one example of a ritual that reinforced communitarian values and boundaries steeped in social, religious, and familial ties. For at least one generation of faculty who entered new educational and cultural worlds, this foundation of values, although reinterpreted, drew them back to reinvest in a community whose social network mirrored that of their childhood, even if the context of higher education and the type of ties was vastly different. This was a social, cultural, and religious connection grounded in a personal sense of ownership and responsibility, akin to the concept of *Gemeinschaft*, which contrasted to later generations of faculty whose emotional connection to the institution varied to a much greater extent, and approached a contract relationship with distinct boundaries of responsibility and reciprocity, or *Gesellschaft* (Tönnies, 1887/1957).

Nevertheless, as the 20<sup>th</sup> century came to a close, the layered triadic elements of this community were gradually distinguished from one another and increasingly, the equally unified space of faculty identity was teased apart. The common binding element of service to the Church provided unity but not unanimity throughout the years. Differences in scriptural exegesis, interpretations of nonconformity guidelines, and a variety of lifestyle issues from piano ownership to homosexuality distinguished individuals who found common solidarity in the mission of the Church, and by extension, the College as well. The idea of the faculty life as one to which each must be called persisted throughout, though certainly, not without modification.

As the cultural, religious, and educational identity spaces became distinct domains occupied separately by professionalized Mennonite faculty, non-Mennonite faculty, and individualized Mennonite laity, each aspect, its place no longer assumed, required independent justification. Clearly, Eastern Mennonite was an educational institution; formal structural elements assured the formal relationship with the Mennonite Church would continue. Despite the dire warnings of the secularization press, Eastern Mennonite had further ensconced itself in church ownership, and nearly all faculty members, regardless of their attitude toward specific Mennonite doctrines, acknowledged that the Mennonite Church, in some negotiated capacity, rightfully should be represented by the College.

Cultural Mennonite practices received increasing incredulity from Mennonites and non-Mennonites alike, and particularly, from non-Mennonite students. Although it was impossible to fully disentangle from religious and educational practices, cultural elements reflected both nostalgia for a simpler era on one hand, and a slightly embarrassing history of radical separatism and exclusion on the other. No crusade eradicated the artifacts of cultural Mennonite-ism, but perhaps, as Calvin Redekop (1989) indicated, some members were willing to neglect them into irrelevance.

Despite the apparent awkwardness of some cultural practices in a diverse educational environment, the intensity of the Mennonite network that was so pervasive in the past and that persisted through the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in various forms, lent an essential piece of identity to Eastern Mennonite. Contemporary evaluations of the troublesome divisive aspects of Mennonite cultural practice may overlook the powerful social bonds, however exclusive, that were produced as a result. As Loren, an emeritus faculty member adroitly identified the increasingly scarce resource cultural practices offered:

I think because of the traditional Mennonite culture there is a sense of community that is there, and it's not really because the school created it. It benefited from that. There is some of that. It takes place now in the peace and justice conflict transformation thing, because they are creating community with the people who come here and have shared experiences that are very important and all of that. But it's changing in the Church and we can't necessarily duplicate that, unless you start all over with a very conservative constituency that still lives the way we did in the 1950s.

To restate this crucial insight; Eastern Mennonite, as an educational institution, benefitted from a social and cultural network not of its own making. As I explore in the next chapter, manifestations of social cohesion produced localized networks of faculty as well as a few sustained institutional practices that promoted faculty interaction. However, the momentum of social bonds and the cohesion that stoked a deep collegial dedication was frequently grounded in congregational participation and the Mennonite network of friends and relatives quite independent from the College. The source of cross-institutional cohesion, aided by the limited faculty population, was an extra-institutional linkage of relationships that provided an exterior, non-professional set of relationships upon which institutional cohesion was built.

Thus, as the cultural, educational, and religious elements of Mennonite faculty identity were mutually-reinforced by one another to a lesser degree, the social network that had provided cross-institutional faculty cohesion began to lose its foundation. This change, in tandem with the altered position of employment as service, placed faculty cohesion and solidarity in a tenuous state in need of new or renewed anchoring.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### DEPARTMENTAL RITUAL SPACE

In chapter six, the central concept of space was sub-divided into metaphysical space as a way of describing the changing relational distance of faculty toward the institution and toward one another, and physical, or ritual space as the location necessary for ritual co-presence. Identity space served as a link between the two, indicating a space where a personal or group conception occurred. Ritual space, it was suggested, is not a passive backdrop across which the scenes of time play. Instead, the features of physical space, in its various iterations, shape the metaphysical space that occurs as a result. However, many faculty members emphasized the impact of physical space on faculty interactions with colleagues, their social bonds, and their metaphysical space. As a result, physical space is a significant element in understanding changes to social bonds at Eastern Mennonite.

In the conceptual framework of this study, physical space was highlighted as one necessary element of ritual, as proposed by Collins (2004). In the last several decades, the impact of the physical campus environment on the social and educational experience of college students has received increasing attention (Moos, 1986; Strange & Banning, 2001). Applicable to faculty populations as well, these authors point to the need for planning physical space strategically:

...arrangement of environments is perhaps the most powerful technique we have for influencing human behavior. From one point of view, every institution in our society sets up conditions that it hopes will maximize certain types of behavior and certain directions of personal growth. (Moos, 1986, p. 4)

The physical campus environment not only facilitates certain activities and discourages others, but it also predicts and describes acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, and reveals the values of those who design and use the space (Rapaport, 1982). Thus, understanding how physical space has changed provides insights into changes in faculty values and relationships as well. In this chapter, the functional and symbolic aspects of physical campus space at EMC are analyzed to understand the intentional and unintentional impact that the material environment has had on faculty social bonds. Finally, an examination of changing campus rituals will reveal their contribution to faculty culture, solidarity, and cohesion.

#### Physical Proximity and Spatial Meaning-Making

For the first three years of existence at the Harrisonburg, Virginia location (1916-1919), Eastern Mennonite School made do with a cluster of adapted structures that were in various states of disrepair. Ambitious school planters understood that a building of appropriate style and scope was needed to establish the institution. Once College leaders settled the heated debates over park versus hill locations, a groundbreaking occurred in June of 1919. Although it lacked the formal ritual elements of many other such occasions, the symbolism of the event was nevertheless potent in its simplicity:

One evening J. E. Kurtz, who was hall manager and also supervisor of the building operations, was in the cornfield on the hill planning to set some stakes. J. B. Smith [the first principal of the school] came walking up through the field with a shovel on his shoulder and said to Kurtz, "Well, I am going to break ground for the first building of the E. M. S.". He took a shovelful of sod and deposited it under the old apple tree. (Pellman, 1967, p. 65)

In the tradition established by Harvard in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Morison, 1936) and followed by subsequent generations of enthusiastic though embryonic colleges (McAneer, 1959), the construction of a grand academic hall was functionally convenient to facilitate the many tasks of higher education centrally, and symbolically imperative to demonstrate the permanence and seriousness of the enterprise. Although the music department had moved to the new chapel and home economics and physical education to nearby houses, the center section of the Administration Building, affectionately known as the “Cracker Box”, and the two adjoining wings constructed later formed the heart of the campus and the home of nearly all academic departments and administrative offices well into the 1960s.

For some forty years, faculty homogeneity and social bonds were reflected in and perpetuated by the sense of fraternity that occurred in the old “Ad” Building. By the early 1960s, conditions in the Ad Building were far from perfect, where according to one former faculty member, you “froze in the winter, and boiled in the summer” in the old structure. But particular aspects of Ad Building life – such as the necessity that all faculty share an office with one other faculty member – contributed to faculty relationships, regardless of faculty preferences. However, changes to the physical campus landscape that would soon occur were, like the purpose of original structure itself, not only functional, but symbolic as well. The administrative strategic planning steps taken in the early 1960s laid the groundwork for campus expansion and a transition of the faculty experience as a consequence.

In February 1961 President Mumaw presented a 10 year development program that included plans for a men’s dormitory, a science hall, a library, and a high school building. In March the Board approved the appointment of an advisory committee of about thirty men from the eastern conferences. (Pellman, 1967, p. 222)



From descriptions of the facilities at that time, there is no doubt that each of these structures fulfilled a serious campus need. Antiquated classrooms and inadequate office space plagued the growing institution in this era of faculty expansion. However, the steps taken to formalize campus growth in 1961 and subsequent strategic master plans fall short of describing the scope or nature of change. The campus expansion that began in the mid-1960s altered the patterns of interaction easily perpetuated in the Ad Building. These alterations imposed significant consequences on the metaphysical space of faculty through a dispersal of physical proximity in four ways.

First, the dispersal of faculty from the Ad Building to other structures changed the frequency of institution-wide faculty interaction. On a very basic level, physical proximity promotes interpersonal interaction which, assuming organizational success, leads to increased fondness and social cohesion (Birnbaum, 1988). In 1968 the Science Center opened and with it, a significant exodus of faculty from the Ad Building occurred. The Science Center was located at the far eastern end of the grassy quad, with a low profile set into the slope of the land. Its distinctive round top, indicative of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, housed the planetarium. The brisk walk downhill to the new structure seemed close enough from the towering Ad Building, but, as one faculty member noted with a smile, there was something about walking uphill to the Cracker Box that discouraged frequent visits.

The new Science Center initially housed several of the prominent professional programs in addition to the hard sciences, and although cross-disciplinary informal interaction still existed, with the Science Center faculty gone from the Ad Building, the sense of connectedness in the Cracker Box was not as pervasive. Jack, one of the Science Center faculty members, talked about this change:

...well the Science Center was built in 1968, and so that sort of separated the science faculty from daily interaction with the other faculty. One reason I was interested in a small college was that I was interested in interdisciplinary interaction. I would have to say I was generally disappointed at the level that happened here. Part of it was exacerbated by the physical separation...

Once faculty began to be dispersed around campus, they quickly noticed that on campus interactions were largely determined by office proximity rather than disciplinary similarity. The distance between many offices required increased intentionality to mingle or coordinate that occurred only on occasion. Although for many faculty members, religious and neighborhood ties provided an external framework for continued interaction, on campus relationships were a product of convenience. Roger, a faculty member hired in the 1970s recalled:

I [didn't] know all the other faculty people. People in the science building I seldom spoke to. I was located in the old Cracker Box and then that burned and we were in the library for a while. And then when the new building was built, we moved to the Campus Center. [The adjoining department] shared a work office space with education, so I got to know some of the [adjoining department] faculty.

Second, many faculty members felt increasingly isolated in departments due to change in physical proximity, however, the lack of propinquity was differently interpreted by faculty members. For some professors, disconnection from the center of campus led to a heightened sense of departmental isolation and a loss of the social bonds that they strongly valued. Carl, a faculty member hired in the 1990s, was located in the Science Center in a temporary office space for the first few years of employment. Although the space was far from ideal, the degree and variety of interaction with other faculty was something he valued, particularly as a new hire who

was not part of the local Mennonite social network. Yet, when his department moved to a converted house down the street, he also appreciated the quiet, private work space, but the trade-off was the loss of frequent social interaction outside his department.

Carl's experience illustrates how the perceived undesirable but imperative spatial placement of a department can facilitate informal relationships of great personal and professional worth. Carl related that informal conversations led to inter-disciplinary connections that in turn produced cooperation on the development of a scholarly conference that he believed would not have been realized without those ongoing exchanges.

Improved office space might also come at the cost of faculty relationships. In an organizational setting where limited resources often force a choice between values, the precedence of one type of personal or institutional value over another has practical consequences. Phrased another way, metaphysical space is sometimes defined by the choices of physical space that organizational members, or their leadership, are required to or choose to make. For Carl, his spatial disengagement from other faculty mirrored his personal disengagement from many parts of organizational life, as he described his time as increasingly devoted to institutional service through personal scholarship rather than committee work.

Values choices of this magnitude often are not placed in the control of individual faculty members. Organizational participation requires cooperation that trumps personal preference on some occasions. Carl reflected on the experience of moving:

I had mixed feelings. I suspected that [relationships] would change, sure. Yes, I think I probably imagined that there would be more contact than there has been. It is a bit more extreme than I imagined, but I definitely knew it was a trade-off. I like my office really well and the office I had over there I didn't like that well. We have more space, it helps

the department have a little bit more of a distinctive identity, but overall I think it's been a loss. If it was up to me, I would still stay there.

Although for some faculty disbursement from a central campus hub was a negative experience or a trade-off at best, other faculty interpreted the move as an opportunity for departmental differentiation, identity development, and increased campus visibility. Faculty participants who expressed positive feelings about departmental isolation tend to fit into two categories: first, those who were departmentally-focused and were not concerned about their connection to other faculty or the institution generally. Professors who fit this profile frequently were non-Mennonites brought in for their professional expertise. Lucy, a faculty member hired in the 1980s, fit this profile as a professional who enjoyed her departmental experience, but off-campus personal issues and interests limited her campus engagement to her close faculty colleagues. Second, faculty members who were already immersed in the local Mennonite network required less on campus socialization to feel a cohesive or solidary connection.

James, a faculty member in the 1960s, fit this latter description. He jumped at the chance to help establish a disciplinary department by moving with colleagues to a converted building one block from campus, even though it removed them from the social center of the College. The new physical space facilitated the creation of metaphysical space between his department and the other departments, providing respectability as well as workspace. James explained:

There were two or three of us teaching [discipline] at the time, and we said why don't we move our [name] department out there, and that will give us a department with the place and identity and a laboratory. It wasn't that far away – it's just across the road from where today's seminary is.... I think the faculty began recognizing that there is a [name]

department identity, [although the location] was somewhat removed from the rest of the campus, which was okay.

Third, departmental dispersal reduced the level of homogeneity produced by similar spaces, similar individuals, and frequent interaction. Human aggregate theory suggests that the dominant features of a given environment are in part a function of the collective characteristics of those inhabitants (Holland, 1973). Although this theory leans on typologies to define human characteristics, at EMC, cultural similarities, values, and practices were more easily circulated and reinforced through the frequent interaction enabled by close physical proximity in the Ad Building.

Concurrent with the gradual exodus of departments to outlying buildings, previous gathering rituals of chapel, faculty meetings, and all-school activities began to lose salience, and the opportunities for formal and informal interactions were reduced. The interaction facilitated by offices, classrooms, and faculty lounges in the Ad Building flavored faculty culture, reifying educational and religious values. Without this natural cultural incubator, the external religious and social network bore more of the load of social connectivity.

Fourth, proximity changes altered relationships between faculty and administrators, as the frequency and type of interactions shifted from informal and frequent to formal and infrequent. This spatial change altered faculty behavior and group identity in two ways. First, for some faculty groups, moving away from the Ad Building and thus away from the administrative offices (later located in the Campus Center) created a new sense of metaphysical identity space and freedom of expression and behavior. June, a faculty member hired in the 1980s, noted that the departments located in the Science Center had a reputation as rebels and free-thinkers, which she in part attributed to the distance of their enclave further away from

administrative oversight. Lucy commented that their departmental move to a house meant she could wear jeans every day if she liked, but once the department moved to the new Campus Center near the administrative offices, she felt an expectation of decorum, and no longer felt comfortable with the wardrobe choices she had previously enjoyed. One faculty member conceived of the difference in terms of conformity:

There's something about being in the same building as administration...that's entirely different. I think you're more likely to conform... and maybe it's just the fact that you have more communication, because you run into each other in the hall and use each other more than if you're in the Science Center...

The faculty made meaning of spatial distance among themselves and administrators, changing behaviors and reinterpreting symbols of dress, interaction, and physical space as they sensed they were interacting with colleagues who represented a different kind of institutional culture.

Although administrators were becoming more professional as well, the space created by faculty moving to separate physical locations facilitated the growth of distinctive cultures and relational distance between the faculty and administrators.

The second impact of spatial change on faculty/administrator relationships was a product of the frequency and type of interaction that occurred. Several faculty members noted that in the Ad Building, administrators would often stop by the faculty lounge and chat, providing opportunities for informal exchanges that gave faculty new insights and new appreciation for the personalities and quirks of their administrative counterparts. Elmer, a faculty member hired in the 1960s, noted how a dean that he had found intimidating had a wonderful sense of humor that he grew to appreciate through informal lounge interactions. Although informal and social faculty/administrator interactions continued throughout the span of this study, the differentiation

of role and professional culture created barriers overcome with greater infrequency through interpersonal bonds often developed in congregational settings.

### Social Bonds and Ritual Change

In 1983, the stalwart Ad Building, already emptied for renovation, burned to the ground overnight. Although far less tragic in these circumstances, the accidental fire shocked the campus, though some faculty members were sanguine about it. When asked what the fire meant, George, a former faculty member, said “It meant we were going to get new digs”, and laughed, as though embarrassed by the truth of it. The limited emotional impact only slightly dampened the symbolic impact: academic and administrative offices would have to remain completely dispersed to temporary locations a bit longer.

Some faculty downplayed the impact of the fire in part because it only exacerbated the growing campus reality that many faculty members, through professional orientation and physical isolation, were already departmentally focused. Although this characterization is not definitive of the social experiences of all faculty members in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, the constraints of physical departmental space undoubtedly mattered. Lucy explained her perspective:

When I was here...it was almost like [departments] were silos on campus. ...the professors that I knew on campus were ones that had taught me. You know, the ones that had been here forever. The interaction times were just at the one faculty meeting. The Science Center people stayed there, the English department people stayed where they were, which is sad. People stayed in the little houses that they eventually tore down. Silos would be a good way of describing it, I think. Then again maybe it was because physically [my department was] so separated and maybe that's different now that the

[new Campus Center] is there. And I don't know, I don't know where the rest of the people meet for classes or where they are housed but I think the Campus Center tended to bring people back together but for so long people were just sort of chunked around.

In 1986, the new Campus Center opened, and with it, the emotional lift of new possibilities as well as new physical spaces. However, the growth of administrative needs and student services absorbed much of the newly available rooms. One faculty member recounted how an administrative office was slated to occupy space, but faculty began to realize how few academic departments were allotted room in the new building. As a result, an academic department that would have been situated in a house was given preference. Despite the possibilities for interaction in a new structure, the increasing departmentalization, pushed forward not only by physical space but also metaphysical separation of professional focus, generational change, and non-Mennonite participation, relocated the primary locus for faculty cohesion. In this chapter, the issues of changing faculty solidarity and cohesion are discussed in reference to *departmental* physical and metaphysical space. In chapter eight, *inter-departmental* physical and metaphysical space is considered.

#### *Classifying Physical Space: Type and Purpose*

The distinction of formal/informal and social/task concepts provides insight into the types and effects of departmental and inter-disciplinary rituals. The conceptual framework for this study introduced solidarity and cohesion as multi-faceted concepts. Rituals, which can produce solidarity and cohesion, are defined as either formal or informal. Among the primary factors that contribute to cohesion were social and task interactions. Comparatively, formal/informal terms can refer to either the physical space itself or to the *type* of event, by the sense of decorum and process of a ritual event. For example, chapel is a formal setting, but an informal social meeting



of students may occur in that chapel space. The social/task distinction references the *purpose* of the event in question. Used in conjunction, these two sets of concepts provide a map of interaction types that allows for a clearer understanding of the types of ritual interactions that occur, and the social bonds and identity space that may result.

Figure 8 presents a model for understanding the interaction of ritual event type and purpose, and the solidarity and cohesion that may result. This example includes four scenarios of a formal or semi-formal setting of a committee or faculty meeting. Depending on size, type, membership, and culture of the group, meeting rituals look very different and contribute to very different effects. It is essential to understand that the event type and purpose of the ritual do not determine whether solidarity or cohesion is experienced, only that ritual event type and purpose are conditions under which one of the effects are likely to occur. Other significant factors include the experience of group tasks, interpersonal liking, and environmental pressures (Hogg, 1992). It is also important to note that although departments may engender a sense of belonging and group identity, that this is not the same as solidarity.

According to the definition of solidarity introduced in the conceptual framework, solidarity results when an event creates a sense of connection to a group with a common purpose, commitment, or ideology, irrespective of particular membership. In a departmental situation at a small institution, solidarity is unlikely, since the relationships resulting from the limited size of the group would result in belonging – a characteristic of cohesion – rather than the more general solidarity. At a larger institution, solidarity may be the defining departmental bond, if commitments to common purpose are supported through local rituals. A positive departmental experience might, but does not necessarily create general institutional solidarity for departmental members.

The four meeting scenarios require some explanation. In the top-left box (Small meeting; Departmental), this sort of interaction event tends (depending on local culture) to include plenty of causal dialog, even though a task function is at hand. This can produce positive interpersonal regard, though solidarity is unlikely since bonds have little foundation for generalization. In the top-right box (Small meeting, Inter-disciplinary), the difficulty in coordinating the group logistically may increase the urgency that task-relevant topics be the focus of interactions. However, the opportunity to work with colleagues from across the institution may promote cohesion, and the diversity of the group, assuming a positive experience, may allow individuals to generalize beliefs about the group to the institution or to the commitments shared (solidarity). In the bottom-left box (Large meeting; Inter-disciplinary), the scenario is similar to the one just described, but the larger participant group means that informal social and task discussions are less likely, reducing one possible source of cohesion. Depending on the group type, cohesion may still result from the task at hand, and from hearing perspectives from around the institution. However, solidarity is more likely to result than cohesion, since a sense of representativeness, due to the size and distribution of the group, may allow a faculty member to more easily generalize bonds institutionally or ideologically beyond the immediate group.

Finally, in the bottom-right box, due to the size of the group, interactions are more likely to be task-related, with less social interaction. However, given the departmental context, cultural norms of casual interaction may be part of the large departmental experience, and may promote cohesion. Depending on how large the department is solidarity may be produced toward the department, toward the institution, or toward common ideological commitments, based on the success of the group. Markovsky's (1998) reachability principle is relevant here, as he suggests that solidarity is stronger among those who are in relational contact (cohesion) with one another.

Figure 8: Frequency of types of interaction and result, given meeting scale.

(Scale, smallest to largest: none, little, some, most)

Small Meeting; Departmental  
(cohesion likely; solidarity unlikely)

	Social	Task
Formal	LITTLE	LITTLE
Informal	MOST	MOST

Small Meeting; Inter-Disciplinary  
(solidarity possible, cohesion possible)

	Social	Task
Formal	LITTLE	MOST
Informal	LITTLE	SOME

Large Meeting; Inter-Disciplinary  
(solidarity possible, cohesion unlikely)

	Social	Task
Formal	LITTLE	MOST
Informal	SOME	SOME

Large Meeting; Departmental  
(cohesion possible, solidarity possible)

	Social	Task
Formal	SOME	MOST
Informal	MOST	SOME

Throughout the following discussion of departmental (and in the following chapter, inter-departmental) ritual space, this four-part classification system provides distinctions important to divining the nature of social bond change.

#### Departmental Ritual and Identity Space

As departments became increasingly physically dispersed, as the faculty became more diverse and professionalized, and as the overall population of the faculty grew, faculty cohesion as a departmental feature was increasingly separated from cohesion generated by Mennonite

heritage practices. Nevertheless, just as boundaries help insiders define their own personal and collective identity, so the physical and metaphysical space between department and institution has helped to define the identity of faculty members departmentally. In this section, faculty departmental social bonds will be explored from three perspectives: the isolation of departments relative to one another and the departmental identity that results; formal and informal social rituals; and formal and informal task rituals. Cultural and religious facets of the job notwithstanding, at Eastern Mennonite, education is still primarily a task-centered enterprise, meaning that goal-accomplishment events and interactions are the primary focus of faculty interaction. Nevertheless, even within the work context, important formal and informal social occasions contribute to faculty social bonds, and are analyzed as well.

#### *Departmental Isolation*

For many faculty members, the physical departmental space meant more than just proximity among faculty. In fact, the space occupied by the department was a central contributor to their experience of social bonds both inside and outside the department in two ways. First, generally, the more geographically isolated the departmental space, the greater the psychological and sociological impact on the individual and the department. The physical isolation experienced by some of the departments occupying outlying converted houses increased their feelings of insularity and group-focus, as well as their internal departmental cohesion since faculty members felt as though they had no one else with whom to relate. Over time, institutional leaders became aware of this and sought to address it, but the same spatial and economic resource limitations that established the practice of placing departments in houses, restricted campus options for office space that would encourage faculty interaction. Louise, a faculty member and coach employed in the 1970s observed:

[Our departmental house] gave us our identity. We felt very much isolated because things would happen at the Campus Center, and we didn't have a clue.... We had our mail delivered, [and] if we didn't go to the snack shop... the snack shop was in the gym and [the snack shop employees] would sometimes let us sneak through the back door through the kitchen and into our classroom.... We taught, coached, and ate in the same building.... If people didn't come to us in the snack shop, then we didn't see people. I remember one year before the old [Ad Building] burned I taught a class [there]...and it was like "Oh my gosh, you have got to be kidding me". I had no idea where I was going. ...And I think there is [that] concern on campus with the groups now that are in houses. So you can come to work now and you never see anyone but the four or five people that you work with.

The physical isolation of the houses also had a tendency to increase departmental homogeneity, and in some cases, exaggerate departmental cultures or positions on issues that nurtured a group identity as well. As result, internally and externally it became easier to equate physical marginality with ideological marginality. A faculty member in the 1990s offered this comment on her house experience:

There certainly was less opportunity to interact, we wouldn't have been as close to faculty [as we would have] been next to the English department or to the science department where there would be much more interaction on a daily basis. It does, it just separates you from them and makes you much more of a defensive little group.... In particular, I think [our department] saw itself as the radicals [and] were considered somewhat more radical on some issues than other departments.

Second, the isolated physical space of some departments combined with distinctive elements of that particular field or discipline to uniquely impact solidarity, cohesion, and departmental identity for that group of faculty. This observation is true, by degree, for nearly all departments. However the two departments that illustrate the effect most clearly are music and physical education.

Despite the sound and the fury generated over the use of musical instruments by Mennonites of a more conservative era, music, and in particular four-part, acapella singing, has long been a ritual of great significance in the Anabaptist tradition. To this day, many Mennonite congregations include hymns led without accompaniment in their Sunday worship services, and singing-only services, or *hymn-sings*, are a common occurrence in many communities. The unique aspects of teaching as part of a music department impacted the faculty experience in two ways: first, the rhythms of daily life were not as clearly defined as many faculty members in the liberal arts might have experienced them. Rehearsals were often one-on-one intensive sessions with students that had to be fit around traditional classroom schedules. Choirs, ensembles, and other group productions typically took place over lunch, in the afternoons, or in the evenings, particularly as performance events drew closer. And of course, the actual performances were usually evening or weekend affairs.

The music faculty I spoke with described a very different set of personal and professional boundaries than most other departmental faculty. A faculty member from the sciences was adamant that she did not allow her professional work to impinge upon her family time in the mornings and evenings, even in the case of emergencies. On the other hand, music faculty members were part of a disciplinary culture that required a far higher level of personal time commitment. As a result, social bonds with students and with other faculty members were

frequently intensive and personal because of the nature and type of interactions that occurred. Marie, a former music faculty member, noted that music is such an emotional and self-revealing activity that strong personal feelings, both positive and negative, may be more frequently expressed than in most other departments. The sense of difference from other faculty felt by music professors was intensified by the physical location of the music facilities in the lower level of the chapel, which one music faculty member referred to as “our cave”. Marie went on to comment:

...and so I think we tend to interacted with each other more - you go down the hall and you don't see people from other departments. In that whole entire building, it's just music people so I'm sure it was kind of like its own little closet feeling....

Similarly, several physical education faculty who also served as coaches commented that their team schedules, travel requirements, and team meetings made their pace of professional life dramatically different from other faculty. Located by necessity in their own dedicated and isolated structure, the athletic subculture of competition magnified group cohesion. A former coach said “one thing I noticed when I left...was how much life [in the athletic department] revolves around whether we had won or lost a game...that brought us together and gave us a common experience”. Like music, the performative nature of coaching and teaching in physical education created the opportunity for increased frequency and intensity of interaction, resulting in a closeness of departmental metaphysical space.

Second, for music faculty, the dramatic difference in schedule and workspace mediated against cohesion with other faculty due to their physical isolation. However, the experience of solidarity and cohesion was elevated precisely because of that difference in role. The cultural significance of music to the College and to the wider community gave the music department a

priest-like position of symbolic and functional importance as the musical ritual-bearers of the institution. As leaders of significant periodic events such as chapel music and worship, baccalaureate music, and the morning worship in the Fall Faculty Conference, music faculty members were both visible and respected as College representatives and religious leaders. According to one former music faculty member:

I would say the most significant ways that I felt [connection to the campus, was that] the music department was basically used as the ambassador for EMU a lot. When they had important events on campus, we provided a communal experience for them. So being a part of those, that was very significant because we were representing the school, for the school continuously.... And we had a lot of feedback from the rest of the community, because we were so visible and the fact that there was no place on campus [that faculty] didn't know who I was, because I was constantly up in front of people and being introduced at programs. And so I was very visible on campus and our department was very visible, and we were well known, more well-known for our names and that kind of thing than other people, so I'm sure that changed my experience also. If you go someplace and everyone knows who you are, it's a different kind of experience.... You have a lot in common with them because they were all at the same event.

As representatives of the College and visible on campus and in the community performing a task that spanned professional, religious, and cultural domains, the solidarity of music faculty with the institution and with larger Mennonite religious and cultural communities was strengthened through the enactment of a significant cultural ritual. This high-profile status created what I call a *conversational link* – a common, individual-specific, timely source of verbal exchange that bolsters cohesion through the expression of positive feelings and support. Instead



of being an anonymous music faculty member, she is now Marie, the one who led the powerful rendition of Franz Joseph Haydn's *Creation* on Friday night. A pre-condition of cohesion is interpersonal relationship, and the public performance, although not generative of cohesion itself, provided the raw materials from which a new social network could be raised.

In an analogous way, the performances of athletic teams representing the College in a material and symbolic sense provided faculty/coaches with a conversational link to faculty and community members. Regardless of the outcome of a contest, the words of consolation or congratulations not only planted the seed of relationship, but joined the parties in a sense of solidarity through supporting the institution. In fact, one former faculty member/coach observed that he felt a special bond with music faculty and made a special effort to support their events because he recognized the parallel experiences of personal sacrifice and professional visibility that each enjoyed and endured.

#### *Formal and Informal Social Rituals*

This research, rather than attempting to describe the facets of departmental ritual identity space in total, articulates ritual influence on faculty solidarity, cohesion, and culture, wherever that influence is found. In the departmental context, cohesion is the primary social bond that is generated, since positive interactions and feelings can supplement or detract from the strength of the interpersonal network around them. Nevertheless, there does appear to be a *halo effect* (Thorndike, 1920) from the cumulative positive interactions that produces positive feelings toward the department specifically and sometimes to the institution generally, or toward common educational values around which faculty may also feel solidary. However, intensely positive departmental networks may remain localized, or depend on the strength of the local connection for extension to solidary connection. One faculty member commented:

Probably not, [I would not stay] if I didn't feel part of my department, I probably wouldn't feel part of a greater whole. No, if I didn't like where I was in my department then I probably wouldn't be here. It's more important than the greater university is to me.

This faculty member's point is significant because it illustrates a variable link between cohesion and solidarity. For this non-Mennonite faculty member in a professional department, connection to the institution was dependent upon the health of the department and of local relationships and not upon solidarity with the cultural, religious, or ideological positions of the institution. This position certainly cannot be generalized to all faculty members who are from different backgrounds. Indeed, some non-Mennonites were attracted to EMU precisely because they felt solidarity with institutional values. However, taking into account the position of a prospective faculty member and the relative importance they place on departmental membership may provide useful information in evaluating the fit of prospective employees or the health and condition of departmental culture.

Social interaction, by nature, tends to be informal, occurring particularly in a small group setting. In this context, I define formal social interaction as *a planned and loosely-structured event where the primary purpose is interpersonal interaction*, though such events are seldom as proscribed as formal rituals. By way of illustration, a formal task ritual would be a wedding ceremony, and a formal social ritual would be a wedding reception. The most common formal social rituals were regularized events that marked significant moments in the academic or religious calendar. Several faculty members noted other events, including Christmas get-togethers and departmental retirement teas for departing faculty. Several departments held beginning of the year pot-lucks, sometimes on campus, and sometimes at the home of the department head. The natural excitement of fall preparation and release in the spring gave

momentum to gatherings, as faculty members reconnected or reminisced about the year that had been. Reflecting on the fall event, Mengistu commented:

...when we came to the fall, people were eager and gung ho and ready to go, and in a good mood. No one had crossed your path just recently.... No one's offended you or done anything messy.... I think it also means that the faculty members felt much better also because they were not under the tension or pressure.

At least three departments also invited former faculty, "old guys", as one current faculty member affectionately referred to them, to join the festivities, providing a sense of continued departmental social connection to the retirees and a sense of continuity and appreciation for the contributions of prior generations to the current faculty. One departmental leader reflected on their social ritual:

There were some things within departments that we decide to do together whenever we start the school year... We invited all the retired faculty members who'd been [in the department], we would have a potluck at the start of the school year and invite administrators as well. We usually do that on the Thursday or something before orientation, and we have the fall get-together. So those are some things that were meaningful to me, so we can honor those who preceded us, and they wanted the connection to the [department], and that was one way we can provide that.... It also helped us get off to a good school year.

Not all rituals of this type are particularly successful. They did not always generate a sense of mutual focus, excitement, and moral purpose. Nevertheless, these occasion gatherings, freed from task expectations, did provide a meaningful group experience for many faculty members, giving them renewed focus for the school year, reminding them of the departmental legacy and

worth of purpose departmentally, and highlighting the group value of social bonds and their perceived worth to daily departmental interaction.

Informal social departmental rituals were more frequent and were cited by many faculty members as very important to interpersonal departmental relationships as they blended into the cultural patterns of daily departmental life. Here, too, physical space occasionally forced the hand of interpersonal interaction. Because of space limitations, faculty members in the Ad Building were required to share an office with one other faculty member, usually from their department. The physical closeness and convenience of interaction combined, for some faculty, with their relative youth and inexperience, provided personal and professional support. Steve, a faculty member hired in the 1960s, commented “When we [would] sit together as office mates there would be important personal and professional stuff we’d be dealing with and talking about, and [there would be] authentic sharing because we cared about each other”.

Faculty members in other buildings also shared offices and close spaces. In more recent years, the close proximity of office and working space in departmental houses, although fostering insularity, also led to frequent interactions and departmental cohesion. Several faculty members noted that within the same space, the quality of social bonds varied based on the personalities of the current group and the continuity of faculty membership. The pressured environment of teaching, the shared beliefs and values, and the sense of commitment fostered from low turnover strongly influenced the experiences of many faculty members. A humanities faculty member, Katherine, noted:

...it is very much an interpersonal connection. I consider people [in my department to be] very good friends. There's not a lot of turnover and people were very wonderful.

Something about the group of people they were my friends – no, we didn't do things outside of work - but we were friends, if that makes sense.

From faculty interviews it is not causally clear whether given enough time, faculty members in close proximity worked out differences, or whether longevity meant that those who did not get along with the group eventually left. However, the experience of one non-Mennonite faculty member supports the former. Although initially she felt excluded, over time Jane felt comfortable confronting departmental members about the way she was treated. That personal sharing was a watershed moment for her and the group, and from that moment she felt accepted and loyal:

The first five years, I don't think the group realized how they shut out people who are not like them. I think there's been a lot of discussion since then, about how they have done that and the chair of [the department], when she became chair she realized what they had done to people like me. So they pretty much apologized, and I became a fully functioning member, a very well respected senior faculty member and mentor after we all understood each other. It got really easy for me to be here and I loved being here, because I wasn't picked on.

In some departments, close physical proximity contributed to closer departmental relationships, even though privacy and personal space were frequently sacrificed as a result. The busy undergraduate schedule, intensified for some faculty due to professional responsibilities outside the office, meant that faculty seldom saw too much of each other. Insaige, a faculty member and coach hired in the 1970s, commented “Well, you didn't have any privacy, so you had to go somewhere else for privacy. But very seldom were we all [in the office at the same time]...”.

Lunch was the one time of day many faculty members consistently set aside for socializing. Particularly in the more isolated departments, lunch rituals were significant points of cohesion, as faculty relaxed enough to enjoy the personalities and interests of their colleagues. Departmental sub-cultures developed their own lunch rituals, some leaving campus to eat, some eating on campus, but many packing lunches and remaining in their departmental homes. Gerald commented on his departmental experience. "I would say we did have a lot of connections on a daily basis, because we were there, we ate our lunch there, that's where we lived day in and day out."

Not everyone chose to join in group lunches, but even that decision was impacted by physical proximity issues. Some faculty elected to eat in their own offices rather than expend the emotional energy it took to go to a public space and interact. Tighter quarters, however, sometimes encouraged interaction, even if a faculty member generally did not seek it out. George referenced the change from departmental house to a new location in the Campus Center:

they did have...an eating area and I went there sometimes, but for me when I get some space I'm ready to get some space. So I'm more likely to say I need some space and eat lunch by myself than I am to go and socialize which would take more energy. So part of it is...I really enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and working with persons, being more of an introvert, so I really didn't see that as a major socializing place. So those kind of places I didn't often seek out...when we were in the house, I think there was a common place and we might have eaten together more just because we were cramped and narrow a little bit more.

For many faculty members, close departmental proximity provided formal and informal social interactions, strengthened through accumulated interpersonal experiences.

### *Formal and Informal Task Rituals*

Task experiences played a more significant role in faculty social bonds than experiences that were social only. In a vocational setting with religious and cultural elements, task functions still predominated, occupying the majority faculty member's departmental time. Formal tasks are distinguished from informal tasks, in that latter does not have a proscribed process through which a desired end is reached. In the departmental setting, formal and informal task rituals impacted social bonds through three categories: individual recognition; colleague support; and professional collaboration.

For many of the faculty participants, departmental cohesion increased as colleagues recognized and trusted their professional abilities. Faculty members who were given tasks to complete and trusted to complete them, whose advice was requested on significant matters, and whose contributions to the department were recognized formally and informally expressed positive feelings toward their colleagues and their department. Giving a person a meaningful task and the exchange of details and ideas that is involved is a type of ritual exchange, whether in a group setting, or one-on-one. Ritualized task exchanges in which responsibility is conferred on a willing person by formal or informal leaders produces, without any action on the part of the faculty member in question, a heightened sense of purpose and loyalty indicative of ritual. Of course, if the faculty member fails to perform or if necessary support is not provided, that trust is compromised and the task ritual fails. However, departmental cultures where those ritual exchanges are normative and faculty members are competent to respond will likely experience the benefits of individual cohesion and departmental solidarity.

The importance of establishing task trust was noted several times in reference to the experiences of new faculty, when anxiety regarding fit and performance might have been highest. Rob, a faculty member hired in the 1990s, explained:

Well...my general experience here, whether in my department or in the institution, [is that] I have felt trusted. I felt like I had their trust. People were not suspicious. They trusted my judgment on a lot of things and I think that's one thing that definitely made me feel welcome at first.... When people ask your advice, when administrators or colleagues ask your advice, and they really want to know your advice it means they trust you. Or when they give you a job to do and just expect you to do it and they don't have to stand over you and watch to make sure you did it.

The individual trust generated from specific tasks contributed to the second source of departmental task cohesion: colleague support when personal life interferes with professional responsibilities. Several faculty members noted how important it was to them that their departmental culture included the expectation that faculty, in situations of serious need, willingly covered classes and provided other support for one another. Faculty members cited personal examples of this kind of intervention, often at a moment of desperation.

This task-related situation also highlights a connection between individual cohesion and solidarity. Although social connections in the departmental setting often contribute to a cohesive network, solidarity is sometimes generated as well. Experiences with a solidary outcome often begin as a description of an event: "I was able to...", and end with a generalized conclusion about the department or institution broadly: "I realized that this is the type of place where...". Laurie, a veteran Mennonite faculty member and alumna, experienced the self-sacrificial aid of



colleagues and generalized specific feelings for those who helped her to the meaning she makes of the place itself:

When I had my first child...I actually had to quit work a month and a half before because I was in an accident and I went into preterm labor, and I had to be totally on my back for six weeks. Well, here I am in the last five weeks of the semester, and here I am not able to come in and I have all these classes. There's not a question, yes, sure everyone chipped in and did what they could.... [That was] camaraderie, the respect that if you needed something, yeah we'll will help out, if it's not too much. Then we'll say it's too much – I can't do that. But it's always been that way, and that's why when I came here [in the 1980s], I felt so good about it.

The willingness of colleagues, in a good faith situation, to help one another despite personal inconvenience generates loyalty and strong feelings both about individual helping faculty, and about the department or institution itself.

Alan, an emeritus faculty member, related a story about his car breaking down about two hours drive from campus: “I remember that the car quit running at Berkeley Springs, and who would I call? Well, the men of my department - [a department colleague] came up. So we had that kind of relationship”. Alan questioned if this kind of willingness to help out may have changed. He suggested that this departmental cohesion was consistent for his career from the late 1960s to the early 2000s, but he was not sure whether the generation of faculty that followed him would have been so willing, or would have asked to begin with.

Third, faculty members described professional collaboration rituals as formative to group bonds that took several forms. For some faculty, working together on departmental curriculum issues provided the basis for positive social connections, likely connecting a sense of trust and

competence to feelings of cooperation. The conceptual yet practical nature of education means that working on student issues or curriculum collaboratively can facilitate a moment of collective focus, interest, and when successful, positive emotional energy, as well as feelings of accomplishment and purpose indicative of a successful ritual. According to one faculty member:

...the most significant connections I had were departmental, because we were running a unique curriculum...so we would spend quite a few hours, we had pretty close-knit [group of faculty], but we would spend [many] hours working together on curriculum, doing that, supporting each other, and clinic goals.

In small departments, cooperative relationships are essential to creating a desirable working environment. Faculty who work closely with just a few other faculty attribute positive relationships to similar personalities, shared ideological commitments, shared professional interests, and cooperation as a departmental norm. Some faculty described feeling like they were on a team, implying collaborative efforts aimed at a common goal. A faculty member named Elaine described her experience:

Well, [a positive working relationship is] very important actually, especially in such a small department [where my colleague] and I are really the only [specialists] in the department of five. So, I thought many times, if you're working primarily with one other person if you don't get along well with the other person it would be really bad. We don't always see eye to eye, but in general, we work well together and that has, I'm also a person who likes to collaborate and I like to bounce ideas off of other people. I tend to be task oriented, and so it's been very good for me to have [her colleague] to bounce ideas off of and work on projects with. We share teaching materials a lot, between the two of us. We teach basically every [course] that is offered so, so depending on scheduling, if

he's teaching a class that I've taught and vice versa, he is very generous about offering materials to me and saying "Here's what I did". I can do my own thing, but at least I have the resources, so we try to share in that way, which is very helpful.

Some faculty members conceptualize the whole educational process departmentally in cooperative terms. One faculty member described it as "we all baked that cake", referring to an individual student as the product of many different professors and occasions of interaction. The sense that each person in the department made a meaningful contribution to a successful graduate is a powerfully cohesive notion.

Significantly, the departmental cohesion generated through social and task occasions frequently bolstered positive feelings about the department generally, and invigorated cooperative task-related interactions as a result. Relating these conclusions to theories of social bonds, rational choice theory (Hechter, 1987) proposes a high degree of self-interest as the motivating factor for performance. Some faculty, those in professional department particularly, tended to separate the social aspects of their life from task aspects, suggesting emotional detachment and a concern with group performance primarily. However, faculty members who describe themselves in this way nevertheless profess to value the personal departmental relationships and interpersonal sharing that extends beyond work topics. Although some faculty members are less interested in investing flexible time in purely social occasions, they nevertheless tend to value informal knowledge of their colleagues. One possible explanation is that production-oriented faculty members intuitively understand that task performance of the group is promoted through departmental cohesion resulting from social exchanges.

Certainly, not all faculty experience strong departmental social bonds, however for nearly all faculty participants, social bonds of some kind – interpersonal, departmental or institutional –

buoyed their desire to remain employed beyond just receiving a paycheck. This research suggests that there is a fundamentally relational aspect to faculty life in this College culture that attracts, or at least retains individuals who value the relational element of task accomplishment.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CROSS-INSTITUTIONAL RITUAL SPACE: SOCIAL AND TASK DIMENSIONS

Although the sprawl of physical campus space since the mid-1960s often contributed to an increased departmental focus, cross-institutional social and task rituals frequently served to bridge those metaphysical divides between faculty members. As a result, inter-departmental ritual spaces represented the greatest source of organizationally-generated institutional solidarity, and the primary means whereby individual professionalism contributed to faculty social bonds. The terms *cross-institutional* and *inter-departmental* are used interchangeably here to refer to events or interactions that involve faculty from more than one department. This discussion is confined to on campus venues, with off-campus formal and informal events explored in chapter nine.

Faculty participants commented on the impact of inter-departmental connections on social bonds more than any other type of faculty interaction. This fact may be because much of departmental social interaction blended into the rhythms of everyday life, but inter-departmental occasions required a greater level of coordination and were thus more notable as distinct events and not because they were necessarily more important to all individuals. Nevertheless, the cohesion generated through cross-institutional connections was particularly significant due to the institutional-level solidarity they frequently engendered, which was less often produced from departmental-level interactions. Cross-institutional interactions are analyzed by informal and formal social rituals, and then by informal and formal task rituals.

#### Cross-Institutional Informal and Formal Social Rituals

Rituals in this category are examined in three groups: seasonal formal social rituals; informal daily interaction rituals; and interdepartmental faculty lounge rituals. Like formal

departmental social rituals, formal cross-institutional social rituals received only passing acknowledgement, with few faculty emphasizing them as particularly poignant. Seasonal events followed a pattern familiar to most institutions: in the fall, an employee picnic; at Christmas, a gathering where faculty received a gift from the President; and in the spring, departmental and institution-wide events celebrating graduation. However, one annualized social ritual that was noted by multiple faculty members as meaningful was the spring recognition banquet. Although the banquet could be considered as task event since it has a specific purpose other than socializing, the primarily social nature of the ritual (as compared to the formality and directed attention of graduation or chapel) fit the category enough to be considered a social event.

The recognition banquet was designed to honor retiring faculty members, departing faculty members, or faculty who had reached milestone years of service in five-year increments. Typically, a booklet chronicling the service of honored individuals was prepared for the occasion, and following a meal (honorees ate free), presentations to scale with a faculty member's length of tenure and cultural status were given by their department. The presentations may have included stories, songs, poems, surprise guests, and, according to several attendees, often represented the highlight of the evening.

The banquet potentially held different meaning for honorees and for attendees. Clearly, for those honored, recognition usually included approbation for their institutional loyalty and service, and an opportunity to reflect on the joys and challenges faced along the way. That their colleagues frequently went to great lengths to organize a skit, poem, or series of remembrances usually magnified their sense of group cohesion. The banquet, like graduation, allowed those exiting to feel good about departing with a swell of positive feelings toward colleagues and toward the institution as well. For some cultural and religious outsiders, the occasion provided a

reminder of the identity space that was bridged, enlarging their sense of cohesion and solidarity.

Marie, a retired non-Mennonite faculty member commented on her experience:

I found my place, and when I retired and they give you the plaque or whatever, I asked if I could say something, because I'd gotten a call from the president's office and they wanted to know how many people I wanted to invite to this retirement dinner. I said it's just my husband and two children, we just need a small table. That's it – I don't have lots of family. But when I picked up that plaque, I really felt the need to say “I was offered the opportunity to invite family, and it's obvious to me that you have all done that because you have adopted me and you cared for me. And I will always be grateful for that because I was a misfit”.

For those in attendance, the banquet elevated the institutional value of commitment and promoted long-term employment as desirable and attainable. For faculty in departments that honor individuals, the act of preparing for the event might have created group cohesion as they remembered the social and professional contributions of the faculty member in question. Jim, a retired faculty member, observed: “Well, [the banquet] gives you something to strive toward. I think it is a kind of encourager. [It] helps you to appreciate those who have done a lot more than you have done and stuck with it”.

Formal ceremonies of this kind are not successful for everyone, and may represent meaning of a different kind. For some employees moving on to other jobs, the event is bittersweet and may bring up unpleasant memories. One faculty member indicated that persons with less positive personal histories with the institution occasionally do not attend. For other faculty members, even if they chose not to attend the event, the feeling of exclusion was a

stinging reminder that they did not fit as well as they had hoped. Lynnwood, former long-time faculty member recalled:

I got a call from the president's secretary because you know they like to make a big deal, passing out certificates. And you had a write up in the booklet, they write up a little resume of you and it's published, and I didn't turn in my response. And I get a call from the president's secretary, and she asked was I coming and I said, "No I'm not coming", or something to that effect. That we want to recognize you and I said, "I don't need it and you can mail it to me" and they did. ...I said so, that my resignation was a protest: I wasn't retiring – I could've retired. It was strictly a resignation protest.

Rituals emphasize boundaries between insiders and outsiders, and ritual participation reassures participants that group values and the group status-quo have been successfully maintained.

Lynnwood's experience illustrates a rejection of ritual participation where attendance would have placed him in a role of willing celebrant if he had attended, regardless of the breach of social bonds. His absence symbolized the metaphysical distance between individual and institution, as the event meant to provide closure and solidarity represented, at least for him, an opposing sentiment.

#### *Daily Informal Interaction Rituals*

As significantly uniting or divisive as formal ritual occasions can be, much of faculty interaction occurs informally on a day-to-day basis. For many faculty members at EMC, the accumulation of these impromptu meetings, greetings, and chats with colleagues from across the institution provided the basis for continued relationships and positive social bonds. Faculty noted that walking to and from chapel, interacting at sporting events, meeting at the mailboxes, copier, or in the halls created micro-interactions of personal worth. These interaction rituals,



easily under-estimated as trite exchanges, reinforced cohesion with individuals and the solidary sense of participation in a larger effort. For some faculty members, casual interactions outside the department simply helped alleviate the sense of grid, though depending on the physical location of faculty, that may or may not be a possibility. Carl, a faculty member hired in the 1990s, commented:

Well, it was like we are [in a departmental house] together with just us here all day. In the Science Center, you go down to the lounge, you do work with the copy machine or just go hang out in someone else's office, there are lots of ways of not just, not that would you want to get out of the office, but the sense that you just weren't in the office all the time.

Casual interactions with faculty from other parts of the institution promoted solidarity as well, especially when conversational links are not pre-existing. For new faculty, and particularly those who were not cultural or religious insiders, establishing a broad base of personal relationships provided a sense of familiarity in a strange place. A non-Mennonite faculty member explained:

There were three of us that came in as new faculty that year...[one of the other new faculty] would stop and talk and we did a lot of things the first couple of years, in the sense that we were both single with nothing to do. ...And so we were both just out of our master's programs, [one of the other new faculty members] had gone to EMU so he knew everybody and whatever, but it gave a connection, it gave a place when if there is a dinner or something you needed to go to, we could go and we could talk about the kinds of things you need to talk about peer-to-peer, that I didn't always feel I could talk to my other colleagues about. I could say what's going on here or explain this kind of stuff.

...We were a group, because it was just the three of us and we always felt that real connection.

Institutionally, by the 1980s faculty and administrators became aware that demographics and physical proximity issues, along with the deterioration of some campus rituals that once drew faculty together, had combined to reduce the amount of cross-institutional interaction taking place on a daily basis. Institutional participants felt the strain of relationships as the domains of professionalism, cultural social connections, and religious affiliation that were mutually-reinforcing up until this point increasingly became competing demands instead.

Between the inconvenience of physical distance and the departmental focus that reduced broader faculty interaction, the College found addressing the emerging culture of departmental isolationism to be a tricky proposition. One idea — to require faculty to come to the Campus Center to get their mail rather than delivering it to each building — was nixed after faculty noticed that administrators, rather than participating in an interaction ritual of their own making, were instead sending their work-study help to pick mail up for them. The faculty member who related this story applauded the original initiative to encourage faculty and administrator interaction, but indicated that the problem was time, not faculty laziness. The sense that increased professional obligations came at the expense of time that at one point was used casually to improve faculty relationships was a theme repeated by several faculty members. Abram, an emeritus faculty member, commented:

Well, we often talked about how there isn't enough interaction between faculty that are scattered out all over campus. There is no center point where we could have a coffee hour or something like that. ...But there's always this discussion about how could we better facilitate interaction, and I don't think we ever came up with anything really good.

But still, it's a small campus.... There are a lot of places where you can learn to know other faculty. It's not systematic, I would say that we should work on that more so the schedule isn't so full that there is never any time to schedule a period when faculty can get together, despite the fact that there is no systematic organizational way of getting people together except that faculty conference at the beginning and end of the year and stuff like that. There is still, I think, a lot of ways to interact with the rest of faculty, at least on a superficial level.

Finally, communication technology alters the frequency and necessity of interaction rituals (Collins, 2004). The installation of campus-wide phone systems, convenient in light of campus sprawl, reduced the need for physical contact and the traffic patterns around campus that facilitated impromptu conversations along the way. The proliferation of email technology over the past decade further reduced the need to physically visit other departments or offices, adding additional distance and making verbal communication far less necessary. Furthermore, the type of communication that occurred may have changed as well. Faculty reported, with regret, that flaming email threads occasionally spread around campus, more often creating speeches than dialog. Strong emotions expressed in emails may have had an impact on the reader that the writer never recognized, and due to the physical (and electronic spatial) distance, metaphysical distance increased. Annie, a former faculty member hired in the late 1980s, related:

I think e-mail is a way to keep distanced from people, definitely there is an emotional distance learning. It's very easy to whip out an e-mail and be very caustic in your e-mails and sometimes there were these heated debates that went on in e-mail. It just made no sense to me. Why doesn't she get together and sit down and talk about it and say it to me? [Email] was just a very distancing technology.

The full extent of the impact of communication and interaction changes are difficult to assess. From the account of retired faculty members of their teaching experiences in the 1960s, significant occasions for social interaction occurred on a regular basis that were not as available 30 years later. However, teaching loads of four and five courses were time-consuming, despite the minimal expectations for faculty scholarship. The increase of professionalism may have impacted the way faculty perceived what the work day was suppose to include, which may be contrasted to the cultural expectations of casual social interaction of an earlier decade. Cultural change notwithstanding, physical campus sprawl and faculty demographics were at least exacerbating factors to the reduced level of casual interaction between 1965 and 2000, and with it, the sense of cross-institutional cohesion.

#### *The Micro-cultures of Faculty Lounges and Lunches*

Although informal social events varied by interest and location, formal social events drew a high percentage of faculty members even though they were not salient rituals for some participants, nearly every faculty member had an experience to offer related to the places where faculty ate lunch and socialized cross-departmentally. Departmental experiences were discussed in the previous chapter. In this section, the four spaces of the Ad Building lounges, the Snack Shop, the Campus Center faculty lounge, and the Science Center faculty lounge are analyzed as hubs of social networking, ritual meaning, and cultural change.

*The Ad Building lounges.* The old Administration Building (1919-1983) underwent stages of reconfiguration, as rooms that had been used for student housing became faculty offices, classrooms, and other spaces as utility demanded. The employee lounges on the second and third floors that emerged in the process were important cross-disciplinary conversation areas for faculty, administrators, and staff in an era when nearly all College functions were housed

under one roof. Prior to the start of campus sprawl in the 1960s, new faculty, many of them green from graduate school and some from college, found time for a laugh, a story, or a sympathetic ear in the Ad building lounges. For the many neophyte faculty members who were also alumni, interaction in the lounge provided a much needed casual environment where they could develop peer relationships with the professors who they had venerated as teachers only a few years prior. Given the intersection of faculty context and institutional size, the lounges, particularly at lunch time, served as a vital facilitator of cohesion and identity for faculty, many of whom would remain at the institution until retirement. In an academic community with frequent faculty interaction and cooperation, establishing peer relationships in a casual environment made it clear to young faculty members that not only was behaving in a professional manner important, but behaving in a human manner was important as well. Elmer, a former faculty member hired in the 1960s, commented on his experience:

[My office] was actually very close to the faculty lounge. A certain number of the faculty would come up there and congregate there. I still remember... it was mostly just a few jokes, not just a lot of really serious talk, because there was just enough time to get a cup of coffee. So maybe the hot news around, but maybe we'd go in and share a few jokes and be on our way to teaching again.... It was pretty mixed: history, development, which was one person, and the whole nursing department was in there too... I think there was someone from the Bible department there.... I think it was important just to get out and it was good for me to get over and hear the Dean crack a joke. Ira Miller, cracking a joke? Well he does – he did that a lot. Well, there were some jokes that you kind of said “Wow, I'm surprised he told that joke!” ... That was a very interesting experience. It let

me see what they're made of, what their opinions were, and how I could interact with them.

This casual conversational space was also a place where community boundaries and cultural values were tested and defended. For those non-Mennonite faculty members hired in the 1960s and 1970s, a context away from the expected decorum of meetings and classrooms occasionally placed their differences in sharp relief. Confronted with an inter-woven social and religious culture with rituals and code words in which they were not versed, some faculty tried to fit in and eventually found their way, although others felt alienated despite years of service. Casual conversations would build off of social network knowledge, as news shared often related to congregational issues or familial ties. The implications of this interaction of cultures – that intimate community will result in the marginalization of those who are not sufficiently embedded in the dominate milieu – was an escalating source of concern for the College through this 35-year period. One Mennonite faculty member commented:

...well, I shouldn't use the term non-Mennonites, but there were always some clues about [faculty who] seem to be excited about being part of EMU, and some who [felt] marginalized. I saw it in the faculty lounge probably...just by hearing people's reactions, or views that came from another person, someone like [a particular long-time employee] but he did feel like he wasn't, like he was an outsider. There was a Spanish prof here that was from another country [and] probably didn't fit quite. And so yes, there would have been some tension. I'm sure some tension has involved African Americans. The people that weren't a part of that Mennonite culture, that were puzzled sometimes and weren't part of us. I think that's one of the things that comes with close community. I think, I

don't know if you can have really close community without some alienation, or at least the perception of it.

Thus, the Ad Building lounges were spaces that facilitated informal rituals that dramatically shaped the identity space of individual faculty to the institution and to each other, just as the institution began to process what it meant to open membership beyond the traditional crowd. In the lounges, cultural values were reified and some outsiders were reminded in subtle ways of their marginal status. Although most faculty members reported that they appreciated the contributions of non-Mennonites, that message was delivered inconsistently.

*The Snack Shop.* In 1957 a new gymnasium was built as a multi-purpose space to meet athletic, academic, and social needs. Situated to the north of the east-facing Ad Building, in addition to gym space, it included classrooms, a game room, and a snack shop. If the Ad Building was the educational sanctuary of campus, the Snack Shop was the fellowship hall: noisy, casual, and fit for all occasions. In the model of a period diner (sans the chrome flashing and jukebox) the long narrow space, lined by windows to the north and west, featured high-back booths along the inside and a counter and stools to the right of the entrance. Although it lacked the exclusivity of the faculty lounges, it did have hot, greasy, home-made food that wafted through the adjoining classrooms. Friday nights after a concert across the quad at Lehman Auditorium, dressed-up faculty members and local patrons stopping in for a late dessert or cup of coffee would mix with students feigning studiousness.

The Snack Shop experience, as faculty members tell it, was less about group conversations and more about simply congregating and seeing who was around. A cluster of faculty may hunker down for a heated discussion, but the often lively atmosphere meant that interruptions were likely, and usually welcome as well. In this casual environment, cohesive

bonds were refreshed by the frequency of contact, rather than the depth. As a hub for institutional traffic, solidarity was generated from the sense of industry and activity: that each person was here for a purpose, whatever that purpose may be. According to a physical education faculty member:

The other place where I did a lot of early socialization was in the Snack Shop. We didn't have a coffee pot in the old little white house in the physical education department, so you went across the dirt parking lot to the Snack Shop. Helen and Dick Hours were there [running the Snack Shop], and then people came in. We'd be like "come on let's go get coffee" and we'd all walk across. But I also met people from around campus when you went over there for lunch, or would be waiting for a practice, I'd be over there getting a sandwich or something, and so that community plays an important role when you sort of went outside of your realm of what you were doing....

The Snack Shop, located outside the purview of any academic department, also represented neutral territory for the campus community. Anyone and everyone belonged and was welcome, making it a less judgmental or intimidating place for younger or non-Mennonite faculty to congregate. The old Snack Shop did not survive the renovation of the late 1990s and was replaced by a space roundly criticized for its lack of coziness and charm. However, the Snack Shop bridged an important gap during the early 1980s when the Ad Building burned, providing a point of campus community and continuity as faculty were dispersed to temporary quarters.

*The Campus Center faculty lounge.* The Campus Center, spiritual successor of the Ad Building, was constructed on the same site and opened in 1986. On second floor, a modest



faculty lounge served as the replacement to the faculty lounges in the old structure, and many of the stories of its use represent a continuation of the issues that arose in previous building.

Initially, the lounge was used by second and third floor occupants, including the nursing, education, language, literature, and communications, and business departments, in addition to several administrative offices. That broad mix of disciplines provided the opportunity for cross-institutional learning on an interpersonal and professional level. A nursing faculty member noted how much insight she gained about pedagogy from the communications faculty. A language faculty member related how his sense of connection to the business department improved through a better understanding of the beliefs and values that drove them academically.

The meaning of the faculty lounge extended to a deeper level of institutional appreciation. Veteran faculty members, by enacting the causal faculty culture and through storytelling, used those occasions to pass on pieces of the institutional legacy they had received and generated over their many years. As a result, younger faculty engaged the narrative history and informal traditions of the faculty culture that some have tended as they assume the role of College faculty elders. Rosa recalled the impact it had on her:

Well, the sense that we're all in the same mission serving the students who [represent] diverse challenges and how we manage that, and just a sense that you're enjoying the people in the organization. It also gives you a sense of respect for what [other faculty] bring, and a sense of everybody's contribution to the whole and also a lot of light-weighted bantering, making fun of people's lunches. Like [one veteran faculty member], his sandwiches were a work of art. He would always build them. And that sort of humor, and he and [another faculty colleague]...they'd been here a long time. For someone who is new, that was an interest thing. It was good to learn from them and

people knew who you were even though you were new. Now you go to faculty meeting and you're like "Who are these people?"

In the 1990s, faculty participation in the small Campus Center faculty lounge changed, and with it, the meaning of a space that had been metaphysically significant up until that point. The basic inadequacy of space exacerbated a sense of exclusion experienced by several non-Mennonite faculty members who decided to stop eating lunch in the lounge. Eventually to maintain positive relations, an entire department stopped using the lounge and ate together in their designated office space.

Similar to the feelings evoked in the Ad Building lounge, the tightly-bound religious, educational, and social communities generated conversational topics that sometimes were of insider concern only. However, rather than feeling offense as non-Mennonites in the Ad Building lounge reported, in the Campus Center, outsiders simply felt that the cultural conversation was irrelevant to them. Furthermore, although they were cultural outsiders, they were sufficiently embedded as institutional insiders that they felt comfortable rejecting not only the normative social culture, but the departmental expectation of group lunch. The occasional tension between insider and outsider faculty continued, but the insiders were no longer able to completely dictate the terms of the culture. The closeness of the physical and conversational space, at least for some non-Mennonite faculty, exaggerated the metaphysical space they felt, rather than reducing it. One of the faculty members who decided to stop eating in the lounge explained:

During about a two year period, several of us stopped going down and [the department head] became upset about that, and so did some of the other old-time Mennonite people that were here, and that caused a problem. In [the department head's] mind, building up

a team meant eating together, meeting other people from the campus center...which was a good idea, but you can't make someone do that, so several of us did not do it. I think I was sort of the maverick that changed that totally. Now, no one goes down there. "Sorry about that" [she said as if to the department head]. It was not at all meaningful to me. All they talked about was [a local Mennonite church]. I'll never forget; it was after Easter one time and all they talked about was going to church on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and it did not at all interesting me – it was boring, it wasn't part of my life. So when I stopped going several of the other [faculty members] said, well, I'm not interested in [the local Mennonite church] either, so we stopped going. The conversation was so one-sided. I knew what [the department head's] intent was, but it just wasn't going to work for all these people. I even apologized to her; I didn't live up to my promise. So anyway, that's long-ago history in the early 1990s. And now, I think people grab lunch when they can because they're so busy up there. But that's what happened in the later years.

Although some faculty continued to eat in the lounge, this moment was cited by members of different departments as a sea-change in the life of the Campus Center faculty lounge, and emblematic of a larger shift toward a departmental focus that found more and more faculty eating lunch in their offices, eating out, or not eating at all. The symbolic importance of the mid-day pause, though never observed by all faculty members, lost its place and represented a change in social values. An example of the nature of this change is the attempt by the department head to legislate a ritual that previously had been an individually-initiated highlight for many faculty members. On emeritus faculty member commented: "I remember thinking two things: one is [that] when I retire, [the faculty lounge experience] is something I will miss. But secondly, the

trend was such that it gradually became less and less significant. Fewer people coming, and [one department] practically stopped coming.”

By the end of the 1990s, use of the lounge continued sporadically, though the loss of the salience of this lunchtime ritual was mourned by several faculty members who recognized its symbolic and functional importance in constructing cohesion and solidarity and perpetuating faculty culture. Rosa, a faculty member who often ate lunch in the lounge, reflected on the changes since that time:

I think the greatest loss is actually the use of the lunch room. ...[eating lunch together] got you out of your department and made you focus not so much on those issues, and you learned to know other people.... I think the other thing is, more people go out for lunch or go to the snack bar, or carry their own lunch, [and that] has made a difference too. And I think it was the networking and knowing other faculty and their stories, and other staff to listen to faculty – it is very much of a mixing and I think that's the greatest loss. And sometimes I think about going back down there, but there are more faculty [in the departmental space] coming and going, or I don't eat lunch. But I think about developing friendships with people from other departments. They weren't outside of work, but within work.

Rosa's concern demonstrates the loss of rituals that allow faculty to pass on the stories and legacy of past generations of colleagues, and to carry forward the values that they believe are essential to the educational environment that they have worked hard to create. However, equally troubling to the faculty culture was the shift of the lounge event from a source of cohesion to a source of division.

*The Science Center faculty lounge.* Built in 1967, the Science Center included a planetarium, a large lecture hall, classrooms, a small museum, offices, and, owing to the lack of a proper institutional facility at the time, a modest library. Adjoining the biology department offices, the library had several large tables in the center, and as home to the office coffee pot, soon became a point of congregation in the mornings and eventually, at lunch as well. With the opening of the Hartzler Library across the street in 1973, the Science Center library space was largely freed from its intended use, and was gradually co-opted into use as the faculty lounge.

By the mid-1980s, the Science Center housed the departments of biology, chemistry, and mathematics, as well as psychology, and Bible and religion. Eventually, the history department joined the fray and Bible and religion moved to a house as the frequent shuffle for campus space continued. During this time, the Science Center lounge became a symbolic and functional center for the inter-disciplinary culture that developed in the building at large.

The imposing Ad Building and later Campus Center seemed to peer out across the valley toward Massanutten Peak, both overlooking and over-looking the low-lying science building located down the hill to the east and across Park Road. The physical distance and lack of administrative offices in the Science Center impacted the psyche of the faculty housed there as well. Several faculty contrasted proximity to the administrative offices in the Campus Center and the accompanying decorum with the lively, no-rules inter-disciplinary conversations and local rituals that faculty characterized as part of the Science Center culture. According to Alan, an emeritus faculty member whose office was in the Science Center:

...the lunch rooms, there was one on the second floor of the Campus Center now too, but I think it's more likely that you might have an administrator sitting in on that and not in shaping the conversation, but delimiting or sort of affecting what was said. We never had

that. We were always [just] the faculty and we tended to be sort of, not cynical, but analytical....

Whether faculty in the Campus Center actually felt the administrative influence or not, the perception of metaphysical distance and intellectual freedom in the Science Center combined powerfully with the mixture of inter-disciplinary faculty who regularly ate lunch together. As a result, lively discussions covering a wide range of academic, political, religious, and social topics occurred on a regular basis. A faculty member hired in the 1990s reminisced about the amount of laughter that happened around the lunch table, in addition to serious topical conversations.

For the many faculty members who chose to participate, the cross-disciplinary cohesion that developed through the variety and frequency of interactions expanded their sense of belonging outside their department and encouraged a feeling of institutional solidarity. In the lounge or in the hallways, whether addressing the needs of a student or conversing about the news, interacting faculty colleagues valued for their differences and contributions was at its best an expression of organic solidarity, that is solidarity through difference. This sense of connectivity socially and ideologically became foundational to the faculty experience for many participants. A current faculty member who frequently participated in the lunch ritual said:

I think that if I had to be in one of the houses where there's just one group of people, or in the Campus Center where they don't have the camaraderie that we have, I think it would be very lonely. So I'm very thankful...I've heard people say "The Science Center has a culture", and we probably do. [We're] more straightforward in what we say [and] what we think. If you don't like it, that's fine and let's accept each other for what we say and go on. I think it would be very lonely [without that experience] and I don't think I'd like it.

The culture this faculty member mentions was in part facilitated by the accommodating physical space of the faculty lounge, but also propagated by a few individual faculty members who took initiative to establish building-wide rituals that reinforced values of collegiality and cohesion. Robert Yoder, a biologist and medical technologist hired in the 1950s, never completed a doctoral degree, but his contribution to the culture of the Science Center impacted many of the faculty deeply. Until his death several years ago, Robert initiated relationships with new faculty in the building and was often referenced by faculty interviewees as the one person in particular who took the time to inquire into their personal lives. Robert also reinforced existing social bonds by initiating and perpetuating birthday rituals: writing humorous poems, bringing donuts, and circulating cards for the occasion.

In the late 1990s, Robert retired but continued to be a presence around the Science Center, which, by faculty accounts, served as an important social foundation for him even though he often just sat and listen to lunch discussions. Frequently, Robert would hook up an electric popcorn popper and pop his lunch, sharing what he made with any faculty looking for a snack or a lunch supplement. Several faculty members mentioned the symbolism of that popcorn, the smell and sound calling them away from their desks, like a dinner bell gathering a family after a day's work. People in all cultures gather around food. The common meal is an especially poignant Mennonite cultural ritual as well, with values of generosity and egalitarianism expressed in the scene of a community sitting together and passing food, each bringing what they have to offer. This common meal metaphor speaks of organic solidarity, of unity through sharing of the best of what one has, instead of giving the most of whatever is similar. The popcorn ritual gathered faculty to the lounge for a similar kind of intellectual and emotional sharing. According to faculty reports, the popcorn tradition continued after Robert's death in

part as a tribute to his legacy in the department, and in part to continue the ritual of gathering and community.

Faculty in the Science Center are aware that their experience is unique, and that a kind of delicate social eco-system has developed that many of them cherish and wish to tend, particularly as plans are made for a renovation and expansion of the structure. Ironically, the limited physical and financial resources that resulted in departments small in membership numbers and space requirements, also facilitated the close and frequent inter-disciplinary interactions that made their faculty experiences rich. Regarding the importance of the diversity of participation these rituals fostered, a veteran faculty member commented:

I worked at Michigan State [University] a couple of summers and we were in the [name] Department, and they have lunch meetings like that too. It was all [disciplinary name]... and while they didn't just focus only on [our discipline], both point of view and the breadth was just [disciplinary name]. Here you have a least biologists and math people, and now in this case, history people, which just adds to that diversity of viewpoints and expertise.

The importance of this cultural center was not lost on the administration and some of the faculty from other parts of campus. At times, the Science Center faculty members were accused of representing a voting block, which one Science Center faculty member dismissed as absurd, since the group can never agree on anything. Yet the external perception that some manner of unification occurred despite the departmental mixture that provided the Science Center culture with an institutional *gravitas* that administrators and many faculty (at times begrudgingly) recognized.



In fact, several academic deans made it a practice to occasionally join the Science Center lunches, using the opportunity to field concerns, gather opinions, and engage in dialog. The significance of Science Center discussions was also referenced in meetings outside the Center, providing an additional sense of mystique and value to this culture of conversation. The decision by the deans to engage the Science Center faculty both legitimated the group, and because the deans acquiesced to the local culture and engaged them successfully, provided the deans with increased informal authority as well. The result was a symbiotic relationship in which institutional solidarity was increased through cohesion with an individual representing administrative authority, and administrative authority was increased through negotiation of a faculty sub-culture. Laurie commented:

When [a former dean] was here, she came down here on a regular basis just to get...she knew that the science Center faculty would always tell her the truth and wouldn't mince words with her. ...And so I think in a way that gave us a sense of connection, because we had a connection when she was Dean, and we could tell her what we thought. She may not agree with [what was said], but that was fine...we can at least tell her what we thought, and she would listen and honor what we said, and sometimes she would make a change and sometimes she would not. And so I think that in itself is a sense of connection, it felt like we were part of something and I think everyone really admired her ability to do that...

Of course, not all faculty members chose to or felt welcome to participate. Several participating faculty noted that fewer of the Bible and religion faculty regularly joined the group, and some of the psychology faculty did not come as well. Also, international and non-Mennonite faculty often felt uncomfortable with the vigorousness of conversation and choice of

topics, according to one faculty member. For some, this was simply a matter of logistics. Mengistu commented that most days, he used that time to prepare for later classes, as did Elaine, who as new hire did not feel she could spare the time. Others, such as Marie, a non-Mennonite faculty member, was direct when I asked her if she had been involved. She replied “No, and I was never invited to do that.” Lunch participants recognized that not everyone participated, but when asked, were mostly confident that it was a matter of choice, and not of welcoming. For a group that developed a strong institutional sub-culture, approaching and engaging that sub-culture from the outside may have been daunting no matter how inclusive it felt to participants for whom the group evoked only positive feelings. Although faculty members chose not to get involved for a variety of reasons, the boundaries of exclusion were nearly invisible to insiders, appearing as issues of choice and not of separation.

#### Cross-Institutional Formal and Informal Task Rituals

Just as task events dominated departmental interactions, task events also occupied much of the conversation of cross-institutional interactions. For the sake of organization, these can be thought of as *official* administratively sanctioned and organized events, and *unofficial* faculty-initiated (with or without the support of the institution) task events. The five categories of official task events significant to this study are: seasonal events; administrative business; curricular events; chapel; and the Fall Faculty Conference. Unofficial task events include the two categories of special interest groups and faculty-initiated conferences.

#### *Official Cross-Institutional Task Rituals*

In the same way the formal seasonal social rituals received little comment by faculty, official cross-institutional task rituals, such as graduation and opening convocation, received a similar dearth of attention when faculty were asked to discuss events that were meaningful to

them, or evoked a sense of collective identity. One non-Mennonite faculty member noted how special she felt seeing faculty dressed in academic regalia, and how it reminded her of the common purpose they all shared, but no other comments about graduation were offered. It is likely that, if cornered, at least some faculty members would admit similar fondness for the event. But the general disinterest in the occasion as significant to a sense of solidarity calls into question the assumption of the centrality of formal institutional rituals (Manning, 2003), in comparison to the preponderance of largely informal social and task rituals lacking the highly-dramatized characteristics commonly associated with ritual occasions.

#### *Cross-Institutional Administrative Business*

The majority of task-related cross-institutional faculty interactions occurred through the ongoing structured mechanisms of representative decision-making categorized here as administrative business. This category includes two broad types of interaction events identified by faculty members: *regularly occurring committees* (including faculty meetings and levels of committee meetings) and *periodic re-visioning* (principally, accreditation and curriculum revision).

*Regularly occurring committees.* The organizational machine grinds forward on the wheels of distributed responsibility. Within higher education, the faculty usually is thought to represent a special category of employee, both free-agent and institutional leader (Birnbaum, 1988). In this unique position, faculty members typically share governance responsibilities to varying degrees. Over the past thirty years at Eastern Mennonite, the faculty have increasingly sought and received a voice in the running of the College. However, according to faculty accounts, achieving the optimal administrative structure to maximize participation and efficiency was an ongoing struggle, particularly as the complexity of the institution grew. Nevertheless, the

conversation space created by regularly-occurring structured and semi-structured administrative meetings represented spaces where important conversations occurred and cross-institutional social bonds were formed.

Two significant and re-occurring points emerged from faculty comments about committee meetings. First, and most fundamentally, committee work provided insights into the personalities, views, and foibles of faculty members that may not be otherwise known, provided the group was not too large. On some occasions, new personal knowledge of other faculty was information only. However, many faculty members commented that through committee meetings they were able to piece together a sense of the individuality of their co-workers from around the institution, and barring strong disagreements, a greater interpersonal understanding contributed to a greater sense of shared purpose as faculty worked toward institutional improvement together. When successful, the committee meeting ritual forged cohesive bonds between participants, reinforced commonly held values, and ultimately promoted institutional solidarity through a strong sense of common mission and moral purpose. According to Abram:

I really hadn't thought about this, but committees probably serve [to create social connections] as good as anything. Faculty meeting gets us all together in one place, but so often you don't get to say anything or people don't say anything even if they do get a chance because it's just too big of a group. But in a committee you're a lot more likely to find people expressing themselves, but the question what you're discussing in committee, sometimes it's not anything that reaches any serious questions about education or life experiences. ...If [committee meetings] didn't do anything else, they did spark a good bit of interaction and least got the members talking, often outside the committee meeting itself by talking with each other and interacting with each other.

Quite a few faculty members who were hired in the 1960s and early 1970s noted the shifting identity space of faculty meetings. Through the mid-1960s, the institution was demographically and organizationally smaller. Faculty meetings occurred weekly and dealt not only with typical issues of curriculum and policy, but also with student conduct and discipline and other institution-wide issues. The frequency of meetings and the breadth of the agenda created an intensified information feedback loop, allowing all participants to remain aware of institutional events and providing a sense of inclusion and participation. Faculty accounts varied widely as to the vitality of faculty meetings. Some participants found them exciting and insightful, and others recalled them to be dull, repetitive, and menial. It is likely that faculty recollections and experiences may have varied relative to seniority, personal relevance, interest in governance, and other interpersonal differences. What is consistent among faculty recollections was the importance of faculty attendance, which changed radically in the years following as the faculty meeting became a monthly affair and much of the day-to-day administrative work was farmed out to new offices or sub-committees. A former faculty member who worked in the 1960s and again in the 1980s, recalled:

Faculty meetings...were a place that everybody came. You didn't miss faculty meetings.

It was a good time to get together as a time that you got to hear colleagues, get their opinions, [and] find out what made him tick. I was amazed when I think back to the 1980s. I thought "Where in the world has school spirit gone?" People didn't come to the faculty meetings, it [felt like faculty were saying] "I've got something else going on".

That totally amazed me.

Institutional growth and administrative complexity compartmentalized the areas of general faculty involvement, further increasing the sense of professional specialization as faculty

now served on one or two committees focused on a particular issue, rather than all faculty members working through all issues together. In an expanding institution, this change might have been inevitable, but the impact on the faculty experience was to increase further cross-disciplinary fragmentation, reduce faculty interaction, and remove one regular ritual that added to interpersonal social bonds.

Second, the shift to a diversified administrative structure, although reducing the volume of issues with which faculty members became involved, did provide the opportunity to focus on institutional topics of particular concern or expertise to a given faculty member. Mary noted that she (a non-Mennonite) had been asked to serve on a committee that she sensed would be a point of contradiction between her own values and the Mennonite religious and cultural values of the institution. It would have been easy for Mary to view this as an opportunity to voice an alternate opinion and attempt to alter the culture as an outsider. Instead, she carefully navigated her way out of that committee and to a committee dealing with an issue that mattered to her.

Mary recalled:

I was asked to serve on some committees.... The issue discussed [in one committee] was dance, whether students on this campus should be dancing or not. And I was sitting there thinking, "Please God, don't let [them] ask me my opinion". [Dancing] was all we did when I was in high school, and I didn't see it as something awful. I went to her and I said I don't think I have a thing to contribute here. My understandings and my background are so different that I didn't feel I could offer anything that would be very helpful, and she was very gracious and she said, "Do you have other suggestions for how you'd like to serve?" and I said "Yes, I'd like to be on admissions committee, I'd like to have some say of looking at underprepared students that will eventually be my students", and they

honored that and I stayed on admissions until I retired, which turned out for me to be the best connection in terms of committee responsibilities and is the only one to me that made any sense.

As a result of this exchange, Mary was energized by the opportunity to connect institutional service and personal interest, which facilitated a sense that she was contributing meaningfully to the institution as well as to the students. Concurrently, the committee organizer, rather than insisting on her participation, decided that finding a good fit was most important and facilitated Mary's move to a different committee. The decision by both individuals to seek the best interest of the institution and of the professional interests of each individual contributed to institutional solidarity in a situation that could have been a cultural battleground detrimental to faculty bonds.

Although Mary's story was the most dramatic, several faculty participants related that their most important committee experiences emerged from groups that were in a position to impact in the institution or the students positively, with members who were committed to a cooperative effort in the best interest of all concerned. Faculty cohesion resulted from the coordinated group struggle, even though the outcome was not always desired, or even successful (Hogg, 1992).

*Periodic re-visioning.* Accreditation visits, curriculum revisions, and strategic planning exercises are often a source of excitement, stress, and learning. Many faculty members also found these exercises to be cross-institutional rituals that often bolstered cohesion through relationship building and the appreciation of faculty expertise. Cross-institutional rituals also contributed to College solidarity through the strenuous process of honing group priorities and articulating group values.

As is the case at many higher education institutions, general education revisions have often begun with great promise but led to greater frustration as competing visions end in compromises that are less inspired than faculty had hoped (Gaff, 1991). Yet at Eastern Mennonite, faculty noted that despite the final product, collectively asking the question “What does it mean to be an educated person and a graduate of Eastern Mennonite?” required an institutional self-examination that is ultimately positive and beneficial. Ritual activities that highlight and re-invigorate collective values provided a sense of collective purpose. This is not to say that the success of the outcome of the collaborative process is irrelevant to the social effect, only that it is not prohibitive to a positive working experience. The opposite may be true as well. Despite the increasing diversity and professionalization of Eastern Mennonite, faculty members continue to point to these organizational soul-searching moments as institutionally and personally significant. According to Carl:

One time I felt [strongly connected to the purpose of the institution] was about the year 2000.... We were trying to revise our general education program and it ended up being a very difficult experience and it didn't really work it out that well. At this point it was early on in the process and we had an all-day faculty conference at the end of the school year in early May...[and] as a way of getting at what our gen ed program should look like [we decided] let's talk about our common values and the stuff that matters the most. And that was, I thought, a really good experience. And one thing we did was a sticky note [exercise] where...we had different options and people prioritized [each institutional value's] worth. [There was] huge consensus about a few of these core statements at the end of this process of discussion and [that experience] felt really good.



As EMU matured and diversified, the gradual reduction of cultural homogeneity meant that identity conversations could not assume the wide acceptance of theological or philosophical premises that once would have been generally acceptable, or at least, accepted. As a result, re-visioning experiences might become more salient rituals since the commonality discovered through difference and not through its absence is assumed less and consequently valued more.

This example reinforces one positive outcome and institutional motivation for periodic strategic planning: not only are institutional priorities clarified, but the ritual process of identifying central institutional values, when successful, also is a process of individuals rediscovering their own commitment and passion for the institution, as well as forming new cohesive bonds cross-institutionally with other faculty members. Certainly, these processes can go badly and the renewal of social bonds is not assured. However, at Eastern Mennonite, the persistence of religious, cultural, and educational values provide a base set of common elements that, although requiring occasional redefinition and refinement, can and have continued to serve as a locus for faculty collective identity.

#### *Cross-Institutional Curricular Events*

The Inter-Disciplinary Studies program (IDS) and the All-School Seminar were two attempts at curricular innovation implemented at Eastern Mennonite that paid significant dividends in faculty social bonding. Although neither of the re-occurring events discussed in this section lasted beyond the 1980s, the legacy of creative programming has continued, with varied success, in other formats.

*IDS.* Begun in the late 1960s concurrent with the influx of new faculty, EMC's IDS program established a team-taught general education sequence that brought insights from multiple disciplines to bear on a central topic. For example, facets of the concept of *personality*

were explored from biology, psychology, history, art, and music. In the program's original form, an IDS department was established and five-person faculty teams created to teach each course, with the expectation that all team members would attend and participate in each session. In line with his ecumenical vision for the institution, President Augsburgers wanted the IDS to be a curricular showpiece that would attract students to the College. The program continued throughout the 1970s, but team teaching was expensive and issues of load and priority between major courses and IDS courses caused the gradual down-scaling of the program until it was no longer a germinal educational experience. However, in the years when the IDS ran at full capacity, many faculty members fondly recalled the high level of inter-disciplinary interaction and collaboration that occurred in the preparation and delivery of the courses. According to Jim, a faculty member from the Bible department during this time; "I would say the most intense and viable [faculty] interaction was on the senior IDS team".

Part of the challenge and excitement of the IDS program was the negotiation of departmental and disciplinary cultures, personal faculty styles, and the sensitivity of teaching in front of a group of faculty peers on a regular basis. Faculty members quickly learned that serving on an IDS team meant that each person must be willing to expose their methods to group scrutiny, rather than relying on the traditional isolated practices and personal preferences. On the path to practical solutions, faculty had to work through philosophical issues of the purpose of education as well. This process not only strengthened methods, but gave each faculty member a new appreciation for the other faculty, even if they ultimately disagreed. Alan, a faculty member from the sciences, commented:

Well, one of the major changes would be faculty learning how other faculty taught, how they thought, what their values were, [and] what their slant was on how you deal with

students. I remember one of the big things that we had to work at in the interdisciplinary courses was: how do you test? What kind of testing, do you do? There were just huge differences in the way that faculty would make tests, and we just really went at each other. “That’s just a stupid way to answer that question.” [laughs] We really went after it; “How are you going to grade that?” Those of us in the sciences *knew* just how to grade something. You either [answer the question] this way or this way, and some of the humanities [faculty], said “No, [the point is] just so they talk about it...”

The sum total of this cooperative process was often a group of faculty who demonstrated their willingness to work together. That spirit of task unity, through the diversity of disciplinary contributions, often strengthened individual social relationships as well as the sense that collectively, IDS faculty were contributing something of value to the institution. In the language of rational choice theory (Hechter, 1987), the cooperative production of excludable goods resulted in group solidarity, satisfying intellectual and emotional needs. As a matter of metaphysical space, for many faculty members, participating in a College-wide curricular project created an intensified and intimate task identity space with their IDS colleagues that by extension lessened the sense of distance between the faculty and the larger institutional mission.

*All-School Seminar.* Also beginning in the late 1960s, EMC created a series of three-week seminars spaced every four years and held after Christmas break between the sessions of the trimester curricular arrangement in place at that time. Like IDS, the aim was to create a common campus conversation around a chosen topic, such as *Christians in a Hungry World*, that allowed for a wide range of disciplinary input. Additionally, a prominent speaker was usually brought in for the occasion. Within this setting faculty collaborated to lead sub-divisions of students to find theoretical and practical approaches to the topic at hand.

Several faculty members recalled that this was a powerful collaborative experience for them, in part because the outcome had real practical implications for campus life. Abram, a faculty member in the sciences, recalled how one of the seminars dealt with environmental issues, and out of that came a student-run recycling program called *Earthkeepers*. Earthkeepers created a network of collection points and transportation not just for the campus, but for the city of Harrisonburg decades before a civic-initiative was in place. Abram reflected on the meaning of the event for him:

It tells you something that you always know as a teacher, how education actually occurs.

It occurs when people actually do something, rather than just sit and listen to you talk.

[The seminar] provided that kind of [environment] in that situation. It provided a situation where it was easier to do those sorts of interactive things in that kind of course than it is in a standard course.

The cooperative creation of a new educational ritual stirred faculty and students to renewed commitments and new expressions of existing values. Indeed, the success of a ritual is always a feeling of moral purpose and a desire to behave accordingly. Undoubtedly the seminar experience was not meaningful for all participants. The hours of listening to lectures in a for-credit environment can not be expected to energize everyone. Ultimately the mid-year seminars were also a logistical casualty, as the College ended the trimester system and found that managing academic credit for a non-traditional course like this was quite difficult. However, the experience demonstrates that cross-institutional task interactions clearly matter to faculty relationships and to the identity space between the institution and faculty members.

*Chapel*

The final two categories of official events shift the focus from rituals couched in educational culture to those related to Mennonite heritage and religious culture. However, both chapel and the Fall Faculty Conference were intended to fulfill educational goals as well. Both events were also frequently cited by faculty participants as occasions that solidified solidarity and shaped group identity. Frequently as well, faculty included a qualifier with those comments, noting that the meaning of the event depended largely on the quality and substance of the given presentation.

This indication of variable ritual salience highlights a significant variation between formal and informal rituals: informal rituals occur with greater frequency and fluidity, making the meaning they create far less obtuse, though no less important. Formal rituals require a higher level of individual attention (perhaps to assemble in a ritual location) and as more regimented occasions that are scripted to a greater degree, the expectations placed upon them are far greater than with informal rituals. As a result, ritual participants are more likely to be self- and group-aware of the success or failure of that ritual, since its boundaries and intentions are clearly seen. Informal rituals slide by in the flow of life and typically do not receive the same level of scrutiny. For this reason, it is not surprising that faculty frequently commented about the variable quality of formal rituals.

The chapel ritual at EMU followed the national pattern of event down-scaling (Burtchaell, 1998), transitioning from a requirement held five-days a week, to three, then two days a week, and eventually, to an optional event with a faithful core and larger periphery of inconsistent attendees. Generally, the perspective of faculty toward chapel depended on their length of service, term of service, and alumni status. Among the faculty who commented on chapel, former employees who worked for shorter stints in the 1960s and 1970s expressed a great

deal of nostalgia for chapel, suggesting that it established a common conversation and place of meeting during the week and perpetuated the religious and cultural values Mennonites held dear. Many long-term employees also remembered the role of chapel when they were students or first employed, but for many of them, the chapel ritual simply no longer held enough meaning to commit to regular attendance. For those faculty members who were hired in the 1980s and 1990s, chapel was more of a campus resource, like a faculty development workshop, that could, depending on delivery or commitment, provide a positive spiritual, cultural, or educational experience. Despite official encouragement to attend, this group generally did not feel enough weight of expectation from the institutional culture or enough authority in the administration to show up unless personally motivated. Part of the struggle of the chapel ritual is its variable purpose, frequently remade for relevance as a corporate worship experience, as an educational lecture venue, and as a cultural or informational seminar (or all of the above). Faculty themselves held no consensus about the best possible use of the event.

Those faculty members for whom chapel was meaningful were those who were committed to chapel being a meaningful experience. That ritual was meaningful for those who decided it would be is less a judgment on chapel than it is an example of the function of formal rituals. Spike, a faculty member hired in the late 1990s, related his variable chapel experience to me. As a student, he had resented that he was forced to attend. As a new faculty member, although no longer required, he went out of a sense of obligation, then after his first year or so when he noticed few of his departmental colleagues attending, he all but stopped going.

...the ones who always went to chapel, they seemed like the unusual persons...because there's always something that makes you busy and very difficult to go to all of them.

And we would even joke about the ones who are always at chapel as a "chapel king". It

was more that we thought this must be some kind of über-religious person, as he's always at chapel, and not someone that doesn't have anything to do.

Spike's view of chapel as a nuisance changed over time, and he eventually made a personal commitment to attend as often as possible. The chapel ritual took on a new meaning for him as a participant in a sub-community of similarly-committed faculty and students, instead of the institution-wide common conversation that seemed to be the function in an earlier era. The now voluntary nature of the event, though drawing smaller crowds, facilitated the desirability of the ritual for those who did attend. Chapel, like most rituals, perpetuated its own value through a shift of normative emphasis from community expectation to group desirability. This pattern of change reflects the transition from strong ties with tightly controlled community expectations, to weak ties, where voluntary association is the foundation of group perpetuation. Spike commented:

...the reason that [chapel] was meaningful is not necessarily dependent on who is speaking or performing or doing whatever, but just being a part of that larger body that voluntarily came to worship.... So when I would go to chapel and sit in an auditorium full of the students it made me feel proud of the students because they went, and it wasn't like "He wants to go to church again" kind of thing, but it was like "Chapel is coming up, let's go", and so I got more out of just seeing that there was a group there. Not necessarily individuals, but that there is a large group there and it made me feel good about EMU and about the student body anyway.

### *Fall Faculty Conference*

The Fall Faculty Conference was a two-day event held prior to the start of the fall semester that combined religious and educational elements in an effort to re-engage faculty after

several months away from the daily rhythms of institutional life. Akin to Emil Durkheim's (1893/1933) *sacred time* and *secular time*, the summer months represented a separated, individualist lifestyle bereft of the collective emotional energy required for education rituals (secular time). The community, then rejoined, celebrated and recommitted to group values through a set of annual rituals (sacred time). The Fall Faculty Conference contained two elements many faculty participants noted as personally significant: corporate worship and thematic study.

On both conference days, the morning began with a session where faculty were led in a time of spiritual reflection often including scripture and liturgy reading and singing, which may include creative accompaniment, but always consists of traditional four-part singing. The worship time was led by a long-time music faculty member who had developed a reputation as an excellent choral leader and scholar of worship music. Those skills were brought to bear on this occasion especially, as traditional hymns were mixed with contemporary and ethnic music styles from around the world. For those who had been raised to value singing of this type, it was a powerful ritual experience of sound and harmony focused on collective worship. Faculty members who had not been raised in this tradition often found it equally overwhelming, even if participation seemed a bit daunting. One non-Mennonite faculty member commented that she just sat and listened, appreciating a practice that meant so much, even if it was not part of her tradition.

Faculty comments distinguish this ritual event from performance. Performance serves the audience by displaying a craft or skill. Ritual serves the participants by reinforcing values and creating symbols of group meaning-making through participation and mutual entrainment. The singing ritual melded common religious purpose to common educational purpose in a way



that no other occasion did. June, a Mennonite faculty member hired in the 1980s, talked about her first Fall Faculty Conference worship experience:

One of the things that almost brought me to tears was that first faculty conference that I attended. I had worked in public schools before that [and the contrast between that experience and this one] was just amazing.... It is when we start singing and we raise our voices and the music is just so wonderful, and the faculty are very gifted in terms of the music. And [the leaders] think very carefully about the planning of music and who leads it... You've come from many different places over the summer, you're not quite ready to begin in lots of ways and it just brings you there. And I remember hearing, I remember right where I was sitting in [the Science Center auditorium] when we did that. And what a gift it was to start something with a sense of, this is what we are here for. And the number one thing is that we start with praising God and that was just an amazing thing for me because I had been in public education and never knew how much I had felt squelched in terms of my faith. I lived it, that's wonderful, but at that stage, I think I needed to hear some of that, but maybe it was for me it felt so free and it's sort of an interesting thing to have that sense of being free at the same time. You're drawn together on a mission, and so there is a responsibility and freedom, and I think I felt that so strongly the first time.

This religious and cultural ritual took on new meaning when performed in an educational setting as preamble to an educational event. Ironically, for June, this environment produced a kind of academic freedom that she felt was denied her in a public institution where academic freedom is assumed to be a central value.

The emotional energy and moral purpose generated through collective worship was precisely the spirit organizers wished to carry forward into the educational enterprise, to inspire faculty to see the educational act, a place and a ritual to which the institution and God had called them, as satisfying the same values and purpose as the musical ritual that began the event. To do this, the College often brought in outside resource people with a particular angle or expertise, and a fresh voice that faculty had not heard before. Often the success of this ritual of renewal hinged on the quality of the speaker and pertinence of the topic. According to Laurie:

I think we had motivational speakers [to remind faculty] why we are [here]; this is why we teach and this is why we are at a small Mennonite college. It is hard after having three months off to go back into teaching again, because it's very hairy. But if you can have someone [to] help remind us [of] the good experiences we have, this is the reason the seeds might be planted in students, this is why we enjoy what were doing, that is really an uplifting thing and helps us go into the new year.

Nevertheless, the Fall Faculty Conference did not capture the emotional and intellectual energy of the entire faculty. For some it was simply an inconvenience at a busy time of year. Both Mennonites and non-Mennonites offered this comment. Some veteran faculty knew it was an important tradition (and one noted he attended for the good of others), but the years of repetition had sapped the salience from the ritual, making it feel tired and repetitious. Some retiring faculty suggested that the significance of the ritual for faculty and for the collective moral purpose of the institution may mean that once the Conference is no longer important, its time to move on.

Although this comment about retirement was offered at least partly in jest, it reflects a real concern. When an institution loses the ability to inspire its faculty, the ability to rely on

intrinsic rewards that keep faculty and keep them happy may be in jeopardy. Leaders at small colleges know they cannot compete monetarily for quality faculty, but if they lose the ability to attract and inspire them through a sense of call, then they must be content with whoever is willing to settle. Loren, a retired faculty member, offered this perspective:

I should say faculty conference, that's a sign that you're getting closer to retirement because it becomes less interesting and less exciting. Because at the beginning that is really high excitement, faculty conferences were extremely important. I think it's just part of the aging process, where you get more cynical and you've heard it before. It's like a 25-year-old preacher who gets up and starts talking about stuff that you've experienced several times over. I mean it's partly an inevitable.

For those faculty members who were energized by the fall faculty retreat, the benefit was a personal sense of purpose but frequently a strong sense of collective mission achieved through co-presence and participation in a ritual moment that, in effect, served as a public renewal of loyalty to a set of loosely-defined educational and religious values. Those values, however named, linked faculty through a common commitment to ideals that each individual personally interpreted (Cohen, 1985). Thus, the Fall Faculty Conference may have been the single most significant formal event in perpetuating the commitment of the faculty and values of the institution.

#### *Unofficial Cross-Institutional Task Rituals*

Unofficial events were cited far less often than official ones, though two types of institution-wide faculty events were noted as particularly important to faculty social bonds: special interests groups, and faculty-initiated conferences. Both of these types of events

highlight a category of rituals that provide cross-institutional cohesion and established an institutional culture of faculty event initiation.

*Special interest groups.* The relatively small size of EMC, the interpersonal familiarity, and the shared religious, cultural, and educational values contributed to a faculty culture of short-term task-related groups organized around a particular area of interest. A review of archival documents established a chain of topical groups, as a pattern of behavior consistent throughout this 35-year period. As examples, in the 1960s a Christmas cantata “Bethlehem” was performed by faculty and staff; in the 1970s a breakfast book discussion captured the attention of some; in the 1980s a faculty men’s chorus gathered and a Ground Zero Committee studied nuclear proliferation; and in the 1990s, a group met to discuss Desert Storm, and a lunch group formed around concerns over the Mennonite position on homosexuality.

The propensity to initiate groups around common interests springs from a culmination of factors noted, but also from the campus space itself. Despite concerns over the fragmented campus, through formal, informal, task, and social meetings, faculty dispersed about campus travelled to other parts on official and unofficial business, encountering colleagues and engaging in discussions. This model of spatial circulation is very different from larger institutions where departments or schools are confined to a building or region on campus. Traffic patterns produced interactions that reminded people of common interests, producing the roots of collaborative formal and informal task events. Regarding this tendency to initiate meetings, June said:

How do you cultivate those [meetings]? A huge way is run into [faculty] on the sidewalk, and you know what they're doing because you hear in the campus bulletin that they've been to this conference for doing this or that. Our faculty are very good at saying, “Oh, I

found this article, and I thought you might be interested". So I'll find something in the mail and I'll send it to someone else: "thought you might be interested in this". We're a sharing family it's...not just what you share academically, it's a natural curiosity of a liberal arts university that you just really want to do that. But it's the proximity and the sidewalks, the committees, we say that we have too many committees and we probably do, or you can say [its that] we care about each other, but part of that is that we want the best...

*Faculty-initiated conferences.* Another expression of the faculty-initiation culture was sporadic academic conferences. Topical conferences were both rituals and expressions of rituals since they emerged from inter-departmental conversations about faculty values and interests, but gained life through a combination of individual motivation and an institutional culture that tended to promote (or at least not prohibit) this type of event. Jay spearheaded several thematic conferences around a topic of personal interest:

The simple fact that people warmed to the [conference] idea and were supportive of it gave me a lot of encouragement and realization that they believed it wasn't just a pipe dream. ...And so the administration I would say at the same time was very open to it, they didn't plan it and didn't promote it per se, [although] they allowed it and blessed it. Part of the thing that helped was that I tried to rally the support of several departments ...and that helped, I think it took about a year to plan and then it came off. So that's validating....

A successful conference undertaking required a high level of coordination, producing positive social bonds through interpersonal exchanges and through the tacit celebration of shared values. As faculty were involved and felt the intrinsic rewards of completing a goal together, they might

also make the cognitive leap from “we did ‘X’ together”, to “this is the type of place where ‘X’ happens”, signaling the generation of institutional solidarity.

In each category of ritual, individual faculty made a decision to engage or not engage the ritual at hand. All of the faculty will not participate in all rituals, but a critical mass of faculty finding strengthened relationships and shared purpose in cross-institutional participation reduces the insularity of departmental work, particularly in those situations where the physical space does not contribute to inter-disciplinary interaction. The ability of Eastern Mennonite to perpetuate a faculty culture of initiation broadly enough so that boundaries are not drawn between a class of participants and one of non-participants will further facilitate institutional solidarity. Clearly, physical on campus space contributed to variable faculty experiences of group bonds and different levels of interaction. The extent to which faculty were given the freedom to find a place to serve and engage the wider institution, such as Marie’s experience with the admissions committee, the greater solidarity and cohesion can be assured regardless of religious and cultural differences.

## CHAPTER NINE

### OFF CAMPUS SPACE

Despite the restricted physical space and regimented calendar of the campus environment, faculty still interpreted rituals through their own values, beliefs, priorities, and group affiliations. Physical space impacted the interpretation of metaphysical space, but did not determine it. To a greater degree, off campus space was subject to the agency of individual faculty members, the sense they made of their own spaces, and their desire to engage their colleagues, to pursue relationships, and to expand the domain of faculty group affiliation beyond the bounds of the required work week. The availability or desirability of off campus events that facilitated faculty solidarity and cohesion was partly dependent upon religious group memberships. However, affiliations related to special interest activities represented a quickly growing priority for many faculty members.

Each of the four types of off campus space discussed in this chapter, home space, religious space, activity space, and international space, is qualitatively different, but each space represents a potential point of connection or disconnection for faculty social bonds, based on individual preferences, memberships, and expectations of community life. Home space, as a physical environment controlled by faculty, functioned as a space where cohesion could be selectively extended beyond the bounds of work life. Some off campus activities such as Faculty Fling and the Mid-Winter Retreat were intentional faculty events sponsored by the institution, although participation was still optional. Although many faculty members were Mennonite, the role of religious space as ritual that facilitated faculty bonds varied widely. For some non-Mennonites different church affiliation facilitated a feeling of exclusion from social bonding and work-related conversations in congregational settings. International space represents a shared

commitment and point of solidarity for faculty who spent time in other countries and cultures. Internationalism facilitated cohesion as associated values were put into practice through program development that sent faculty and students abroad, and storytelling rituals upon return.

### Home Space

“Let him who cannot be alone beware of community...

let him who is not in community beware of being alone.”

With these words, the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1954, p.77) summarized his view of the relationship between personal space and group space, suggesting an interconnected dynamic between the health of the individual and community participation. For the faculty at Eastern Mennonite, the assumptions of how life ought to be lived away from campus changed with new theological interpretations of community, new membership, new professional affiliations, and new generations. The value faculty members placed on individual space versus shared space influenced where they lived physically and how they chose to relate or not relate to other faculty members through that space.

The way faculty members think about their home space provides insights into the changing identity of faculty collectively. Faculty choice of domicile reveals personal and community values, such as the importance of relationships with the local non-Mennonite population, the importance of living near a church congregation, and the importance of creating metaphysical separation between home and work environments. In this section, home space is analyzed from two perspectives: first, in terms of the generational dynamics between physical and metaphysical proximity to campus and colleagues, and second, in terms of the use of that home space to foster faculty social bonds, or create space from them.

### *Physical and Metaphysical Home Space*



Although the current address of Eastern Mennonite University is Harrisonburg, Virginia, when Eastern Mennonite School was founded some 90 years ago, the area was named Park View, for its location on a prominent ridge overlooking what had been a fairgrounds-like complex, including a hotel, large meeting hall, ball fields, and track for racing horses (Pellman, 1967). Since the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Harrisonburg has grown up around the Mennonite neighborhood from the south. The housing area to the north of campus, still known as Park View, has long been an enclave for college employees, retirees, and members of the Mennonite community in general.

The decision of faculty whether or not to live in and around Park View is a revealing expression of personal relationship to the Mennonite community and personal conception of what it means to be in community. For many faculty and particularly those of the Augsburg generation such as Bertha, college friends and congregational friends were nearly synonymous, and living in close proximity to both locations seemed like a natural expression of that membership overlap. However for other Mennonite faculty such as Mary, the Mennonite community felt stifling, and she expressed how important it was for her to have space away from it, despite her religious and educational solidarity.

Furthermore, with exceptions, this home space value has varied generationally throughout the course of this 35-year span. In the 1960s and 1970s, living in and around Park View was, for many faculty, a practical decision and expression of communitarian values. Several faculty members hired in the 1960s decided to pool their resources and build a series of adjoining town homes with a common basement that included a recreational area and laundry facilities. Their connections to the Mennonite cultural network had linked their families through school and church affiliations, and although this was a new sort of venture, the intimate physical

space reflected the pre-existing close metaphysical space and a value of shared space, even though economic concerns were also a factor in the decision. The frequent off campus interaction facilitated by this unique home space not only created close relationships, but a closeness with the institution that changed in later years after they had moved to separate homes.

One of the members commented:

Because most of [the people in the group] were associated with EMU, you saw them much more often. In some sense you lost some connection between, I would talk to [the other two faculty members] daily when we lived [in the townhouses] [and I heard] what they knew about EMU and shared with me about EMU. I sort of miss that out [where he and his wife live now]. I think in a sense, I felt [after moving] a little more isolated than I had in the early part, but that didn't have anything to do about the school and its policies.

Certainly, this was a unique experience, but it also typified the intensity of social, religious, and educational interaction common to many faculty members of that generation, facilitated by close physical proximity and expectations that home space perpetuated those bonds.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the priority many Mennonites placed on close and all-encompassing community began to change, and EMC, reflective of the church generally, became less insular and more accepting of different traditions. The perspective on home space began to change in a similar way both through the inclusion of non-Mennonite faculty and through new perspectives that valued personal space on one hand, and interaction outside the Mennonite community on the other. June, a faculty member hired in the 1980s, bucked the trend she observed of new faculty avoiding Park View, though her reasons for living in close proximity to the college reflected her concern for her family's internal connection rather than a desire to wrap all aspects of her life in one social and religious group. Elsewhere, Jane expressed that she

needed non-EMU connections to honor her husband's perspective, and to help her children engage in a variety of activities. She explained:

[When] we moved here in [the 1980s] we were very much cautioned by lots of faculty, "Don't live close to EMU, go outside of there".... I would say most faculty choose to do that – they want that other life. But then there is a group that doesn't do that, and I would be with a group that does not. Part of that is, I wanted to be able to walk [to campus], I wanted my kids to be able to come over. I wanted them to experience that as community, the whole place as a community that they could run through the halls of EMU and feel just as comfortable. I think it was a smart thing as I look at the faculty since [the 1980s] who have come, that was a good choice for me and my family.

A third group of faculty lived away from campus but was metaphysically tied to the educational and religious communities in both locations. For these faculty members, living in a different space allowed them to engage in social networks inside and outside the Mennonite community. For some faculty, it also allowed them to serve as a metaphysical and physical bridge between disparate social networks. Closing the metaphysical gap is what gave them energy, rather than cloistering themselves in it or from it. According to Gerald, a veteran faculty member:

I have always sort of maintained space, so to speak, between my academic world and my private life in this regard: that I have chosen to live out in the country. I live about 12 miles from here, and I know that many others, probably the majority of faculty members live right here close by [the College].... And so, I think when I leave this place and go home, my home, my environment there is very different than probably the environment that and a lot of other faculty members come from. ...I know that for me because of that

distinction between different worlds, when I come to this place I love this place. And when I leave this place, I love what I do elsewhere as well. And I don't know if that makes a difference for a faculty member who lives here almost day and night because you're in the same community, and never get a chance to break away.... I would still say that a lot of my social connections are still with college people. In fact one of the things I enjoy doing is inviting students and faculty members to come out and enjoy the rural environment as well. And sometimes I think they valued the chance to get to do that as well.... And I think also, there is a sense in which even though the worlds are different, they complement each other. For example I think sometimes because I live in a rural area and live on a farm and all of that, when I'm in the classroom -- that adds another whole perspective to what I do in the classroom. And of course, my academic world also informs my rural community and my rural friends as well. Because I do have friends and neighbors that are not at all connected with the academic world at all. But I still try to invite my academic friends to be a part of that other world that I have.

The relationship between physical and metaphysical home space is understood more easily through a four-sector matrix (Figure 9). In each quadrant, faculty have negotiated personal and social values in the process of determining the physical location of their home space in reference to their desire for a specific type of metaphysical space between themselves and their colleagues, and themselves and the institution.

*Figure 9: Faculty home space: Physical and metaphysical values negotiated.*

	<b>Physical Closeness to Campus</b>	<b>Physical Distance from Campus</b>
<b>Metaphysical Closeness to Faculty Colleagues when Off campus</b>	(Example: Bertha): Typically of 1960s and 1970s hires, close ties between church, college and social life.	(Example: Gerald): Faculty who are rurally-based or enjoy a different physical environment at home, but also enjoy connecting home space and college social space.
<b>Metaphysical Distance from Colleagues when Off campus</b>	(Example: June): To honor spouse and establish other connections, non-network bonds are formed, though physical proximity allows for easy family access to work space.	(Example: Lucy): Non-Mennonite hired in the late 1980s. Wants to keep distance between her social and family time and her work world on campus.

The key question is how these decisions reflect and impact changes to faculty social bonds. If, as in Gerald's case, faculty members see their physical space, though distant, as a resource for themselves and the community to which they are committed, then perhaps the physical proximity may have changed but the metaphysical proximity remained constant. If proximity changes imply an altered metaphysical space between faculty members reflective of new or different social values, then the proximity change may be one source of relational change within the institutional as well. For faculty cohesion and solidarity to continue, the distanced off campus metaphysical space may mean increased pressure applied to on campus task and social rituals to maintain these bonds, if they are to be maintained. The shift from close physical and metaphysical space to more frequent distances could also be characterized as indicative of the shift from strong to weak ties (Granovetter, 1973), making faculty bonds more a matter of commitment than frequency of interaction.

#### *Home Space Facilitating Ritual Space*

Faculty position home space in part based on individual interpretations of community participation. Home space was also used as a ritual space to selectively facilitate social bonds, or

to avoid them. The use of home space as a primary means to facilitate social bonds was subject to social and cultural reprioritization and generational change, as many younger faculty made social connections through interest-specific events.

For many of the Augsburg-era faculty, shared meal rituals provided a relational foundation and social intimacy with new colleagues and veteran peers. In the late 1960s, the established faculty had children and responsibilities, and the new faculty were looking for social connections. Several faculty members new during this era commented how, as unmarried individuals, gathering socially over meals was a common occurrence and great source of emotional support. In response to my question regarding events that impacted his relationship to faculty the most, Elmer said: "I would say it didn't happen very much, but being invited into a faculty member's home made huge difference. I also invited some of them in as a single man".

Faculty comments connected the frequency and desirability of dinner invitations to generational and cultural change as well. For Mennonite faculty members who had grown up in intensive religious communities, the exchange of meal invitations was quite common, to the extent that some families established regular patterns of meal-sharing. This tradition continued for some faculty, like Carmen, who, along with her family, was part of a monthly multi-family family shared meal in which hosting duties were rotated among participants. However, indicative of modern community, as the Mennonite cultural network has become less central to faculty lives and the religious, social, and educational facets of life are less inter-twined, family social time has shifted reflecting the social focus towards sports, clubs, and children's scholastic activities, and away from the church as the center of the family's social time. Paul, a faculty member hired in the 1970s, suggested:

I may not have a good measure on this; we don't [invite faculty and students to our home], we did a lot of that in the 1980s and 1990s. More recently, people...are at work all week and they're not really interested in going to another faculty member's home. ...I'm sure some of that happens, and some faculty have close friends so I'm sure it does happen. But I don't think, when you look at the larger Mennonite ethos, people are not as quick to open their doors.... And I think as persons, there's been a lot of individual interests that people have developed like runners or sports, people do a lot of socializing around their kids and sports and that gives a natural [point of connection]. That was true for us too, I think, when our kids were involved in [high school]. The faculty we saw most often were the ones that had kids our age at sporting events, [and we] would sometimes go to sporting events together. But I guess I see the University reflecting basically the larger changes within the denomination...

Only one non-Mennonite faculty mentioned meal invitations – Lucy recalled hosting an Ethiopian-themed dinner for other faculty women on one occasion. From the comments of Mennonite faculty who named specific non-Mennonite faculty as friends, it is clear circumstantially that other home invitations did occur. Because non-Mennonites were not affected by the same cultural and social connective forces that linked many Mennonite faculty through their congregations and other affiliations, it is less likely meal invitations were as expected, yet the meal ritual represents another link in the cohesive chain where insiders perpetuated and strengthened social bonds through events where non-Mennonites were infrequently included.

It is not surprising that given the reduction in Mennonite insularity and increase in general social engagement that rituals so easily perpetuated in closed social circles should

become less pervasive. It may also be that, as the focus shifts from meals to sports and interest-related gatherings, faculty find themselves still relating to other faculty on the basis of these new pursuits. However, the consequences of the loss of shared meal rituals could be significant as well. The social contexts in addition to the education and religious venues that facilitated interpersonal relationships also may be important to working relationships. Rob suggested that the quality of task interaction improved as he interacted and observed the behavior of colleagues in a variety of on and off campus settings. If this is the case, then each shared practice that loses salience is one less potential source of interpersonal insight, and one less piece of information that helps faculty to navigate social and task situations in the college context.

### Church Space

A central premise thus far has been the overlapping and mutually-reinforcing domains of religious, social, and educational life at Eastern Mennonite. In chapter six, the discussion of the traditional centrality of congregational life highlighted the way religious meaning was infused into the daily social experiences of many Mennonite communities. Given that common experience, as the faculty of Eastern Mennonite diversified, the role of congregational life has become increasingly variable. Thus, church space represents a ritual environment through which faculty may or may not perpetuate social bonds with other faculty. Faculty expectations for church space fit three general categories: church space as perpetuator of faculty bonds; church space as relationally distinct but ideologically supportive of social bonds, and; church space as segregated from faculty life and identity.

By way of context, it is important to understand that there were at this time many Mennonite churches in the general geographic area around EMU. In addition to at least one congregation that met on campus and the Mennonite church located in the Park View, there were



at least five other Mennonite churches in Harrisonburg, and at least twenty total in surrounding area. Although the majority of these local congregations were part of the Mennonite Church, USA, each also had a unique identity based on size, theological emphasis, location, and history. As a result, some faculty members attend Mennonite churches with many other faculty members, and some attend Mennonite churches with few or none.

A sizable cohort of faculty members regardless of hiring generation reported that different spheres of life facilitated interaction with other faculty members. For those veteran faculty members such as Ella, home space, work space, and church space intersected and facilitated cross-contextual conversations on personal, theological, and academic topics. Ella commented:

...when I first came here we went to a church that met in the chapel [on campus] and then when we moved...we went [to the local Mennonite church, and there] were always lots of EMU folks there. At certain periods for a while, we had a [small religious group] that met here on campus - they were made up of the faculty. And then when I was at [the local church], [my husband] and I were part of a small group, and they were all EMU people. So our church life and school life were very mixed.

Rob and Louise, faculty members who came from other religious traditions and joined Mennonite congregations, also found the intersection of social, religious and educational communities to be positively reinforcing. Rob, in particular, had been sympathetic to Mennonite beliefs and values before his employment at EMU, and the opportunity to attend a Mennonite church and interact with other faculty functioned as an expression of religious solidarity for him. According to Rob:

Another thing is, even in my first year the church I went to, there weren't too many faculty who went there, but I happen to be friends with one of them and that was a good thing to be connected there. Now we go to a different church and it's a lot of EMU faculty and staff. I think it's really valuable, I enjoy it a lot. I guess some people might not want to see those people again on Sunday morning, but I like it.

Second, some Mennonite faculty members, either by intention or circumstance, attended churches where there were few college faculty. These faculty members did not have cohesive networks that extended into their congregational experience. One veteran faculty member commented that he saw his colleagues every day, and intentionally chose a congregation where they did not attend just so he could expand his experience with non-academic Mennonites. Other Mennonites chose churches, based on other geographic, theological, or historical reasons that by circumstance alone had few professors as members.

However, for many faculty members, the Mennonite affiliation of their churches and the importance of distinctive faith commitments nevertheless buttressed a sense of general ideological and religious purpose with Eastern Mennonite, contributing to institutional solidarity even though cohesion may not have been directly supported. For some faculty members, congregational affiliation remains the locus of their religious cohesive network. Jay, a faculty member hired in the 1980s, commented:

For me personally, meaningful interactions come at church. The church that I go to, there have only been a couple faculty people from EMU and none from our department.

...again I come back to this [idea] about [faculty] community or comradeship not being a community like a church. [EMU] is not church – it's a workplace environment, but a Christian workplace environment where people care about each other.

The distinction Jay draws is crucial to understanding how some faculty envision their off campus social and religious space differently than others, and how that personal identity and group membership impacts faculty social bonds.

Third, non-Mennonites, by virtue of their denominational affiliations, associate with a group of congregants who are unlikely to be Eastern Mennonite faculty members, reducing the possibility that congregational cohesion and faculty cohesion will overlap. Attending a church that is not directly supportive of distinctive Mennonite values and beliefs reduces the possibility that congregational rituals will facilitate a sense of institutional solidarity. However, as the sense of call experienced by some non-Mennonite faculty members was expressed as a general call to serve God in a religious educational environment where they were free to express their religious views, participating in church rituals might enhance their sense of moral purpose enacted through their faculty role. In this case, a general Christian solidarity might have occurred.

However, some non-Mennonite faculty members felt that they were not part of the full faculty experience because they did not attend a Mennonite church. Specifically, several non-Mennonite faculty perceived that the blurring of church space and college space resulted in informal academic discussions of policy and politics occurring in religious or social setting to which they were not privy. Scott, a former non-Mennonite faculty member, said:

Most of my interaction was predominately on campus on committees, going out to lunch, but still kind of during the workday concept, and very little interaction outside of the workday or work environment interaction at conferences, things like that. But very little interaction outside of the workday socially, or engaged in that aspect of it. Part of that, I feel like was because I was not Mennonite, quite honestly. And I think that had an

influence on the level of interaction, because I always heard about a lot of interaction and decision-making processes occurring at church, but I was not part of that mix.

It is probable that some college-related business did occur in Mennonite social or religious spaces. Although some Mennonite faculty argued that this happened infrequently, the critical issue is the perception among non-Mennonite faculty that over-lapping religious, social, and educational spaces excluded them from important aspects of their professional domain. In a sense then, the perceived close metaphysical space between these various expressions of Mennonite practice enlarged the metaphysical distance between some non-Mennonites and their colleagues and institution.

Church space impacted the way faculty established connections, felt connected, or did not feel connected to other faculty socially in at least two ways. First, the variation in church space experiences demonstrates that even within the Mennonite community, faculty have long fulfilled their need for congregational affiliations in ways that do not necessarily contribute to cohesive faculty networks. Second, the meaning made of congregational affiliations illustrates the frequent sense of exclusion that non-Mennonites experienced. For some Mennonites and non-Mennonites, church was simply a different community from their work community. For faculty with separate work and congregational domains, religious rituals may have supported solidarity to Mennonite values or to Christian commitments in general. For other non-Mennonites (and, potentially also for Mennonites who did not attend faculty-populated churches), the suspicion that significant social and task bonds were formed and perpetuated in the church context occasionally reduced cohesion and promoted feelings of exclusion.

#### College Activity Space

Although faculty interacted in contexts outside of home and church, events sponsored through the institution that take place off campus were significant as well. In this section, two types of events will be analyzed: off campus retreats, and the Spring Faculty Fling.

### *Off campus Retreats*

The faculty retreat, as an organized event occurring at an off campus site and including both task and social elements, has long been a mainstay of deans, presidents, and other administrators who are looking to use physical space to adjust metaphysical space through the change of pace and interpersonal interaction retreats provide (Pedrick, 1985). Like many higher education institutions, various departmental or administrative sub-sets of Eastern Mennonite have, from time to time, initiated retreats for strategic planning, morale improvement, and other purposes.

In the 1980s, EMC held several all-faculty retreats at off-site locations between fall and spring semesters. Although it is not clear exactly how many of these mid-winter faculty retreats were held, university archives hold a sporadic selection of itineraries as late as 1987. Several retreats were held at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center in Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania, several hours drive from campus. A typical event began Friday evening with social time and a vespers service, business through the morning and early afternoon on Saturday (in one case, work on the five-year academic plan), free time in the afternoon, then a talent show in the evening. Following a worship service Sunday morning, the retreated concluded. The event was planned by the Faculty Development and Research Committee, with the academic planning portions officiated by the Dean's Committee.

When asked what events impacted their sense of belonging to the collective faculty group, many faculty members, some of whom were recent hires in the 1980s, pointed to the mid-

winter faculty retreat as particularly meaningful. Faculty members noted that administrative tasks were part of the purpose, but the value of the retreat was in the social relationships it facilitated. Ella, a retired faculty member hired in the 1970s, commented:

Well, in Laurelville...some of them were planning retreats where we were working at curriculum. I don't remember what we did at the Laurelville retreat, but I do remember that it was significant in terms of interactions with each other. I think it was somehow strategic in terms of some kind of planning, but I don't remember what we did – it would be interesting to look that up. I mean, the interaction, that's where you, at night you played Dutch Blitz<sup>4</sup> and other stuff, and you sat and talked to people, and you got to know people in ways that you don't in your ordinary work life and the only way you're going to get that is if you go off campus overnight.

In structured organizational settings there are intermittent moments of informal social contact. However, generally it is a space where a professional persona, honed from years of practice, is on display (Goffman, 1967). This persona gives confidence to students and colleagues that a faculty member is competent, confident, and professionally prepared. The powerful combination of spatial expectations and professional persona limit the acceptability of certain behaviors in the formal college setting, unless, like the Science Center lunchroom, a sub-culture emerges that re-norms a given space. The persona constructed for use in social and informal situations emphasizes different aspects of a person's personality, interests, and typical behaviors. In Goffman's view, personas are not disingenuous, nor is one the "true self" and the others a self-deception. Rather, people construct themselves as they are personally and culturally able, to best manage different types of situations.

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<sup>4</sup> Dutch Blitz was a popular card game among Mennonites

The physical retreat space functions as a cue for a persona switch, at least in part. In this case, the rural, natural setting, the structures built for recreation, the clustered sleeping space, all represented an environment in which a different type of self-representation is typically expected, even though some task space was also present. Consequently, when faculty members expressed that they were able to see a new side of their colleagues, to know them, to be known – and accepted – generally it produced feelings of appreciation and insight. Ella commented that she tended to be a rather serious, task-oriented person. At the retreat, colleagues saw her sense of humor, and one mentioned that he had not seen that side of her before. In the way she told this story, it was clear that she felt better appreciated as individual faculty members understood her more fully.

In terms of solidarity and cohesion, informal social interactions, and even formal task interactions in an informal setting facilitated cohesion between the faculty members who learned to know each other in new ways through interaction patterns not normally experienced on campus. Solidary bonds were strengthened through the understanding that this was not a social occasion exclusively, and that cooperatively, an important task was accomplished. The task and social processes, in concert, allowed faculty members to feel they were supporting a common mission and purpose. This was particularly important in the late 1980s, as the faculty began to diversify and grow, and the need to facilitate social bonds between faculty generations and between Mennonite insiders and outsiders heightened. The narrow task focus facilitated by most on campus spaces contrasted with the sense of possibility experienced in a new space where rituals and standardized usage had yet to be solidified for the group. Gene, a faculty member hired in the early 1970s, said:

[The retreat] was very bonding. All of a sudden you'd discover, "Hey, I didn't think I had anything in common with that person", so it bridged a lot of those divisions that were emerging and provide a context in which you could relate around something other than an issue at you're debating in a faculty meeting. That's the thing about faculty meetings typically, you are arguing about something, and so these were situations where you didn't argue about them. And you just stimulated your minds, together. I thought it was very significant.

### *Faculty Fling*

For event participants, the Mid-Winter Retreats facilitated faculty cohesion and solidarity through a combination of social and task elements in a new physical space. However, another type of annual event contributed to faculty solidarity and cohesion through a singularly social context free from the expectations and constraints of the campus environment. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, an event called the Spring Faculty Fling was held the week after grades were due in celebration of the end of the semester. Faculty Fling consisted of a day-trip to Washington D.C. (about a three-hour drive). Usually, the itinerary included attendance of a play, time to explore the museums independently, and dinner together prior to the evening return on the van or bus the College would charter for the day. Initially, the event was organized by a faculty member and financed by faculty. After several years, the institution began to sponsor the event, covering the cost of transportation and part of the cost of the performance ticket.

Although Faculty Fling was purely a social occasion, it also represented a strategic investment on the part of the College. It revealed an important organizational value: what is good for the faculty, collectively, is also good for the institution. Many faculty members recalled how enjoyable that trip was both in terms of new and important relationships that were formed,



and as ritual that brought closure to the year through a casual social occasion with the faculty body in general.

Faculty Fling represents a significant example of one form that the relationship of solidarity and cohesion can take. College sponsorship in combination with positive interpersonal bonds, allowed the meaning made of the event to shift from a specific conclusion about a network of individuals only (cohesion), to a general conclusion about the nature of the group and the institution (solidarity). I identify this as a *solidary turn*, or a situational reformulation of cohesion as solidarity. In the case of the Faculty Fling, the circumstances provide additional clues about how the solidary turn occurs. Here, a social situation that is acceptable and enjoyable by the participants is sponsored by the institution. For cohesion to be reinterpreted as solidarity, participants experiencing cohesion must share a point of commonality, such as an organization or an ideological position, around which solidarity can be focused. In this case, institutional investment and active sponsorship of the event serves as a link between individual faculty members. As a result, desirable interpersonal experiences reflect positively on the College as the event sponsor. If this valued experience is interpreted as typical of faculty interactions and institutional behaviors based on past experiences, solidarity with the institution may result.

The key ingredient, as witnessed by legions of unpleasant corporate picnics, is the desirability of the event. For the social ritual to be successful, it must support and re-energize group values. Faculty Fling was meaningful precisely because it created an off campus ritual space that celebrated values of collegiality that were already important to many faculty members. Louise commented on Faculty Fling:

[Faculty Fling] was fun, yes, I went a couple of times. Sometimes when you're coaching at that point you just want to go to "No I'm not going anywhere". But again it was another time when we got together as faculty. It was one of those little gifts where they said just go and talk to other faculty, spend time with other people in a totally different setting. That spring fling has now turned into Spring faculty meeting. [laughs] Well, we can't afford spring flings anymore.

Due to the discontinuation of both Faculty Fling and the Mid-Winter Retreat, nearly every discussion of these events turned into a conversation on faculty perceptions of changing social bonds and changing institutional loyalty. Two issues were commonly cited. First, faculty demographics changed. In the 1980s, the majority of the Augsburg generation of faculty were between 50 and 60 years of age, with few family responsibilities to keep them from heading out of town for a day or a weekend. According to my informants, faculty members in the Detweiler and Lapp eras who had children simply were not willing to leave them overnight. Second, the sense of institutional ownership and service changed. As I have discussed extensively already, faculty did not perceive loyalty to imply the same intensive level of institutional dedication that they experienced in the past. This is likely due in part to increased faculty professional boundaries, institutional size, redefinitions of what it means to follow a call to institutional service, and the increasing emulation of the higher education standard of bureaucracy observed by the university. According to Rosa:

People started getting upset about [the mid-year retreat] because there were too many events, too many family events between Christmas and the New Year. We went to Laurelville a couple of times that I remember where we spent a weekend there. All the faculty were invited to come, I don't remember how many people actually came. It was

pretty good, but what ended that, I don't think it was the budget. It was the complaints of people with young children. As the faculty became younger, they did not want to do that anymore.

Two particular points are vital to observe about these events, in retrospect and regarding organizational behavior. First, getting (willing) faculty together off campus matters. A high frequency and differentiation of shared experiences produces diverse insights and appreciation of individual talents, quirks, and foibles – behaviors that, without a context, may be inappropriate in the work environment. Positively, improved interpersonal understanding among faculty colleagues often contributes to more engaging, appreciative, and tolerant faculty behavior toward one another. Exceptions abound, of course, but improving faculty social bonds and faculty task behavior can be facilitated more easily through the metaphysical space created in non-typical physical spaces.

Second, from a leadership standpoint, savvy administrators may benefit from understanding faculty culture and demographics to best utilize strategies for promoting social bonds. At EMC in the early 1980s, the generational cycle of the faculty combined with pre-existing relationships and a pre-disposition toward social networking with other faculty members to make the Mid-Winter Retreat and Faculty Fling timely endeavors that fit the culture. Several years later these types of events, however fruitful in the past, served to frustrate faculty and degraded institutional solidarity. A dean in this position may realize that tending internal physical environments where social bonds can be formed, though not as efficacious as off campus events, is the best option for the nature of the group. However, if creating a faculty culture that embraces off campus rituals as a worthwhile part of the group experience is an institutional goal, then preparing the faculty through informal channels rather than forcing off

campus events onto the procrustean bed of faculty culture should be the initial task. At Eastern Mennonite, the faculty changed culturally and generationally, making off campus rituals more difficult to schedule and less palatable to faculty. Faculty buy-in is necessary for successful social and task rituals, particularly when they impinge on what faculty perceive to be personal metaphysical space.

### International Space

The 20<sup>th</sup> century was, among other features, a century of wars. Every generation faced the reality of conflict that, although differing by scale, nevertheless required young men to leave their homes and if they returned at all, they returned irrevocably changed. For Mennonite youth growing up in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, military conscription meant something very different. One of the points of theology and practice that has long separated Mennonites from most other Christian churches is the commitment to non-violence and pacifism, and most explicitly, a rejection of military service. Frequently, this position has been unpopular in American society at large, particularly during times of heightened patriotism. Negative societal reactions served to bolster group solidarity for most Mennonites, although prior to World War II, some believers were forced to flee the country or serve prison terms for their position (Redekop, 1989).

After World War II, many of the young men registered as conscientious objectors, fulfilling their draft duties around the globe through service ventures in hospitals, building projects, and all manner of international aid projects. The contrast between the intimate social home space many of them left and the international space where they served was dramatic. In the process, many young Mennonites developed a deep appreciation for the indigenous culture of their hosts in Africa, South and Central America, and Asia, with whom they often found a

kinship for the values of community and localism that were part of both heritages. Furthermore, the marginality Mennonites felt historically and at times in the United States created solidary bonds with local under-represented populations in developing nations. Anabaptist values of simplicity and cultural non-conformity found new expressions with the juxtaposition between the subsistence living of poorer countries and the consumerism of Americans.

The non-traditional career path of Mennonite academics in this era – high school, international service, college and graduate school (or some configuration of these) – produced several generations of young scholars looking to infuse their graduate and professional work with the ideals internalized from international service. Arriving at EMC in the 1960s and 1970s, faculty members who shared these values experienced cohesive purpose and solidarity with an institution that was finding new ways to integrate internationalism into the curriculum and into student experiences. Mengistu, a Mennonite faculty member hired in the mid-1970s, related:

...you developed a cohesion with people who had similar ideas.... For awhile I didn't know if I wanted to go into the social sciences or religion, so I have felt some camaraderie with the social science people and history people because [they] had a similar vocabulary and worldview. For example, even though some came from Latin America, and I came from Africa we understood the same things but because we had a similar worldview, and what it means to interact in cross-cultural situations and what benefit that was to us, and what benefit that would be for students to avail themselves of in a cross-cultural requirement.

As an increasing number of people with international experience were hired, the institution found new ways to express this burgeoning value of internationalism. As early as the 1940s the college began inviting international scholars with Mennonite connections to the

campus for one-year appointments to provide an avenue for students and faculty to interact with and appreciate cultural diversity, albeit from the safety of their own campus. In the 1960s and 1970s, the college founded partnerships with non-Mennonite educational institutions in Quebec and Washington DC to provide students with different types of first-hand urban cultural exposure. It was not until the late 1970s and 1980s did EMC faculty began taking groups of students to developing countries, many of which traveled for a semester at a time. In the late 1980s, EMC formally adopted the study-abroad requirement, making a semester-long cross cultural experience (shorter summer experiences were also available) standard as part of the general education curriculum.

The development of the semester-abroad program and the common international experience was significant to faculty social bonds in two ways. First, the process of developing the curriculum created conversations that articulated the value of internationalism and its value in higher education, embedding it further as an institutional value rather than a value shared by a minority of faculty. To have the institution adopt this curricular position established institutional solidarity by the expression of a value that many faculty held in common already.

Second, the actual operation of the program created the opportunity for a new set of rituals that reified values of internationalism. For example, cohorts of students returning from a cross-cultural experience typically led a chapel service at which they discussed their experiences and the meaning made of them. The excitement of hearing from these returning travelers and the personal transformation students experienced served to form and re-form cohesive bonds in the college community and create solidarity with all those who had proceeded them in this rite of passage. Manuel, a Mennonite faculty member hired in the early 1980s, recalled:

I came that first semester in the fall semester to replace [a language] teacher who was out of the country with a cross-cultural. Then he was planning on going on to doctoral studies, so my position here was sort of tenuous and open-ended. In spite of that, we came here and at the end of that first semester he and his students returned from Central America, which was in those days something of a war zone, and presented a program about what they had experienced and learned. And the atmosphere in the chapel service in which they presented those things was one of eagerness to hear and learn about this. Whereas, my previous experience, when I'm with students returned from the same region to report on our experience [at another institution], there was a strong sense of doubt and suspicion. So it was impressive, that chapel service, where the audience reaction I think I can point to specifically [was] "Wow, we're going to hear about this Central America cross-cultural group in this chapel service!"

In an odd way then, physical space contributed to metaphysical space through values of the physical distance shared between faculty members. The common value of internationalism, expressed through a ritualized trip away from the community, served to tighten a sense of solidarity through a common sympathy for the difficulty of the experience, the challenges of leadership, the rewards of group development, and the general commitment to values of internationalism their sacrifice displayed. Upon return, cohesive bonds were strengthened as well, as faculty shared stories of their adventures and experienced the enthusiasm and support of their colleagues and educational community. One faculty member recalled what a lonely, frightening experience leading a group of students in Africa had been. However, despite her exhaustion and frustration, observing the growth of students increased her appreciation for the institution and for other faculty who went through the same ordeal.

Although this program continued through the year 2000, some of the faculty reaching retirement age at this point expressed concerns about the way the changing life experiences of newer faculty might impact the core values of and motivation for the cross-cultural program. Professors suggested two potential issues from the faculty side. First, obviously, the career path of newer faculty is radically different than it was for those who initiated the program. Gerald commented that he would not wish the draft upon them, but it did serve to forge a common experience for a generation of faculty. Although many newer faculty members come from communities where their parents and fellow congregants had international experiences and passed those values along, fewer new faculty members have the extended, intensive, and geographically isolated experiences that shaped the previous generation so powerfully. Contributing to that change is the increasing diversity of the institution. Although some faculty are attracted to the institution because of its international perspective, more come to the school from a broader Christian commitment that does not perpetuate this value. Gene commented on this change:

...the other big thing is [that] faculty now have gone from being 70% or more who would have lived at least one year or more in another country, and would often have had another language. Today, I think the last report I saw was something like 30%. Now that radically alters how faculty looks at the rest of the world. If you have that kind of firsthand experience often living grass roots as opposed to people – we have people who may have lived a year in Britain and doing a graduate degree at Oxford, which is very different to those who would've lived in a village in the Congo for two years or three years. So when I came, 70% would have done that, and now when I leave probably 30 to 35% would represent that.



Gene is suggesting that the difference is not just numerical; it is a matter of worldview. Part of the vision for the cross-cultural program that motivated faculty who helped to found it was a desire to expose students to the same process of self-discovery and learning that impacted them so powerfully. To do this, Gene suggests that faculty leaders need to view their indigenous hosts as teachers and understand their suspicion towards industrialized assistance. Without a personal and transformative cross-cultural experience, Gene wonders if this perspective will be adopted.

Second, the numeric change in experience level also hints at a potential change in a sense of faculty ownership of the curriculum and the shared value of internationalism itself. For a wide variety of faculty to lead a group of students in a foreign country for a semester takes an enormous amount of energy and initiative. Faculty leaders benefit from a value system that turns that difficult experience into an intrinsic reward, both in its own right, and in relationship to colleagues with similar experiences. It is unlikely contiguous generations of faculty will have the same life-altering experience as the retiring generation shared. Without this solidary bond, this sense of common ownership and experience, the value of internationalism will need to find a new basis and new expressions, which has in part occurred through the graduate Center for Justice and Peace.

Off campus spaces provided environments where faculty cohesion could be strengthened through purposeful shared experiences. In many cases, formal and informal off campus rituals such as shared meals, retreats, and international forays were infrequent and special events to which faculty participants ascribed special meaning. Similar to the value of on campus informal lunch rituals that provided interpersonal insights not gathered through formal events, so off campus interactions often took place in contexts that were not the exclusive domain of the group, providing faculty with the opportunity to take on different roles and behave in casual ways that

the formal work environment discouraged. Institutional leaders recognized the value of off campus settings to focus collective attention on an issue or on social bonding.

Home space, church space, activity space, and international space all could be used to extend existing faculty bonds beyond the college environment, though this extension of social bonds was not positive for all faculty members. For some faculty members, connecting various realms of social interaction was a natural result of existing cultural and religious expectations for community life. For other faculty members, physical distance provided individualize identity space apart from the work environment in which they could focus relational energy on social networks not directly tied to Eastern Mennonite.

Finally, for non-Mennonites, off campus space provided potential situations of perceived exclusion as well as contexts of interaction free from the cultural assumptions that occasionally caused discomfort. Non-Mennonites brought with them different cohesive networks that often were in no way connected to the social networks of Mennonites, occasionally resulting in a sense of exclusion from the full range of faculty interactions. The unknown nature of the Mennonite congregational experience and impression of strong church connections gave some non-Mennonites the impression that total faculty participation could only be had by those who were members of the Mennonite church, even though the experiences of Mennonites differed widely. However, for some non-Mennonites, other off campus rituals, such as Faculty Fling, allowed them to connect with Mennonite faculty outside a context in which Mennonite values and behaviors were normative. The space itself did not determine the impact on social networks, rather, the commitments and expectations of individuals shaped the meaning made of off campus space.

CHAPTER TEN  
CONCLUSIONS: RITUAL, SOLIDARITY, COHESION,  
AND THE REVISION OF FACULTY CULTURE

As several faculty members observed, the physical distance traveled and metaphysical change experienced in the lifetimes of the Augsburg generation of faculty was epic. External forces of history expanded the physical and metaphysical geography of these faculty members through international experiences that few might have chosen, but all seemed to cherish. The identity space they discovered, thousands of miles from the communities that had so powerfully shaped them, led to a reconstitution of their perceptions of the world and their place in it by adapting their values of community, simplicity, and justice, rather than replacing them.

The physical and metaphysical landscape these international travelers left behind was not static in their absence. Although many of these same faculty would assume professional roles at EMC prior to the more visible organizational changes of clothing and buildings, the paradigmatic shift had begun, turning from an inward-focused cloistered community based on homogeneity and internal cultural conformity, to a community concerned with service, peace, and justice issues constituted according to the values and belief commitments of an increasingly diverse constituency.

Yet to characterize this change as quick, smooth, or total ignores the fits and starts of a process of individual and collective identity formation that is never complete. Through this 35-year time period, aspects of religious conservatism, ethnic identity, and community self-protection not only persisted, but found purchase as lasting features of this shifting physical and metaphysical landscape. In the following conclusions, the status of ritual, solidarity, cohesion, and culture are reconsidered in light of the story of cultural and organizational *becoming* told

thus far. Finally, I will analyze how faculty members understand the identity of the institution in light of these changes to group bonds and practices.

### Ritual Space

The concept of ritual filled a central role in this study as the barometer of changes to social bonds and faculty culture, since rituals of various kinds are primarily responsible for the production and modification of solidarity and cohesion. A review of ritual change according to nature and structure provides insights into the ways that the perceived identity of Eastern Mennonite has been reshaped during the time period in question.

### *Ritual Change*

Ritual change most frequently occurred for two reasons: first, due to physical environmental changes; and second, due to cultural forces, both internal and external to the institution. In many cases, the twin factors of space and culture worked in tandem. Although my conceptual framework provided for ritual nature and structure to change independent of one another, with few exceptions changes to structure were accompanied by changes to nature, and vice versa. Consequently, most ritual change was instigated or impacted by changes to physical ritual space. Most notably, the campus sprawl initiated in the late 1960s began a process of departmental space redistribution that disrupted the largely centralized and thus easily perpetuated interaction rituals of the faculty lounges and offices in the Ad Building.

To some degree, the framework of the academic day assured that the basic structure of certain rituals would persist. Faculty continued to eat lunch, use office facilities, receive and send mail, attend classes, and traverse the campus on various errands. Yet the dimensions and proximity of physical campus space confined and shaped possible rituals, and although many daily informal rituals were altered in form, changes to space and routine did not determine the

meaning faculty would make of them. James found that the relative proximity of a new space on the edge of campus enabled new departmental rituals and practices and happily impeded some existing social rituals. Other faculty members, such as Carl, found the move to a house to promote departmental rituals but eliminate daily cross-institutional casual rituals that he valued highly.

Given the time to acclimate to a physical environment, most faculty members, although recognizing the limitations, also identified with and gravitated to the rituals fostered by that new space. Many faculty members, such as Lucy, found that the house experience intensified departmental interaction and promoted fringe ideological metaphysical space. Science Center faculty members, such as Laurie, expressed that departmental house space would be intolerable to her since it would come at the cost of the inter-disciplinary interactions she had come to cherish. In other words, although physical space may limit the types of rituals possible for a group, the group may also gradually adjust its normative standards to fit what is physically possible, even when they are less than ideal. The group may then celebrate the most salient of those rituals together, whether they are rituals of departmental exclusion (typical of houses) or inter-departmental inclusion (typical of larger buildings).

In some situations, despite the structure of the academic day, cultural forces of faculty professionalism, faculty diversity, organizational complexity, and theological reinterpretation altered the meaning and efficacy of some rituals even though the physical space changed very little. In particular, faculty meetings lost their place as a central and unifying faculty ritual as organizational complexity and size dispersed oversight responsibilities to specialized administrative offices and faculty committees. Faculty meetings themselves, by virtue of their size and the inability of faculty to meaningfully engage, lost the ability to create ritual

enchantment, focus, and moral purpose in all by the most unusual cases. Although faculty meetings as a collective gathering involving the co-presence of all members and generating common purpose did not last, the sense of meaning and cross-institutional connection was retained through some smaller faculty committees. The basis of the social bonds that resulted from faculty meetings in different eras may have shifted as well, from a feature of co-presence linked to an observable collective to a sense of serving a larger institutional identity not necessarily linked to any specific group membership. In other words, old faculty meeting solidarity was grounded in a broad-based cohesion, whereas new faculty committee solidarity was based on a localized cohesion generalized by task extension to the institutional whole.

Weekly chapel services, a daily requirement in the 1960s, also lost their place as a gathering space for all faculty (and students) due to cultural, but not physical change. The administrative decision to make chapel voluntary and to maintain it as a viable ritual through the quality of the event and the social expectations of campus leaders both failed and succeeded. It failed because total or near-total compliance could not be maintained, and participation dropped off precipitously. As a result, chapel no longer served as a point of common conversation for the campus or as a gathering ritual for the entire community. However, chapel succeeded as a renewed ritual smaller in scale but more intentional in membership. This “coalition of the willing” reinvigorated the chapel ritual, although its meaning shifted away from the unifying all-campus event it had been (or, was intended to be) to a campus resource to be used or not used at the leisure of students and faculty.

Consequently, most faculty members proceeded through several stages of metaphysical space regarding chapel as a ritual of personal and collective significance. Although this process should not be generalized too broadly, negotiating this ritual space often included initial

compliance based on a sense of expectation, followed by questioning of the chapel ritual and co-workers observed as serial non-attendees. Then, faculty often rejected the chapel ritual as forced and meaningless or as worthwhile but skipped due to more pressing professional tasks. Finally, some faculty members recommitted to chapel and found it to be a personally meaningful experience of gathering because they decided it was. This is not a hard-stage theory, and faculty may cycle back through previous positions based on personal positive or negative experiences, schedule, or other internal and external factors.

Other rituals remained consistently important despite, or even because of cultural and physical change, as the metaphysical significance of the rituals far outweighed the physical environment. The Fall Faculty Conference continued as a potent faculty ritual throughout the span on this study. However, the personal significance it held for faculty members depended on the organization and topics addressed. Held first in the Ad Building auditorium, then in the Science Center auditorium, and most recently in Martin Chapel in the seminary, this event became, for the preponderance of faculty, the most meaningful all-faculty event in the academic calendar.

The ritual strength of the Fall Faculty Conference resulted from a powerful intersection of several elements, each rich with their own cultural and social meaning. First, the ritual marked the advent of the academic year that produced heightened expectations, excitement, and apprehension, particularly for younger faculty. Second, the physical gathering of faculty members, many with pre-existing social bonds and some with a desire to establish them, acted as a *de facto* reunion after a summer of individualized activity. Third, the religious worship element that opened the event, although based in Mennonite cultural and religious traditions, was also broadly Christian and acted as a unifying ritual for Mennonites and non-Mennonites,

reminding them of the deeply-held values that were the basis of their original sense of call to the institution. Finally, the academic portion of the event was organized around a guest speaker and a central topic, and although these were occasionally of dubious interest, this programmatic element gave faculty a shared focus of conversation and thought, reminding them of the value of the task before them that had been idle over the summer and energizing the group for the work ahead.

Quite a few of the retirement-aged faculty noted how impressed they were with the level of academic accomplishment and quality of the faculty who followed them. The increased academic professionalism of Lapp-era faculty – a product of their graduate school socialization, of the maturing expectations of their field, and of the institution itself – represented an important cultural force, modifying, exaggerating, and eliminating some rituals. Most notably, on and off-campus social rituals, although still a part of some faculty members' experience in the 1990s, became less normative as metaphysical space and time commitments centered around individual interests, family activities, and community involvement outside the EMU circle. Rituals that were highly meaningful to the old and middle generations of faculty, such as the inter-disciplinary studies program, and the mid-winter retreat were casualties of social, cultural and demographic change. Rob commented that faculty members in the 1990s were not called on to make sacrifices for the university, as had faculty of previous generations. The loss of these rituals appears emblematic of a sacrifice that newer faculty have refused to accept, for better or worse.

Increasingly, the basis of faculty social bonds shifted toward regularized task rituals in departments and across the institution as well as sporadic social rituals (most substantively, lunch rituals) rather than the broader connections rooted in common alumni experiences, Mennonite



cultural experiences, international experiences, local church experiences, and close-proximity residential experiences. To a degree, this transfer of ritual emphasis in combination with persistent religious and cultural elements may still have resulted in a density of social networks exceptional in higher education. However, the intensity of the social network supporting the successful and innovated task rituals of the past, and the shift toward task rituals as the basis for social bonds, seems to have had significant institutional consequences.

Randall Collins (2004) emphasizes the necessity of ritual chains to perpetuate ritual meaning because the momentum and energy of rituals dissipates relatively quickly and must be renewed frequently. Although Collins intends chains to indicate the repetition of a particular ritual, the Mennonite cultural network into which many of the older and middle-generation faculty members had been socialized from birth was a *ritual network* of overlapping and mutually-reinforcing meaning-making occasions. A congregational meal or service ritual supported values that were also strengthened through a community softball game and through a curriculum planning committee meeting. Although these rituals were also under constant renegotiation and revision, the ritual network, intertwined with intensive cultural practices, kept the call to serve God in all parts of life at the forefront of community attention. A professionalized faculty, although still self-identified as people who felt *called*, now located more of its social and task rituals within the academic work day. The shift in the intensity and breadth of the cultural network undoubtedly contributed to changes in social bonds. However, the impact of those social bond changes presently may or may not be detrimental, depending on the ability of the institution and its membership to be intentional about the values that are most central, and the rituals that will sufficiently support them. In the past, rituals that produced social bonds were by-products of dominant religious and cultural values as part of the strong ties

experienced by the community. At the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in an environment more characteristic of weak ties, the value of social bonds requires increasingly explicit attention institutionally if they are to be maintained.

### Solidarity and Cohesion

Although changes to ritual have been the focal event in this study, social bonds, specifically solidarity (as the general other) and cohesion (as the specific other) as products of the ritual process, are the outcomes of greatest significance within this environment and in application to other contexts. This section analyzes what this research has revealed about the factors that promote and shape or reduce cohesion and solidarity, and the relationship between solidarity and cohesion.

#### *Factors that Shape and Promote Cohesion*

In this study, the cohesion concept is used to explore the social bonds of the faculty as a collective whole and in sub-groups, such as departments, committees, and self-selecting social groups, among others. Thus, although understanding the networked nature of cohesive bonds is enlightening (see Lawler and Yoon, 1996), establishing the position and role of specific individuals is not the aim of this study. Cohesion is here defined as *the interpersonal bonding of people within a face-to-face group who maintain a common social or task purpose*.

As presented in the conceptual framework in chapter three, based on the work of Cota, et al. (1995), cohesion is identified through a two-tier structure. The *primary dimension* is comprised of characteristics found in nearly all cohesive groups. They include individual/group elements, social/task elements, and a sense of belongingness. The second tier, or *secondary dimension* is based on the unique features, environment, or actions of the group in question. Although the primary tier describes elements consistently identifiable in cohesive groups (what

cohesion *is*), elements of the secondary tier are *contextual modifiers* of the primary tier (what form cohesion takes). Using this framework highlights the processual nature of cohesion, as interactions within the group support, change, or even discourage cohesive bonds.

In this study, six particularly notable cohesion modifiers emerged from analyzing the interviews, representing a significant list of secondary dimensions that may be applicable to other higher education or organizational contexts. Multiple factors that contribute to cohesion may occur in the same bond instance, strengthening and shaping the cohesive bond through a positive interaction effect.

First, engaging faculty members in activities that carry responsibility germane to their expertise or skill set promotes and shapes cohesion between leaders, department members, and faculty members by providing faculty members with a sense of worth and accomplishment. I term this modifier *task trust*. Task trust is particularly vital with new members and those who are not extensively connected through pre-existing cultural or social networks. Rob and Carl, neither of whom were alumni and both of whom were non-traditional Mennonites, spoke of significant initial experiences in which they were asked to contribute in a meaningful way, that is, in a way that if their contribution failed, the group would suffer in a significant fashion. Strategically providing new members with the chance to contribute meaningfully to the group without overwhelming them is a tactical opportunity for insiders to engage potential outsiders or new group members and therefore foster cohesion with the new, as well as existing members.

Second, and related to the first in terms of its importance to new members and non-traditional members, the *empathy* modifier contributes credibility and depth to relationships that may have been cordial but otherwise insignificant. Several faculty members who were young professionals in the 1990s recalled individuals who, for no pre-existing interpersonal reason,

made a noticeable effort to welcome them and follow-up socially in the opening months of the semester. This willingness to empathize and extend a meaningful welcome to new employees laid the foundation for ongoing relationships and set the newcomers at ease.

Empathy that motivates acts of personal sacrifice provides legitimacy and substance to cohesive bonds as well. Jay recalled how, as a new faculty member, his rental housing flooded, and several senior faculty members and the dean spent a Saturday helping him to clean up. Carl described how, soon after moving in, his son had a serious accident; faculty and church members brought meals and actively cared for his family during a time of transition and crisis. Empathy, especially for new faculty, indicates a desirable personal or organizational value set that motivates behavior toward all persons in need, and is not based, or not exclusively based upon interpersonal attraction and liking. Empathy often appears in social activities, but by definition, may contain task elements as well.

Third, examples of homogeneity that promote cohesion at Eastern Mennonite abound. Many of the cultural and religious rituals and the resulting bonds are based on this premise exclusively. However, as the faculty diversified and, despite certain shared commitments, ideological positions and opinions became less and less uniform, moments of understanding and social bonds occurred nevertheless. Cohesion through homogeneity is relatively simple to achieve, but cohesion achieved through an appreciation of diversity, what I call the *bridging* modifier, is less frequent and often accompanied by an important moment of group reification, according to faculty accounts. Katherine, a non-Mennonite faculty member, commented how her personal and professional relationship with two Catholic departmental co-workers was transformed. Katherine had been raised to believe that Catholics were nominal Christians, with suspect theology and worship practices. Through her relationship with these two women,

Katherine learned to embrace a liturgical worship style that had been foreign to her, and felt a deep sense of connection that arose through the process of working out their differences. Similarly, Marie's story of feeling excluded from her department until she confronted the department head and Mennonite members about their behaviors mirrors the kind of bonds that develop and that build cohesion as individual differences are resolved and diversity transitions from a liability to an asset. This modifier that promotes cohesion can also occur with task-related situations, such as Alan's recollection of faculty clashing over testing techniques in the Inter-disciplinary Studies (IDS) curriculum. The bridging modifier is also primarily social, though, as noted, it may also be a feature of task cohesion.

Fourth, the *task-bonding* modifier positively impacts relationships in an organizational context. This is perhaps the most obvious modifier, but its persistent significance for faculty members makes it important to highlight. The task-bonding modifier is the sense of group connection that results from a particular type of shared activity, and is amplified through two other cohesive elements: pre-existing social bonds and group commitment. Faculty, such as George, enjoyed their colleagues, although they were minimally connected to them socially out of the work context. In George's case, his sense that each person was working for the good of the student above all facilitated task cohesion, so that the positive benefit to social bonds was not dependent on a particular outcome necessarily, but the *telos* commonly shared.

Fifth, the depth of empathy lends weight and credibility to relevant interpersonal interactions. However, the accumulation of daily interactions in multiple settings provides the opportunity to further a relationship beyond the generic morning greeting ritual. Thus, the *frequency* modifier is based upon interactions that build upon one another through information gathered and distributed. Carl commented on this experience in the Science Center:

I enjoy casual contact with people. I kind of cultivated it even...and definitely when you see a person fairly regularly, in some ways your conversation continues when you see them often enough. It isn't just "Hi how are you doing?" then the next time you start over at "Hi how are you doing?" Instead, it's "We were talking the other day about this or that...".

The frequency modifier begins with a low-level of pleasantries exchanges, as the first kind of interaction Carl described. However, investing enough conversational energy to exchange or gather personal information from other sources upon which one can build an ongoing dialogue generates a deeper type of cohesive bond.

Finally, a feature of the Augsburg generation of faculty is not only the breadth of their inter-connected social bonds, but their depth as well. Many new faculty hired in the 1990s, although they felt welcome, were also both impressed and slightly intimidated by the accumulated years of experience the veteran faculty had together. The frequency modifier introduced above, if tended over years, can develop into the *longevity* modifier. Quite simply, consistent organizational membership, given competence, positive relationships, and general organizational health facilitate social bond stability, interpersonal knowledge, and appreciation for the other. When people enjoy one another interpersonally and professionally, like compounding interest, longevity bonds deepen over time. At Eastern Mennonite, one manifestation of this modifier has been a regular meeting of retired faculty members. This cohesive cohort of faculty are telling their life stories of personal and social change from traditional backgrounds, to international experiences, to professional positions, and have already published one volume of personal histories. This type of deep connection and appreciation for certain others only occurs over a considerable timeframe. The longevity modifier can be

manifest through social cohesion, but can certainly arise within task-oriented cohesion in an organizational setting.

*Task and social cohesion.* Clifford Mottaz (1978) found that task cohesion often promotes social cohesion, but the reverse is seldom true. Although I cannot completely refute his claim, based on the interview data collected at Eastern Mennonite I would counter that social cohesion, when couched within a larger cultural or social system that makes the overall task enterprise attractive to members, plays an important role in perpetuating the desirability of the task at hand. Furthermore, certain shared values, such as the communitarian values Mennonites have traditionally held, link cultural and religious beliefs and values through social rituals embedding with religious significance.

In the context of this study, six significant cohesion modifiers emerged that significantly shape the task/social cohesion discussion. Modifiers of longevity, empathy, bridging and frequency highlight the social and affective nature of the faculty life, and the impact social interactions. As Carl suggested, frequent and substantive social relationships contribute to a sense of interpersonal knowing that helps to maintain cohesion even through difficult task situations. Thus, some social modifiers may promote the quality and desirability of task processes. In another way, the discussion whether social cohesion promotes task cohesion was precisely the conversation underway in the late 1990s, and implicitly, faculty and administrators attempted to understand what the impact of a transition away from the cultural network would mean for the organization. This question remains without a definitive conclusion, as the transition of generations and of social bonds continues.

*Factors that Shape and Promote Solidarity*

Solidarity is a less complex concept than cohesion owing to its definition as the generalization of bonds in contrast to the complicated interpersonal network that is a feature of cohesion. In this study, solidarity is defined as *an affective and cognitive bond between people who share an ideological commitment*. At Eastern Mennonite, solidarity can be differentiated and interpreted through two factors: the *scope* and the *context* of the social bond. To understand how scope is defined and delimited, it is first necessary to understand the way solidary bonds are formed and structured. Solidarity is a by-product of a common commitment, but not the aim of the commitment itself. For example, faculty members with international experience might believe in the value of that experience and look to perpetuate that value through curricular expressions. The relational aspect of this ideological commitment is a sense of affinity and shared purpose with other individuals who happen to also be committed to internationalism. Thus, two faculty members are solidary not by virtue of a direct relationship (though, by Markovsky's (1998) reachability principle, a direct relationship strengthens that bond), but via an indirect link due to their shared commitment to internationalism.

Although the solidarity occurs tangentially from an ideological commitment, particular contexts alter how central the relational bond is to a given event. Some rituals promote solidarity through *direct agency*, and some through *indirect agency*. Direct solidary agency events are those designed to inspire positive group feelings and commitments, such as the recognition banquet. Indirect solidary agency events are those, like IDS, where the generation of solidarity is a by-product of a process that happens to celebrate and intensify commitment to common values. When solidarity agency is indirect, participants may not be aware of the impact. Direct agency events are quite different than the indirect agency events, as they are intentionally evocative



experiences, when participants are more keenly aware of the outcome, especially when the ritual is not successful.

Returning to the issue of scope, all people who are solidary based on an ideological commitment alone share an *associational* bond. By contrast, people who are linked through a solidary bond and are part of a formal structured group that identifies with that ideological value share an *organizational* bond, in addition to the associational bond. Scope, then is described in terms of the presence of a group or groups that serve as a *prototype* (Mullen, 1996), or representative of the group that embodies the group concept (in this case, as a values representative, and not a physical representative as is the typical social science implication). Again employing the internationalism example, individuals who hold this value generally have an associational solidary bond by virtue of a common ideological commitment displayed and reinforced through various rituals (such as cross-cultural experiences, or presentations about past experiences). The bond is organizational and serves as a group prototype for those members of EMU's faculty who hold this value if they perceive that the organization shares this value as well. However, these faculty members still share an associational bond with others outside the institution that hold this value, even though others may not share this particular organizational membership.

Second, solidarity may be facilitated through ritual events of varied context. In the conceptual framework, solidarity was identified as a by-product of ritual (or, the enactment of an ideological commitment). Randall Collins' (2004) description of ritual adopted for this study established four necessary criteria: co-presence of participants; boundaries between insiders and outsiders; focused attention on a common object and awareness of common focus; and a common mood and experience. Collins particularly emphasizes the necessity of the physical

assembly of participants (co-presence) and the need for ritual repetition to achieve and maintain solidary bonds. However, ritual elements that resulted in solidarity within this study were not so neatly defined. The contexts of solidarity production confirmed Collins' emphasis on co-presence, but also contradicted the criteria of co-presence, repetition, and awareness of common presence. Thus, in this study, two ritual contexts that facilitate solidarity are identified: *co-present* contexts and *isolated* contexts.

The co-present context generates solidarity through formal and informal rituals when group members assemble in person to participate in a ritual. The co-present context depends upon broad member participation with a shared focus on an activity that reifies a value held in common by most or all participants. At Eastern Mennonite, these included for many faculty members, The Fall Faculty Conference, the spring recognition banquet, the IDS program, the Mid-Winter Retreat, and the all-school conference. These events fit Collins' (2004) expectation of co-presence and repetition, confirming his ritual model.

The effects of rituals lose momentum quickly, according to Collins (2004), and thus require continual renewal through chains of rituals involving the physical assembly of solidary members. However, I identify a category of contexts that violates one or both of these expectations. The concept of *isolated* contexts utilizes two meanings of the term. First, isolated contexts are those in which solidarity is generated without the co-presence of those with whom that person is solidary. Second, isolated contexts are those that occur once, or do not occur continuously, yet solidarity is facilitated and persists nonetheless. Although clarity might seem dictate separate terms for these two types of isolated contexts, the contexts occur in combination in many examples, and can not be predictably dissected from one another.

Several significant examples from this study illustrate the importance of this complex concept. International experience – both in the alternative-service deployment and more recently the student semester-abroad program that was characteristic of many faculty members hired in the 1960s and 1970s – united the faculty through a shared ritual performed in the absence of the other faculty. Some rituals, such as rites of passage individually performed, are so powerfully formational that all persons who have experienced the event are bound together. For many faculty members, the international experience facilitated this sort of persistent solidarity. Certainly, this solidarity was supported later through chapel rituals and curriculum rituals that collectively focused attention on the values in question. However, international rituals were an isolated context of physical separation that in some situations persisted despite a lack of reinforcement thereafter.

A second example of isolated context illustrates the momentum built up from formative rituals that continues to reify solidary bonds despite the lack of a continued ritual engagement. Although the percentage of faculty who were also alumni fell off precipitously, nearly 75% of faculty hired in the 1960s and 1970s and no less than 25% of faculty hired in the 1990s were graduates of EMC or EMU. Annie, a non-traditional Mennonite who was an alumna, expressed that even if she had not known any faculty currently at the institution, EMU was still home to her. Although in her retirement she seldom visits, she maintains strong feelings toward the institution. The root of her passion for the institution lay in her experience as a student whom the institution had given a chance, even though her high school record was marginal. For Annie, a PhD who returned to teach many years later, her undergraduate experience was a historical moment from which solidarity persisted throughout the rest of her life. Other faculty members

expressed that same sense of connection, and indeed, it figured into the sense of call that faculty felt in several situations.

A third example of isolated context emphasizes the episodic singular moment in which solidarity may occur. Marie described her experience of solidary turn that took many years and an unusual circumstance to instigate:

I was going to go to a public university and I even applied at a public university right after my dissertation. ...during the interview at the public university, I'd spend all day interviewing with these people, I looked around at all these faculty and – I know you've been at public universities – but there's a big difference between faculty [at EMU] and public university faculty. You don't have that warm fuzzy feeling in research and grants [that] in my perception were more important than teaching. During the interview I just felt so uncomfortable. And while I was sitting there, all I could think of was my wonderful group [at EMU]. And I couldn't believe, I said, "I don't belong in this public place. I belong in EMU". So I got my "ah-ha". So I came back here, and that was it....

For Marie, a moment of institutional solidarity occurred in a ritual without the participation of anyone she felt solidary with, although the hiring ritual did serve to reinforce her sense of purpose. In this example, the contrast of contexts between environments; one devoid of the ideological value she esteemed and one the source of it, heightened her awareness of and the importance of that value present at EMU.

The scope and context of solidarity interacts and facilitates particular expressions of solidarity (Figure 10). Co-present context and associational scope are exemplified by general Mennonite ethnic or religious rituals that tend to support values and beliefs that are not necessarily connected to a specific institution. Although such rituals likely support Mennonite

membership generally, they do not necessarily contribute to organizational solidarity with EMU. Co-present context and organizational scope often result in moments of the solidary turn, as faculty rituals within the College context created a general social bond with the institution, and by extension, with faculty in general. The result of isolated context and associational scope is solidarity without regard to institutional membership, such as the international experiences that individually shaped but corporately bound many faculty members together. Finally, isolated context and organizational scope occurs most often with faculty members who were alumni, where a positive historical experience continues to perpetuate institutional solidarity.

*Figure 10: Interaction effects of solidarity types and contexts.*

Context	Type	
	Associational	Organizational
<b>Co-Present</b>	<u>Mennonite religious and ethnic rituals</u> . Not based on a specific organizational commitment, but powerful rituals connect participants to all others who hold similar values and beliefs.	<u>The solidary turn</u> . Based on repeated shared experiences, participants generalize positive interpersonal experience to the institution and all who are affiliated.
<b>Isolated</b>	<u>International experiences</u> . Based on commitment to values and beliefs occurring at a significant moment in the past that continues to reify bonds	<u>Alumni experiences</u> . Historical experiences continue to feed positive regard and commitment to the institution

### *Factors that Damage Cohesion*

Just as Eastern Mennonite benefited from an intense social network and many non-Mennonites found acceptance within the institution, some faculty either never achieved cohesion with other faculty or experienced erosion of the cohesion that had been built. Cohesive bonds

have been destroyed in three types of situations. First, cohesion is damaged when members do not or cannot fit or make peace with the institutional culture. Gene described the experience of several non-Mennonite faculty members who had positive interpersonal bonds with departmental members and who were generally in sympathy with institutional values, but for whom cultural Mennonite practices interfered with bridging modifiers, resulting in a sense of alienation and feelings of oppression. This failure to build cohesion beyond perhaps isolated primary relationships can result from the second and third factors that damage cohesion.

Second, cohesion fails when members with more institutional experience and legitimacy comment or take action that brings attention to individual or ideological difference in a derogatory manner. As examples by Scott and Lynnwood demonstrated, the interactions that lingered painfully in their memories were most often off-hand jabs by cultural insiders who desired a greater degree of compliance, or who were uncomfortable with the inclusion of outsiders. Regardless of motive, the dramatic effect was to sever any existing cohesive bonds and increase metaphysical distance between insider and outsider status.

Third, when other insiders, particularly those in authority positions, fail to react to and correct social bond breeches, cohesion is further damaged and sometimes permanently destroyed. For members who feel marginalized, the decision to appeal to authority, particularly for outsiders, can be an intimidating proposition since the offense has highlighted membership boundaries between the two parties, and insider authorities may be perceived to be sympathetic to the insider group. In several stories, authorities did not take reports of cultural slights seriously, and in one case the faculty member was told that the offending insider was just joking. For an authority to minimize an offense that a person experiences tacitly legitimates the behavior, rather than respecting the position of the offended person and recognizing the damaged

cohesive bonds in need to repair. This breach of the social compact between employer and employee was the cue for some members who saw themselves as outsiders to exit.

### *Factors that Damage Solidarity*

At least three factors also damage solidarity. First, solidarity is grounded in a shared ideological or institutional commitment. The simplest way for solidary bonds to be damaged is for an institutional policy, practice, or an individual speaking or acting as a representative of that institution to take some action which members interpret as violating the values in question. Interpretation is paramount, since seldom will leaders of an organization willfully violate its values unless they have a strategic reason to do so. Nevertheless, leaders of a stagnated or economically-troubled organization may make changes to radically change an institution's direction. Policy decisions that appear to violate the culture of an institution may also occur when institutional values have been reinterpreted to the consternation of some constituents. In the late 1990s, EMU's Board reiterated and supported the position of the Mennonite Church, USA opposing homosexual behavior, an act that upset some faculty who saw this as a violation of values of welcoming diversity. As a result, solidarity radically diminished among some faculty members, several of whom ended up leaving the institution.

Second, solidarity may be damaged when the institution fails to act on values that represent points of solidarity for members. For example, the series of decisions in the 1960s to relax expectations of regulation dress at EMU angered and alienated some conservative constituents who perceived the change in policy as a compromise to worldly values. Another more subtle expression of damaged solidarity due to violated values is the dismay some faculty expressed at the process of dismissing faculty whom the institution no longer desires to employ for reasons of perceived fit or quality of service. The difficulty of separating cohesive

interpersonal bonds and organizational standards in a culture that values relationships and social justice occasionally caused faculty members to feel that administrative actions and cultural values were not in harmony. Paul, a veteran faculty member, noted that when the administration wanted to be rid of someone it was often done under what he considered as the false pretense of being “just business”, although he adding that he felt EMU worked harder to handle these situations well than most places did, but still struggled in many cases. A faculty member from the 1970s whose contract was not renewed after several years of service recalled:

I ask the administration at that time, I said “I don't necessarily think I would like your answer, but I would like to be treated the same way I was treated when I was hired”. You go through several committees and the department looks at you and you go through the religious welfare committee, and [the college decides] whether you're suitable to come here. Now, who decided that I needed to leave? When that happened all the other faculty shut up. The faculty said, “we never made that decision”. Someone gave them some information and it wasn't my department....

Removal from institutional membership is almost always a difficult experience for both parties, though more emotional for the individual departing. Nevertheless, an institution with religious and cultural values stressing community, justice, and self sacrifice treads a difficult road between behaving as it perceives organizations are justified to act and honoring the values that draw and sustain faculty in the institution.

Third, solidary bonds may be damaged when cohesive bonds are damaged. Even though an institution may represent itself as supporting certain values and ideals, those properties are acted out through the behavior of members; negative interpersonal experiences within the organization impede cohesion and may cause a person to question whether the institution is the



place they had perceived it to be. Elmer, an alumnus and a faculty member who taught full time for several years in the 1960s then returned later to teach part-time, felt disrespected by departmental colleagues and an administrator in his role as a non-permanent employee. Elmer felt strong ties to EMC from his student experience and his initial full-time teaching role. However, his second teaching experience made him question the type of institution EMC had become in the 20 years since he had left and whether he wanted to support it as an employee or as a graduate. Although his personal values and the institutional values were still in harmony, the deterioration of cohesive bonds with other faculty members compromised sense of institutional solidarity.

#### *The Relationship of Solidarity and Cohesion*

In the conceptual framework I proposed a model of overlapping and mutually-reinforcing solidarity and cohesion, with fringes of both types of social bonds extending outside the immediate cultural, religious, and educational community. Although it is a basic model, the findings of the study strongly support this projection, at least for the majority of the veteran faculty members hired in the 1960s, 1970s, and into the 1980s. Inter-disciplinary task rituals such as the IDS program linked cohesion generated through intensive curriculum development sessions and team teaching experiences, with the solidarity generated through the sense that their collaborative efforts were supporting a value shared beyond just their immediate working group. However, the faculty experiences at Eastern Mennonite show the relationship between cohesion and solidarity to be more complex than a continuous positive loop. Two sets of factors that shape the development and causal direction of influence between solidarity and cohesion are social and task dimensions, and insider versus outsider status.

*Social and task dimensions.* Whether a ritual is primarily social or task-related impacts the type and causal direction of the social bonds generated. Task-related rituals, particularly in an organizational setting with a clear mission, allow participants to associate successful or rewarding work, such as curricular reform, with the institution broadly when the values of the task at hand are congruent with the values of the organization. As the difference between departmental tasks and inter-departmental tasks at Eastern Mennonite demonstrates, the broader the representation and issue at hand, the more representative the group and purpose appear, thus making solidarity to the general other more likely. Although at Eastern Mennonite, many faculty members reported positive interpersonal connections (cohesion) resulting from task experiences as well, conceivably, institutional or ideological solidarity could occur if the task was successful or meaningful, even if the working relationship among participants was negative and not generative of cohesion. Negative social bonds resulting from a task successfully accomplished is a rare scenario, however, since successful task completion usually produces cohesion, even if there is internal turmoil during the process. As Carl mentioned about the accreditation process, a task may facilitate cohesion through the interaction it generates and the focus on the mission it creates (and thus, producing solidarity as well), even though the end product may have been less germinal than what was desired.

Ironically, the same institutional or ideological element or elements that provide a source of social bonds can also be the source of institutional divisiveness. Social rituals, such as the Science Center lounge lunches, tend to require an accumulation of experiences, since social exchanges do not provide the same intensity of focus that task events often do. Repeated positive and engaging social rituals build cohesion between participants as interpersonal information is exchanged, trust is formed, and a group identity is fostered. However, the leap to

solidarity, or *the solidary turn*, only occurs when interactions have been frequent enough, consistent enough, and with broad enough participation that the member can confidently generalize their positive interpersonal experiences to a group beyond the bounds of the direct network.

The keys to the solidary turn are repetition, to reinforce ritual meaning, and representativeness, to give the ritual a common focal point. A conceptual or ideological axis or articulated defining feature that members can ascribe regard or commitment toward must be present for the solidary turn to occur. That *conceptual key* then functions in a similar way that Arthur Cohen's (1985) symbolic boundaries do, as an explicitly-identified group attribute to which each person ascribes their own specific meaning. However, the focus of symbolic boundaries is on territorial maintenance, while the focus of the conceptual key is on a shared point of commonality that may cause exclusion indirectly. When increased group diversity or member turnover requires articulation of the conceptual key, the benefit of a symbolic point of commonality is compromised and group bonds become more difficult to sustain. Thus, as faculty and administrators at Eastern Mennonite found in the late 1990s, articulating a conceptual key with the goal to improve the clarity of institutional mission and identity created a great deal of disagreement. Members found that their interpretation of what had been a symbolic point of shared purpose was actually quite different across the institution when specifically defined. As a result, significant conflict occurred around a point that had previously been the center of commonality and solidarity. Of course, articulating institutional purpose allows members to focus efforts and evaluate progress, but the costs of that activity should be considered as well.

For several faculty members, the indirect connection between social cohesion and institutional solidarity occurred through Faculty Fling. A day spent in the company of other

willing faculty in a non-task atmosphere promoted cohesive bonds, and via the institutional sponsorship of the occasion, also gave faculty the sense that the institution valued not only them as individuals but also faculty relationships as well. Perhaps the lesson from this event is that organizational resources can be strategically used in apparently altruistic ways that ultimately benefit the institution through improved faculty relationships and institutional solidarity.

*Insider and outsider dimensions.* Although for organizational insiders, social and task dimensions can strengthen a sense of solidarity, pre-existing commitments position insiders differently in relationship to solidarity than outsiders. Many Augsburg generation faculty members who were raised Mennonite and felt a sense of call to the institution, operated on co-existing and pre-established religious and institutional solidarity although specific experiences reinforced or reinvigorated their commitment or understanding of the commitment to values that made them solidary with the institution originally. Insider faculty members seldom experienced the solidary turn, at least not to the degree that outsiders did. The experience of insiders as described highlights that solidarity may occur without cohesion, or may occur through cohesion in a different environment, and subsequently, solidarity alone is a shared association in a new context. For example, Carl was a non-traditional Mennonite who was solidary with EMU faculty generally based on pre-existing ideological commitments, but no cohesive networks linked him to EMU.

Institutional outsiders, however, experienced a much more variable passage from cohesion to solidarity, and the experiences of individual outsider faculty ran the gamut of social bond experiences. For some faculty members, such as Lynnwood, cohesion was achieved through departmental trust. However, personal jabs and perceived social exclusion created alienation, and it is unlikely he ever experienced the solidary turn. For other faculty members

such as Carmen, the circumstances of employment and reinforcing experiences led from initial cohesion to long-term solidarity:

...when I came, I [had just] defended my dissertation. I moved the same day as my dissertation so I didn't have time to deposit it and officially receive my Ph.D. until the end of my spring semester here, and so they held a party to kind of celebrate that, and I invited [faculty and administrators] and they came. Even President Lapp came, so I felt somehow connected. I'd never intended to stay here; in those first two years I certainly never saw myself staying here. Eventually I kind of eased into it and now I've sort of bonded to the EMU mission....

Colleagues honored Carmen's commencement ritual, inspiring cohesion and instigating a sense of the institution's department. Solidarity, as a product of ritual, seems easier to manufacture intentionally than cohesion, which requires the accumulation of trust. However, this is true only for those who are already sympathetic with a value or set of values, and need only the occasion to unite them. For those who are wary of an institution, solidarity appears to represent a level of personal commitment even more significant than the interpersonal bonds of cohesion. Marie described her experience of solidary turn that took many years, and did not occur until she was in the middle of an interview at a public institution. Only through a ritual designed to initiate the process of membership egress did Marie become fully cognizant of her cohesive bonds, and make the solidary turn to institutional bonds as well.

### Cultural Change

Between 1965 and 2000 multiple layers of values, beliefs, and attitudes shifted and realigned, contributing to a transformation of the nature and structure of faculty culture at Eastern Mennonite. To analyze these changes further, in this section I describe the manifestation

of cultural change in terms of the social classification systems of organic and mechanical solidarity, and strong and weak ties.

*Organic and Mechanical Solidarity: Navigating Membership Status*

In chapter one I outlined the claim that as groups become increasingly diverse the type of social bonds they experience shifts from mechanical solidarity based on identical and interchangeable membership to organic solidarity based on a specialized division of labor (Durkheim 1893/1933). My conceptual framework resisted the evolutionary assumptions of this theory, but the question of how, qualitatively, social bonds change in a context of increasing organizational complexity and diversity is still germane. This shift is an issue in need of further scholarly work, but several insights from this research are relevant and significant.

First, although I will excuse myself from a detailed explication of the fieldwork from which Durkheim drew his solidarity model, evidence from this study suggests that apparently homogenous societies appear to under-estimate the level of internal and significant variety. Faculty members employed at mid-century EMC insisted that, despite the pressures of conformity, regulation dress, and theological scrutiny, diversity of thought flourished within community boundaries. From the perspective of a different social system and expectations, the appearance of certain standards of community membership can appear to dictate uniformity in all parts of social life. However, nearly every society provides space for personal expression and the flaunting of authority by degree, as F. G. Bailey (2001) illustrates in his discussion of *carnavale* and other sanctioned rituals of misbehavior. Even within Amish society in which the practice of shunning, or removing non-compliant members of the community, is still practiced, allowances are made for the rebellious impulses of adolescence. Indeed, it is easy to over-characterize homogeneity and conformity in a single social system when significant change

worthy of attention occurs as distinct cultures intersect and must negotiate boundaries and meaning, as was the case at EMC beginning in the late 1960s.

At Eastern Mennonite, two cultural transitions occurred almost simultaneously that required a new interpretation of social bonds: the formal and informal reinterpretation of cultural and religious values. Informally, reinterpretation of traditional values led to an increased acceptance of and interaction with the broader American society, though the peculiarity of the Mennonite culture made the contrast between the two stark, at least at first. The pressures of informal reinterpretation propelled formal reinterpretations, bringing Mennonites in closer interaction with non-Mennonites. Mennonites, accustomed to operating as a minority culture with a theology and history that taught them how to take on the role of the oppressed, were newly situated in the position of a majority culture within the higher education environment of EMC. Not only were most Mennonites socially and culturally unprepared to act from a position of power over outsiders generally, but they were also unequipped to manage the participation of non-Mennonites in one of their internal Mennonite spheres. Consequently, the model proposed in Figure 7 in chapter six played out, with the position of non-Mennonites transitioning from token, to resented/accepted minority, to vocal minority with sufficient cultural capital to impact certain rituals and values (such as departmental lunch rituals), though with significant limitations.

The idiom “two countries separated by the same language”, though referencing the frustration of English speakers in the United States and Great Britain with one another, also expresses some of the tension of establishing social and ideological bonds between Mennonites and non-Mennonites at EMC. As non-Mennonites, although often enthusiastic about Mennonite values and beliefs (usually some more than others) joined Mennonites, who were often similarly

enthusiastic about the new perspectives and skills non-Mennonites brought (at least some of them) an ongoing summit ensued regarding who had the authority to determine the cultural identity and organizational direction of the institution.

Harking to the metaphor above, the question “who decides what is the correct usage of language?” is poignant in its absurdity: no set of rules can mediate between separate cultural uses of language. Similarly, the collision of engrained Mennonite culture and rituals in an avowedly Mennonite institution with a non-Mennonite membership entitled to their own cultural and religious practices occasionally accentuated and aggravated insider and outsider differences. The division between insiders and outsiders was never so stark or contentious that battle lines were drawn and formal charges delivered. However, all non-Mennonites were, in some manner, forced to navigate the foreign cultural landscape through which some faculty, like Louise, found guides, and others, like Lynnwood, did not. Some non-Mennonites commented that they simply accepted that there would always be cultural practices of which they would not be a part. Other non-Mennonites found this situation intolerable, decided they could not fit, and resigned.

Thus, Mennonites, often ill-prepared to manage the incrementally accumulating diversity, found themselves in a governance situation in which they were charged with integrating members with different perspectives in an environment of increasing organizational complexity, while trying to maintain a distinctive identity. Giving non-Mennonites an equal share in organizational governance without qualification would likely mean a far less intentionally Mennonite institution than the Board of Trustees and many faculty members desired. Indeed, in the late 1990s, non-Mennonite faculty with vision and skills were hired who simply attempted to move the institution too quickly in directions less explicitly reflective of



Mennonite identity. As they experienced resistance, several of these faculty members decided not to stay.

However, continuing to hire a substantial cohort of non-Mennonite faculty while maintaining Mennonite distinctiveness, however reinterpreted, created several contingencies: that the occasional experience of marginality by non-Mennonites would simply be the unfortunate collateral damage of community maintenance (as more than one veteran faculty member suggested); that ethnic traditions that some members experienced as alienating would have to be eliminated or be made intentionally inclusive (an act some faculty and administrators embraced, for example, by refusing to use common Mennonite acronyms) and; that shared values of peace and justice would need to be capitalized upon for solidarity (which has occurred to some degree through the graduate programs).

In other words, by the year 2000, the best case scenario was an intentional though often inconsistent striving toward organic solidarity. Organic solidarity, if achieved, would occur despite the persistent presence of lingering and possibly important ethnic and religious Mennonite practices occasionally reminding non-Mennonites of their outsider status. However the struggle to achieve organic solidarity in a diverse environment is characterized, several significant examples of the successful development of organic solidarity emerged from faculty interviews that illustrate its worth as well. Marie's experience of working out her feelings of exclusion within her department was a moment of understanding and appreciating by department members when she was accepted as different, but valuable. Inter-disciplinary organic solidarity was facilitated by the Science Center lunch rituals, where honest contributions were valued for their thoughtfulness, and not for their conformity. Faculty members teaming together cross-institutionally in the IDS program worked through theoretical and pedagogical differences with

the intention of delivering the best educational experience possible through the strength of variety. Generationally, the Augsburg era of faculty welcomed the expertise and professionalism of their replacements and in return, many new faculty members chose to honor the legacy of their contemporaries by continuing to include them in departmental activities. Although many stories of disappointment emerged as well, the bonds formed through diversity, through the struggle for a shared identity that was not predicated on denying difference nor content to allow difference to define relationships, are the bonds that faculty repeatedly noted as the most significant, and the reason some faculty persisted at Eastern Mennonite when less fractious and more prestigious options were available.

#### *Weak and Strong Ties*

The associated concepts of weak and strong ties (Granovetter, 1973), reformulated as weak and strong solidarity (Lindenberg, 1998), contain some parallel features of categorization with organic and mechanical solidarity, though distinctions between the two sets of concepts make them both worthwhile tools with which to analyze cultural change at Eastern Mennonite. Strong ties and mechanical solidarity are in part based on intensive community expectations and member similarity. Similarly, weak ties and organic solidarity are characterized as constituted from loosely-connected independent parts. The value of introducing both organic/mechanical solidarity and strong/weak ties is the emphasis that the strong/weak tie distinction places upon the locus of control of social bonds, whereas organic/mechanical solidarity is built around the relative diversity of membership. For example, although mechanical solidarity emphasizes the interchangeability and homogeneity of members, strong ties focus on group conformity to jointly held values, of which homogeneity may be one part. Thus, although the discussion above focused on the power dynamics that emerged concurrent with member diversity, this section

focuses purposefully on the changing motivation and expectations of member behavior in lieu of increasing diversity, professionalism, and values reinterpretation.

A full review of Mennonite cultural history in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century is not necessary to appreciate the impact that the reinterpretation of nonconformity values had on the type of authority exercised in the Mennonite institutions, including EMC. One story will suffice: a retired faculty member noted how EMC often followed internal Mennonite cultural changes rather than blazing the trails. He recalled how at mid-century some church bishops would attend communion services to assure compliance to regulation dress when Mennonite youth began to push the boundaries. Standing, communion elements in hand, the bishop evaluated each communicant on approach and if a dress were not of sufficient length or modesty, participation was denied. Of course, the danger of enforcing compliance through acts of authority is that no other recourse exists (legitimately) to address behavior. As soon as members observed one brash young lady slipping through, the norm no longer held. Mennonite culture, however insular, was not immune to the social tremors of the 1960s, and gradually, maintaining control through strong ties became possible only among the shrinking number of members who wished to be strongly tied.

Global forces of international politics and conflict reached down into the rural farming enclaves of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, and Kansas, sending their inhabitants to remote locations around the country and around world in the name of alternative military service. This physical dispersal provided Mennonite young men with every opportunity to shed the values of traditional Mennonite life. For many of those who returned and eventually would find their way to EMC as faculty, their newfound cultural perspective was expressed in the enactment

of values based on personal commitments forged through their experiences rather than on the strong ties of community expectations.

Many of the faculty members from the Augsburg generation returned from their international and graduate experiences to participate in close-knit and overlapping social, religious, and educational communities. Although the structure of community resembled what they knew as young people, the nature of the community shifted concurrently with their sense of purposeful engagement. The appearance of continuity disguised by continued cultural rituals, which historically had been markers of strong ties, perhaps veiled from insiders and outsiders the true significance of the change underway.

At EMC, the uneven and inconsistent transition from strong to weak ties became apparent in the reduction of conformity and uniformity and the increased importance of individual commitment. Non-Mennonites, almost by definition were at most weakly tied to the institution. Chapel was once a ritual that reinforced strong ties through the physical presence of students, faculty, and administrators, *and* the collective inculcation through presidential sermonizing. The chapel ritual, however, could not continue in its traditional form in part because participation by decree was no longer an acceptable form of governance and cultural conformity was no longer a norm able to claim the compliance of independent-minded intellectuals, despite institutional commitments.

Loosening the standards that uphold strong ties for generations can be a frightening proposition for an organization. Indeed, the story of higher education secularization often begins with the compromise of rituals that appeared to provide essential structure for the religious and ideological commitments of the institution (Burtchaell, 1998). However, that structure was frequently a false front as the actual foundation of commitment had long since eroded from

beneath. The fleeting persistence of rituals bereft of their moral force only served as a smoke screen for the changes occurring on an individual level. At Eastern Mennonite, the chapel ritual, no longer mandatory, became meaningless for some faculty who viewed it as an imposition on their academic time. However, other faculty members, such as Spike, found renewed purpose and commitment to a sub-community of chapel-attendees dedicated to making the ritual salient in their own lives. The successful transition from legislated rituals typical of strong ties to self-motivated individuals acting on personal commitment is, perhaps, the highest aspiration for an organization that cannot expect the willing compliance of its members based on authority alone.

*Faculty call.* The peculiar cultural and religious values and practices, combined with a dearth of institutional resources, required the enactment of *call* as a means to attract and retain qualified faculty members at Eastern Mennonite through the existence of the institution. From the perspective of prospective faculty members, call represented an invitation to evaluate fit and pursue employment in an educational environment in harmony with their beliefs and values. From an administrative perspective, call was an attempt to lure prospective faculty with the intrinsic rewards of participation in an education community that, given their interests and commitments, represented rare and desirable membership.

Both the nature and structure of the call changed between 1965 and 2000 for administrators and prospective faculty alike, concurrent with the shift away from a strong tie community. Although call as the means of attracting and retaining faculty was a necessary and consistent feature of institutional life, the nature of call itself changed to reflect this shift in group ties. A veteran professor recalled that as a young man he was taught that “when the church calls, you respond”. Implicit in his observation is a strong sense of church authority and expectation of conformity. The shift away from institutional authority as proxy for the church is evident in

other parts of institutional life as well, as the College gained the authority of a professionalized organization demanding academic standards and evidence of faculty scholarship, but losing, at least by degree, the ability to speak as the church and call faculty to service and acts of self-sacrificial commitment.

This shift in bond type was further reinforced by the many faculty, among them Jay, June, Gene, Loren, and the legendary Daniel Suter, who, despite the skills, opportunities, and for some, the inclination to go elsewhere, heeded the call to EMC. In an environment of weak ties, promoting the desirability of faculty position through member longevity and institutional saga represents an important means for faculty attraction and retention.

Although the use of call was a persistent feature of faculty hiring, over this 35-year span, the call to faculty employment changed by structure as well. Faculty call shifted from a specific church call to a general Christian call in many cases. Call itself increasingly was interpreted as a request to examine fit, placing more of the locus of decision-making with the individual rather than with the source of the call.

### *Cultural Change Conclusions*

What, then, does this transition toward weak ties over strong ties mean for the social bonds and member culture within an organization? It means that institutions, like EMU, need to strategically consider what inspires commitment and member engagement in order to increase member interaction and self-sacrifice on behalf of the group. This includes positioning organizational segments spatially and using resources to facilitate sub-cultures that are internally cohesive to the degree that the solidary turn may be made as well. It means leaders must monitor institutional rituals and evaluate their relative value to members as moments of collective purpose rather than moments of forced participation, at least for the majority of members. It

means that organization-wide, a greater level of intentionality is required to articulate values and mission, although it is incumbent upon leaders to weigh the costs as well as the benefits of the articulation process in a given context. Strong ties make values implicitly obvious, but weak ties either require organizational comfort with ambiguity, or purposeful and often difficult group processes to articulate the culture, ethos, and purpose of the organization. Finally, it means leaders must look for opportunities to make organizational-level self-sacrificial acts to promote member relationships and well-being, since the continuation of commitment for most organizations like EMU depends on the sense of intrinsic rewards and values congruence experienced by members.

#### Interpreting Institutional Identity through Faculty Bonds

The importance of physical space and the way the campus environment impacts faculty social bonds is clearly significant. However, organizations are not buildings or grounds or physical resources, even though each of these has immense practical and symbolic importance. Organizations are ideas that exist in the minds of those who encounter and participate in them, either from the inside or the outside. Eastern Mennonite School existed as a value toward the preservation of a collective identity long before it offered a single course, and despite several physical changes of location. Codified policies, practices, and procedures such as the mission statement and faculty handbook express and guide the metaphysical construction of Eastern Mennonite, but what the institution is resides in the meaning individuals make of it.

For this reason, the interactions among the faculty impact the way they perceive the identity of the institution and understanding those interactions provides valuable insights into the role of faculty culture in determining the identity of Eastern Mennonite. The majority of faculty participants responded to this issue through one of three general strands with one central theme:

collectively, faculty members *are* the institution. First, the way faculty treat one another reveals what kind of place EMU is. Some faculty members commented that EMU is a place where faculty members trust and respect one another. Scott, a non-Mennonite and former faculty member, commented that he would not have stayed as long as he did if he did not feel the high level of professional respect and trust that was extended to him. Trust and respect also facilitate important faculty social and task interactions, and bridge differences of religious tradition, academic rank, and disciplinary tradition. Working toward organic solidarity in a weak-tie environment is an aspect of EMU's identity dependent upon the behavior of faculty. According to Laurie:

...one of the things that's important in an academic community is to be able to argue back and forth different ideas and learn different things from that. I think that's what we do [in the Science Center]. We can argue about things and get a different point of view than [we typically hear departmentally]...and I think that is something that I hope can be modeled to our students. You know, that you can have different viewpoints but you can still accept that and like each other.

Second, student learning and development is a product of the collective faculty effort. Although they were not denying the agency and responsibility of students for their own education, faculty asserted that the educational identity of the institution is a product of a collaborative faculty effort. According to Jim:

.... each student that came to the four-year program, they were impacted not just by what they studied but by who taught them and what that faculty member modeled for them, the things that they learned from [that faculty member] out of the classroom, and I just sort of see the total cumulative impact on a given student from the standpoint of what they



taught and who taught them, and I think they carry that with them for life.... I myself am just one of those persons along with all the other faculty that were impacting the students.... One faculty member will impact a student in a way that the others will not. You're a part of this, but you're not the total part. And we just live with the awareness of that...good things are happening very much apart from me because of what the other faculty are contributing.

Thus, the identity of the institution is the combined faculty effort resulting in a student who is shaped and molded, who is encouraged, and who is endured as a community process. This conceptualization of the student as collaborative project is an important contrast to the view of teaching as a solitary process. This vision of the solitary professor is even proposed within the Mennonite education literature (see Schrag, 1998).

Third, consistency and inconsistency between values-claimed and values-lived reveals what EMU is through faculty behavior. Elaine commented:

...if I know that faculty incorporate social action and peace and justice into their lives and tangible ways of living out creation care and environmental concern, then that tells me something about what's important to EMU. If I hear faculty discussions, and if I see that some faculty never go to chapel that tells me something about the campus. If I hear faculty discussions of whether Christianity is one way to God, and maybe not the only way, then that tells me something about what's important on campus. So I think it has a tremendous impact on how I perceived EMU as a whole. Even though we are owned by the Mennonite Church and we would espouse the Mennonite Confession of Faith, it's that it is or is not lived out in certain ways, or talked about and that tells me really what EMU is about. What I observe and hear from other faculty as well as administration and staff,

that really tells me a lot about. It's like anyone can tell me what you believe, but how are you behaving? It's what your behaviors indicate; that's what you really believe.

Elaine's point was echoed by many faculty members. A small campus and small community with many internal communication forms such as campus-wide emails, the *Campus Bulletin* publication, faculty meetings, and informal on and off-campus gatherings provide a variety of informational feedback loops. One measure of maintaining or fostering institutional distinctiveness is to what degree faculty activity and institutional mission and purpose are in harmony. When they are, it decreases the reliance on mission sloganeering, and provides legitimacy for the ideals the organization officially endorses.

A sub-set of this point, raised by several faculty members, is that the longevity and cultural centrality of some faculty figures take on symbolic importance as icons of institutional identity. Robert Yoder in the Science Center impacted the culture of the building through his welcoming spirit, warm regard for colleagues, and selfless behavior that provided other faculty with opportunities to demonstrate care for each other. Abram, an emeritus faculty member, commented:

I don't know what the right word is, but [Robert] was a focal point, he would be there and if there's someone [in the lounge] eating lunch, you might join them. If there is no one there, then you might go on and do your thing or not eat. And sometimes people don't even have lunch with them, but if there is someone who is in there and they're talking about something that sounds exciting, or if you smell popcorn, it's sort of a magnet kind of thing. I think he had a significant impact over our social interactions. He did in other ways too. He was the guy who in the morning would say "Hello" and smile and say, "How are you doing?" The rest of us tend to be maybe a little subdued, at least,

especially in the morning. He did a lot of things too in addition to the physical services here rendered especially to the biology department. It was the social impact that he had on the department that we miss.

Similarly, another faculty member who was employed at the College for fifty years was legendary for his ability to remember the names of every student he ever taught, and his efforts to encourage faculty interaction by initiating the Faculty Fling and other campus rituals. Reflecting on the impact of this man's career, another faculty member wondered who the next person would be to fill that role. For their survival, institutions must be able to perpetuate themselves without respect to individuals (Ahrne, 1994). Nevertheless, this study reinforces the idea that member longevity and commitment places certain individuals more centrally in the gradient circle of institutional culture, giving them unique and sometimes disproportionate referent authority in the life of an organization. Replacing individuals who have come to serve as cultural anchors may, as was the case at Eastern Mennonite, contribute to a dissipated sense of identity. Although followed by highly capable individuals professionally, the retirement of a cohort of long-term faculty contributed to a need for institutional redefinition, both to re-center the organization in a period of transition, and to allow the subsequent generation to own the institution and its values. Individuals like these two are present on nearly every college campus. These cultural anchors embody the values of the institution, and serve as avatars for the kind of contribution and identity that represents the institution at its best. In a very real sense, they *are* the institution.

### Summary

Most organizations, particularly in higher education, are cobbled together from multiple cultures; some mutually-reinforcing, and some mutually exclusive. Eastern Mennonite

University as it existed in the year 2000 had remained a remarkable example of mutually-reinforcing social and cultural bonds, despite the significant change in structure, membership and values interpretation that occurred over the previous 35 years. However, the story at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century was also a story of re-establishing a collective identity after the institutional guidance and momentum of the previous generation began to fade.

The Augsburg generation of faculty (1965 -1980) brought with them the often disparate forces of academic pedigree and social and religious commitments that were held together by a by a single set of values, rooted in a common Mennonite heritage. It was their shared history that gave that generation of faculty an identity and purpose that the subsequent generation must parse out. Particularly among religious groups, historians have identified moments of generational revolution, when the cultural and theological foundations of one cohort form the backdrop against which that same group reacts and establishes new interpretations or behaviors (James Burtchaell (1998) presents the Pietists as an example). Subsequent generations, absent this socialization, interpret the revisions of the prior generation as a wholesale rejection, and behave in kind. However, this contemporary generation, absent the socialization of the prior generation, fails to appreciate that it was the theological foundation of their fore-bearers that provided a framework for understanding cultural and religious change that occurred. Although the dominant characteristic of the Augsburg generation of faculty was not the summary rejection of their cultural and religious roots, the basis for group identity shifted away from the strong ties of the past even though their common values were rooted in their strongly-tied history. The Lapp generation of faculty (1987-2000), although largely Mennonite, often lacked the social, cultural, and religious background through which the retiring generation made sense of their academic commitments and thus resisted the locals/cosmopolitans dualism. The

challenge was to find a new footing and identify the value of the history and traditions they inherited.

However, the grounding set of international and domestic experiences that guided the social and professional activities of the Augsburg generation of faculty also brought with it cultural practices that, perhaps more by tradition than intention, formed boundaries between insider ethnic Mennonites and outsiders. Although some non-insiders (both Mennonites and non-Mennonites) ultimately felt they belonged at EMU, the journey to this realization was at times painful, and for some, like Mary, came only when she accepted her outsider status and determined an apposite role for herself. The Lapp generation of faculty also had to navigate through this cultural and religious legacy of exclusion and boundary maintenance and decide what it meant to them to have a diverse faculty in an ideologically-distinct institution.

This research represents a recent historical study and there is no end to declare. Just as the framework resisted linear and evolutionary social and organizational assumptions, so also I will not pretend that tidy conclusions of institutional identity or change are available. This is precisely the point: the Augsburg generation, now mostly in retirement, can pause to cast a glance back over the many physical and metaphysical miles traveled. They certainly have earned that right. However it is the Lapp generation, experiencing the freedom and insecurity of loosened ties and the promise and challenge of solidarity and cohesion through diversity, who must intentionally sort out the internal and external social and cultural pressures upon them. It is theirs, at least momentarily, to decide what sort of space EMU is going to be and what legacy the faculty will be to the generation of faculty that follows them.

#### Recommendations

The theme of my recommendations for further study is *assumptions*. As highlighted by the very familiar concept of the paradigm shift (Kuhn, 1970), research tends to support the conclusions en vogue and discard approaches or results that do not conform to those assumptions of value and reality. The modest claim of my research is to peer conceptually into a few ill-litged corners of higher education and pose questions of a study subject that may not fit the assumptions of the dominant milieu. Nevertheless, the light cast there may allow other researchers and practitioners to better understand their own contexts, and with that hope, I make the following recommendations.

Higher education research, in recent years, has expanded its interests beyond the typical study subjects to minority, non-traditional, and specialized populations (race, gender, ethnicity, and age) and educational services (community colleges, historically-black colleges and universities, as well as rural, urban, for-profit, and international colleges and universities). However, the irrelevance of the hundreds of avowedly Christian (see Benne, 2006) colleges and universities in the United States is evident in the dearth of research that recognizes the unique and defining characteristics that result in approaches to attracting faculty, tending culture, and advancing organizational purpose. No doubt, the historical tension between institutionalized Christianity and the secular academia has produced a legacy of distrust that perpetuates a general posture of dis-interest in educational enterprises with similar structures and policies, but highly divergent ontological assumptions.

Thus, a first and general recommendation highlighted by this research is for a field-wide acknowledgement that higher education plurality provides a richer, more engaging, and more nuanced range of institutional types and purposes than can be described by the Carnegie Classification System. This should not be a difficult premise to accept. However, fully

embracing the diversity of and study of higher education in the United States cannot occur without including Christian higher education as a part of that research agenda. Recent studies by Benne (2006) and Parker, et al. (2007) have advanced the state of this research, but given the breadth of institutional types, missions, and histories, far more scholarship is yet needed.

Although this call is for attention to a specific segment of the higher education universe, the majority of my recommendations are applicable to other populations and settings as well. The unique cultural and religious aspects of Eastern Mennonite facilitated the persistence of theological and ideological commitments despite increasing professionalization and diversification of Mennonites in general. Nevertheless, the following recommendations are applicable to higher education institutions whether secular or religious, since the specific manifestation of these concepts at EMU may be unique, but the forms and issues are pervasively present in nearly all colleges and university types.

Assumptions of the meaning of space and time deserve further consideration. In particular, studying organizational change as dynamic physical and metaphysical spaces provides alternatives to chronologically-based studies and assumptions of linear development. Imaginative studies employing a framework based on Popkewitz (1997) could expand our means of conceptualizing the shifts of culture and meaning-making within an organization.

Along with metaphysical space, physical space has been studied with respect to student experiences and meaning-making (Moos, 1986; Strange & Banning, 2001), though curiously, this research infrequently has been extended to faculty and administrative experiences. Particularly at small colleges where a collective faculty identity may still be fostered, the significance of physical proximity, isolation, and interaction greatly impacts the value faculty

members place on their colleagues, the quality of faculty relationships, and the informal collaboration that occurs to the benefit of students, professors, and the institution alike.

The meaning faculty make of physical space is one aspect of another significant area for further research: the intrinsic rewards of faculty life that contribute to faculty hiring and persistence. Since Finnegan (1992) illustrated certain segments of faculty prioritizing mission fit over perceived prestige, little subsequent research has occurred to expand understandings of faculty motivations for institutional selection beyond the traditional model of hierarchical hiring. From my research, three specific related areas require further scholarly attention. First, the concept of call, or why faculty members are attracted to certain types of institutions and positions, and how administrators lure faculty with suggestions of fit and unique institutional purpose requires further study. Second, in this study, solidarity and cohesion were used to analyze faculty bonds, and by extension, to understand the positive and negative relational and cultural forces that encourage or discourage faculty persistence. More research is needed to understand the many facets of faculty persistence in other contexts. Third, at Eastern Mennonite, a history of (potentially) cosmopolitan faculty members committing to the institution, although they had other, more prestigious prospects, contributed to a culture of institutional desirability to variable degrees. At small, less visible institutions, understanding the experiences of faculty who resist the *Gouldner paradigm* (that is, that highly skilled faculty are the least institutionally-committed) would provide greater insights into the meaning ascribed to faculty employment.

Finally, in line with the increase in general research interest in marginal populations, investigation into the experiences, motivations, and moments of connection or rejection for those faculty members who do not fit the dominant paradigm at institutions with a specific culture is needed. Although EMU, at least historically, may be exceptional in the level of cultural



reinforcement brought to bear upon outsider faculty members, many institutions, both religious and secular, have a culture or preferred *modus operandi* that creates certain boundaries of membership, participation, and social inclusion. Understanding personal and institutional success and failure of outsider inclusion would aid institutions who rely on cultural outsiders to fill particularly needed skill sets or diversity targets.

**APPENDICIES**

## Human Subjects Review

This is to notify you on behalf of the Education Internal Review Committee (EDIRC) that protocol EDIRC-2008-02-04-5174-nfalle titled Faculty Ritual, Solidarity, and Cohesion: 35 Years of Change at Eastern Mennonite University has been exempted from formal review because it falls under the following category(ies) defined by DHHS Federal Regulations: 45CFR46.101.b.2.

Work on this protocol may begin on 2008-02-13 and must be discontinued on 2009-02-13. Should there be any changes to this protocol, please submit these changes to the committee for determination of continuing exemption using the Protocol and Compliance Management channel on the Self Service tab within myWM ( <http://my.wm.edu/> ).

Please add the following statement to the footer of all consent forms, cover letters, etc.:

**THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON 2008-02-13 AND EXPIRES ON 2009-02-13.**

You are required to notify Dr. Ward, chair of the EDIRC, at 757-221-2358 (EDIRC-L@wm.edu) and Dr. Deschenes, chair of the PHSC at 757-221-2778 (PHSC-L@wm.edu) if any issues arise during this study.

Good luck with your study.

### COMMENTS

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 No comments available  
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### BASIC INFO

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**Title:** Faculty Ritual, Solidarity, and Cohesion: 35 Years of Change at Eastern Mennonite University  
**Start Date:** 2008-02-13  
**Year Number:** 1  
**Years Total:** 1  
**Campus:** Main  
**Committee(s):** EDIRC  
**Cc: Emails:** definn@wm.edu  
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Protocol modified by tjward on 2008-02-13 12:13:52

## Appendix A

### *Faculty Interview Protocol*

This protocol will be followed with all faculty participants to ensure standardization and ethical treatment. Participants will be informed in advance that they will be asked questions regarding their experiences with other faculty members.

- The participant will be reminded that this interview will be audio recorded
- The participant will be asked to read, and if in agreement, sign the consent form provided

### **Participants will be asked to answer the following questions, and follow-up queries:**

- Years served on the faculty at Eastern Mennonite
- Undergraduate institution
- Educational level and institution when hired at Eastern Mennonite
- Reasons for seeking employment at Eastern Mennonite

### **Rituals**

- List for me some ways you recall faculty interacting. They may be formal or informal settings, and events that included non-faculty as well.
- Which events were most important to you? Why?
- Tell me about (X) event – can you think of a particular experience that exemplified it? What did this event mean to you? What did it mean to the group? [Repeat this question for several events noted as “most important”.]

### **Group bonds (Solidarity and cohesion)**

- What role did these events play in the life of the group, in your experience?
- What events impacted your relationship with other individual faculty the most? How would you describe that impact? (probe: sub-groups)
- Are there common values that were part of this event? (if so, what)?
- Did everyone participate? If not, what impact did that event have on the faculty who did not participate? What kind of impact does participation have on individuals and on the group as a whole?

### **Ritual change**

- How, if at all, have your experiences with other faculty changed? Examples?
- Were there shared experiences that ceased to be practiced? If so, what do you think caused the change? What impact did it have, if any? When did these changes occur? Do you have any idea why the changes occurred?
- Did any new shared experiences develop? When? Why?
- Did you notice any changes in the make-up of the faculty while you were employed at Eastern Mennonite? How? What were the changes?
- If so, what impact did it have? (to further clarify: on faculty interactions, shared values, sense of connectedness)

**Implication of group bonds for view of institution**

- What would you say are some common faculty values? Have you seen these values change? What contributed to the change, in your opinion? What impact has this had on the faculty collectively?
- Do you think changes to shared faculty experiences have contributed to changed faculty values? If so, how? How has this changed the faculty experience?
- How, if at all, did your experiences with other faculty shape your view of the college?
- Have the changes that you mentioned change your view of the college?

## Appendix B

### *Administrator Interview Protocol*

The following protocol will be followed with all administrative participants to ensure standardization and ethical treatment.

- The participant will be reminded that this interview will be audio recorded
- The participant will be asked to read, and if in agreement, sign the consent form provided

### **Participants will be asked to answer the following questions, and follow-up queries:**

- Years employed at Eastern Mennonite
- Undergraduate and graduate institutions

### **Administrator role in faculty hiring**

- Did you have a direct or indirect role in the hiring process? Can you explain the degree to which you may have impacted the selection of individual faculty or the criteria involved in searching for faculty members?
- Tell me how new faculty hiring took place (situate in a time period).
- Who else participated in the hiring decisions?

### **Hiring criteria**

- What were the main criteria considered in the hiring of new faculty? Did these criteria change over time? If so, why? Was anyone in particular responsible for effecting this change?
- Are there examples of hires (no names) you recall who exemplified the hiring process during the three periods?
- Can you think of non-typical hires, and why were exceptions made?
- What values do you believe the criteria represent? From where did these values arise?
- What consideration was given to the hiring of non-Mennonite faculty? How was that handled in your experience?

### **External factors**

- Were there any factors or pressures from outside the institution that figured into individual hires, or hiring in general?
- What role did the religious community outside EMU play, if at all?
- What role did the labor market play in hiring decisions?

## Appendix C

### *Cultural Informer Protocol*

The following protocol will be followed with all cultural informer participants to ensure standardization and ethical treatment.

- The participant will be reminded that this interview will be audio recorded
- The participant will be asked to read, and if in agreement, sign the consent form provided

### **Participants will be asked to answer the following questions, and follow-up queries:**

- Participant's relationship to the college and Mennonite community

### **Social, cultural, and religious changes**

- Thinking in terms of the administrative eras of Augsburger, Detweiler, and Lapp, what would you say were some of the most important changes in the broader Mennonite community that impacted the college during these respective periods?
- In what ways has Eastern Mennonite reflected changes in the local churches?
- How has Eastern Mennonite resisted changes that have occurred in the local churches?
- What role has the Mennonite community in general played in the development of Eastern Mennonite between 1965 and 2000?
- How has this relationship changed? To what effect for both communities?
- What have you observed regarding the hiring of non-Mennonite faculty? What impact do you think that has had?
- How had the institution and the faculty worked out the role of the college as a leader or follower relative to the Mennonite church?
- What changes have you observed in terms of the cultural and social practices of local Mennonites?



## Appendix D

### *Faculty Focus Group Protocol*

The following protocol will be followed with all faculty focus group participants to ensure standardization and ethical treatment.

- The participant will be reminded that this interview will be audio recorded
- The participant will be asked to read, and if in agreement, sign the consent form provided

**Participants will be asked to answer the following questions, and follow-up queries:**

#### **Ritual Change**

- When you think back to your earliest employment experiences, what were shared faculty experiences that seemed particularly significant or meaningful?
- What made these events so important?
- How would you characterize faculty bonds and connectedness in your early years?
- Did you observe these events changing in terms of structure or meaning? If so, how?
- In your opinion, what caused or contributed to this change?
- What impact did these changes have on faculty bonds and connectedness?
- Were shared faculty experiences replaced? If so, by what, and if not, was anything lost?

#### **Faculty Identity and Institutional Perception**

- As you think about the types of changes we've been discussing, what impact did these changes have on how faculty, as a group, saw themselves?
- What would you identify as common faculty values? Have you seen these values change? What contributed to that change, if any?
- Do you think changing faculty values have impacted the way faculty perceive what it means for EMU to be a Mennonite institution? If so, how?

## Appendix E

*Participant Consent Form*

*Faculty Ritual, Solidarity, and Cohesion:  
35 Years of Change at Eastern Mennonite University*

Researcher: Nathan Alleman

Contact: 757 566-2343(h); 757 753-5387(cell)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in an historical case study involving past and present faculty and administrators who served at Eastern Mennonite College/University between 1965 and 2000. This study is part of the requirement for degree completion toward a doctor of philosophy in educational policy, planning, and leadership, at The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. The purpose of this study is to understand how collective faculty bonds may have changed as a result of changes to rituals (repeated, shared activities), group membership, and environmental variations. This study also seeks to understand how faculty perceptions of the “Mennoniteness” of EMC/U may have changed as a result.<sup>5</sup>

Faculty: as a participant, I understand I will be asked questions regarding my experiences as part of the faculty as a group during my time of employment only, as well as recollections about specific group events, my feelings about those events, what those events meant to the group, and how and why events change over time, if at all. I understand that the honesty and accuracy of my responses is crucial for this study. I also understand that I am not required to answer any question that I do not want to answer. I understand that I will be expected to participate in one interview, lasting one and two hours. I understand that I may be asked to be part of a focus group with several other faculty members, but that my agreement to be interviewed is not an agreement to be part of the focus group.

Administrators: as a participant, I understand I will be asked questions about my experiences with institutional hiring practices, and my direct or indirect role. I will be asked questions about hiring criteria and hiring decisions generally, but will NOT be asked about specific individuals that could be identified either by name or by description. I understand that the honesty and accuracy of my responses is crucial for this study, and that I am not required to answer any questions that I do not want to answer. I understand that I will be interviewed for approximately one hour.

Cultural Informers: as a participant, I understand that I will be asked questions regarding social changes surrounding Eastern Mennonite in the community, churches, and denomination generally. I understand that I have been asked to participate because of my personal experience and awareness of events pertaining to Eastern Mennonite College/University, and that my honest

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<sup>5</sup> Four consent forms will be used, tailored to each participant group. For expediency, the sections unique to each are parsed out under their respective group heading in this form.

and reflective responses are essential to this study. I understand I may decline to answer any question. I am aware that I will be interviewed for approximately one hour.

Focus Group Participants: as a participant, I understand I will be asked to discuss my experiences and impression of faculty social life with a group of other faculty who were employed at Eastern Mennonite for at least 15 years. I understand that by agreeing to participate in a focus group, my identity in this study will be known by the other focus group participants. I understand I may decline to answer any question, and that the focus group will last between one and two hours.

All participants: I understand that I have been informed my identity as participant will be kept anonymous, except as noted in focus groups. I understand that I will be interviewed and recorded using a pseudonym that will allow only the researcher to determine my identity. At the conclusion of this study, the key linking me with the pseudonym will be destroyed. I also acknowledge that my interview will be audio recorded to ensure the accuracy of the data analyzed. At the conclusion of the study, the recordings will be destroyed and will no longer be available for use. All efforts will be made to conceal my identity in the study's report of results and to keep my personal information confidential.

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue participation in this study at any time by notifying Nathan Alleman by e-mail at xxxx@wm.edu or by telephone at 757-XXX-XXXX. If I have any questions that arise in connection with my participation in this study, I should contact Dr. Dorothy Finnegan, the dissertation chair at 757-XXX-XXXX or definn@wm.edu. I understand that I may report any problems or dissatisfaction to Dr. Thomas Ward, chair of the School of Education Internal Review Committee at 757-221-2358 or tjward@wm.edu or Dr. Michael Deschenes, chair of the Protection of Human Subjects Committee at the College of William and Mary at 757-221-2778 or mrdesc@wm.edu.

My signature below signifies that I am at least 18 years of age, that I have received a copy of this consent form, and that I consent to allowing the researcher to record my interview as a part of this study.

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Participant

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Investigator

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECT COMMITTEE (PHONE: 757 221-3901) ON

\_\_\_\_\_ 2/13/2008 \_\_\_\_\_ AND EXPIRES ON \_\_\_\_\_ 2/13/2009 \_\_\_\_\_.

## Appendix F

*Participant Invitation Letter*

Dear [Title] [Last Name]

My name is Nathan Alleman. I am a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education Administration Program at the College of William and Mary. I would like to invite you to participate in my dissertation research about the way shared faculty activities, group identity and social bonds have changed at Eastern Mennonite University between 1965 and 2000. More broadly, faculty membership at Eastern Mennonite College/University has been affected by changes in academic market forces, faculty professionalization, institutional diversity, and other internal and external factors. In this study, I do not assume that this has had a detrimental impact on the common faculty experience. However, I do believe the faculty experience has changed, and I want to understand the nature of that change.

In particular, I will be interviewing faculty from this era to hear their own stories of shared events and the meaning of those events for faculty life in general. Participants have been selected based on length of employment, era of employment, and undergraduate institution (Eastern Mennonite alum or not). President Swartzendruber has provided institutional support for this project as well. Participants will be interviewed for approximately [time dependent on type of participant], and may be invited to participate in a focus group as well. The interview will be audio recorded for accuracy, but all identities will be kept confidential. Participants will have the opportunity to sign an informed consent form, detailing their rights and responsibilities.

If you are willing to participate in this study, [for email contacts] reply to this email ([xxxx@wm.edu](mailto:xxxx@wm.edu)) [for postal contacts] either contact me at [xxxx@wm.edu](mailto:xxxx@wm.edu) if you have email, or I will follow-up with you with a phone call in the next few weeks and you can consent or decline to participate at that time.

Please note that participation in this study is strictly voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time. Information about individuals gathered as a result of the study will be kept strictly confidential. Under no circumstances will the names of individual faculty members be identified within my dissertation or in any subsequent publications. All identifying names will be assigned pseudonyms.

I appreciate your giving time to this study. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (757) 566-XXXX (home) / (757) 753-XXXX (cell) or e-mail me at [xxxx@wm.edu](mailto:xxxx@wm.edu) . You may also contact the Chair of my Dissertation Committee, Dr. Dorothy E. Finnegan at [dxxx@wm.edu](mailto:dxxx@wm.edu) . I hope that you consent to be a part of my dissertation research.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Nathan Alleman

## Appendix G

*Interview Code List: Tree Nodes*

## Culture

- Employment as mission
- Generational change
- Impact of diversity
- Institutional expectations
- Mennonite culture outside of EMU

## Faculty Hiring

- Administrator thoughts on constructing a faculty body
- Constituent influence
- Faculty hiring criteria and practices
- Hiring non-Mennonites
- Historical perspective on hiring practices
- Market forces
- Administrator role in hiring
- Selling the college

## Ritual

## Space

- Metaphysical space
  - Identity space
    - Individual identity space
    - Collective identity space
- Physical space
  - Campus proximity issues
  - Conversation space
    - Social space
    - Task space
  - Departmental space
  - Home space
  - International space
  - Off-campus college event space
  - Off-campus space
  - Religious space

## Solidarity and Cohesion

## Cohesion

- Departmental cohesion
- Social cohesion
- Task cohesion

## Solidarity

- Solidarity via enforced homogeneity

Connection between solidarity and cohesion  
Lack of bonds

*Interview Code List: Free Nodes*

Stories of administrators  
Individual catalysts  
Alumni experiences  
Leaving the college  
Employment stories

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