

3-1-1999

The Challenge to Catholic Teacher Education in Scotland

James C. Conroy
St. Andrew's College

Douglas McCreath
St. Andrew's College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/ce>

Recommended Citation

Conroy, J. C., & McCreath, D. (1999). The Challenge to Catholic Teacher Education in Scotland. *Journal of Catholic Education*, 2 (3).
<http://dx.doi.org/10.15365/joce.0203062013>

This Article is brought to you for free with open access by the School of Education at Digital Commons at Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. It has been accepted for publication in Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice by the journal's editorial board and has been published on the web by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons at Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. For more information about Digital Commons, please contact digitalcommons@lmu.edu. To contact the editorial board of Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice, please email CatholicEdJournal@lmu.edu.

THE CHALLENGE TO CATHOLIC TEACHER EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND

JAMES C. CONROY AND DOUGLAS MCCREATH

St. Andrew's College, Scotland

Maintaining a strong sense of religious purpose is a challenge facing private education. Institutions of higher learning confront special challenges when addressing issues of religious identity, governance, and mission. Scotland's Catholic community encountered a major challenge when the only teacher education college for those aspiring to teach in Catholic schools, St. Andrew's College, began merger talks with the University of Glasgow, an institution with historical ties to the Church of Scotland. After reviewing the historical context of the merger discussions, the authors provide a helpful analysis of the process and offer a four-fold model of analysis for other institutions in similar transitional stages.

For most children religion is an accident of birth. For many adults in our contemporary society religious practice is a matter of habit. For some, the witness of religious faith is a real and perpetual challenge in their daily lives. In public organizations (including schools and colleges of religious foundation) there can be an uneasy match between their avowed purposes and the day-to-day interpersonal transactions. Sometimes the historic labeling of an institution can lead to the premature assumption of a consensus among members and a reluctance to encourage debate within the civil polity of its mission and purpose. For staff of St. Andrew's College, caught up in the maelstrom of merger talks with the University of Glasgow, a large secular organization, being Catholic is no longer enough. For a number of staff at the University of Glasgow, being Catholic is too much. The challenge for the University of Glasgow as a major civic university is to establish a framework both to manage the plurality of perspectives represented within its local com-

munity and to support informed debate about related issues. The prize for the University of Glasgow is not only securing an additional department, but also its potential recognition in the international world of higher education as an institution which genuinely embraces the plurality of ideas and world views. For St. Andrew's College, the prize is the maintenance of its institutional mission to contribute to the national and international debate on the nature of Christian education. The challenge for the College is to do this in a way that represents the authentic anthropological traditions within Catholic education while actively encouraging others to critique the epistemological assumptions of the post-modern world.

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF CATHOLIC TEACHER EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND

The provision of Catholic education in Britain has differed markedly from that which evolved in other parts of Europe and in the Americas. In almost all other countries which have at least some roots in a Christian tradition, higher education is marked by diversity of provision. Many countries on both sides of the Atlantic have come to a variety of accommodations between church and state and indeed between different denominational traditions. In Scotland such plurality has been limited by historic circumstances, demographic considerations, and legislative enactment (Boyle & Lynch, 1998; Brown, 1991; Findlay, 1991). Consequent to the Reformation, the universities of Scotland effectively operated under the aegis of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The Education Act of Scotland of 1872 made provision for universal education by, among other things, offering to transfer all schools from their sponsoring church bodies to the state. Catholics in Scotland, largely an immigrant population, felt themselves exposed, and their Church leaders chose not to transfer their schools. However, in the negotiations which presaged the 1918 Education Act of Scotland, the Catholic Church (under severe financial pressure) agreed to the transfer of its schools to the state; the state being at that time concerned with both equity and the poor standards of achievement apparent in many Catholic schools (O'Hagan, 1996; Treble, 1978). The Church, however, retained responsibility for the ethos of the school as well as approval of staff appointments. The involvement of the Catholic Church in higher education since the Reformation in Scotland has been confined to the provision of teacher education for these schools since 1895.

Prior to a merger in 1981, Scotland had two Catholic teacher education institutions. Since then, St. Andrew's College has fulfilled a national role as the higher education provider for those wishing to teach in Catholic schools. In common with all teacher education institutions in Scotland, St. Andrew's College continues to offer professional development opportunities for all

teachers, irrespective of denominational attachment.

In 1987 the opening of the post of principal from one reserved for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to all suitably qualified lay Catholics marked a further developmental change. The appointment of the first lay principal appeared entirely consistent with the evolving role of the laity which had been taking place in the governance of Catholic institutions as a consequence of the Second Vatican Council (Gleason, 1997).

At the same time, a number of related developments weakened any institutional bond between colleges and their sponsoring bodies. These changes included a shift away from the rhetoric of collegiality; the introduction of the language of accountancy (quite distinct from that of accountability), with the widespread use of such shibboleths as “Value for Money” and “Fitness for Purpose”; substantial reductions in funding; and significant changes in the instruments of governance. In the case of St. Andrews College the issue of governance had special importance since it heralded the advent of the first lay Chair of Governors, previously occupied by a member of the Bishops Conference of Scotland. This significant development reflected the thrust of the Second Vatican Council and has paralleled the changes to governance in North American institutions, which have been well documented by, for example, Gallin (1996). While in the case of St. Andrew’s College, the relationship between Principal and Chair may not always have been relaxed, the loss of direct and personal contact between the Conference and the college would presage a disengagement of the Bishops Conference from the actual experiences and existence of the college. This process reduced the awareness within the Bishops Conference of the substantially changed and expanded day-to-day demands placed upon the college, demands which would dictate new ways of thinking and operating within both the worlds of higher education and the wider polity.

To no surprise, the most potent of these changes was financial. Prior to 1992 St. Andrew’s College was directly funded by the Scottish Office Education Department. Changes wrought at that time in the general funding regime for Scottish Higher Education meant that the disbursement of funds would be negotiated through the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council. Coincidentally (though there are rarely coincidences in politics!), the creation of this additional administrative layer reduced the possibilities of direct influence by the Scottish church on the political process—especially on decisions about resource allocation. Shortly after the inception of this new Council, it became clear that the funding adopted formula did not favor small, monotechnic institutions, particularly those with high student-contact costs, such as teacher education. The first intimations of an impending financial crisis appeared in the announcement by the Funding Council, on Friday, March 16, 1995, that part of the historic funding of teacher education institutions would be re-designated as a “safety net” (Munro, 1995a, p. 95). These

intimations of impending financial difficulties soon became a reality; one reflected in the Minutes of the Board of Governors of St. Andrew's College, for February, 10, 1996. Despite staffing reductions and the best efforts to balance the books, the institution faced the prospect of a spiral into long-term financial deficit, raising questions of institutional viability. Other changes in fiscal measures, most especially the introduction of a competitive mechanism for research funding, were further to weaken a small institution with a limited research base. As the national Catholic college for teacher education, St. Andrew's priorities at this time continued to be the development and implementation of national and regional projects including management training and school and curriculum support.

Having assessed the long-term prospects for the College as an independent institution, in 1997 the Governors decided to seek a merger with the University of Glasgow. In February 1998, following protracted negotiations and widespread consultation by both the College and the University, the Senatus Academicus and the Court of the University of Glasgow (February 11, 1998) and the Board of Governors of St. Andrew's College (February 10, 1998) passed a resolution to establish in the University of Glasgow a Faculty of Education. This proposed Faculty would assume the historic responsibilities of St. Andrew's College to the Catholic educational community in Scotland through the establishment of a Board of Catholic Education within the Faculty which would have responsibility for advising the University Court on the resources, staffing, and needs of Catholic education.

PUBLIC RESPONSES TO THE PROPOSED MERGER

The following section of this paper offers an analysis of the responses of a variety of individuals and bodies to the proposed merger. It examines the conversations found in the Scottish press beginning in June 1996 with the announcement of the merger of Scotland's largest teacher education institution, Moray House, with the University of Edinburgh (Pickard, 1996). Its central purpose is to trace the progress of this very public discussion surrounding the proposed merger of St. Andrew's College with the University of Glasgow. The most striking feature of the emergent debate, precipitated by the St. Andrew's proposal, was the recognition of its implications for the whole of Catholic education. One measure of the widespread interest in the issue was the scale of press comment. The number of Scottish press articles was three times that generated by the concurrent merger proposals for each of Scotland's other two remaining independent teacher education institutions. It is also significant that the concerns generated two separate articles in a United Kingdom Sunday newspaper and found substantial expression in both the local community press and in the national Scottish Catholic press.

FINANCES AND VIABILITY

The decision to seek a merger with the University of Glasgow was not arbitrary, since St. Andrew's was already an associate college of the University. The evolution of this association led to the launch of the Glasgow School of Education as a collaborative venture in 1995 between St. Andrew's College and two Glasgow University Departments, Education and Adult and Continuing Education. Its purpose was to allow the pooling of the complementary expertise and professionalism of both institutions so as to provide enhanced support for teachers and schools. Although the avowed purpose was educational, both institutions felt it necessary to deny that the proposal represented a "survival package," while acknowledging that "St. Andrew's College has been buffeted by budgetary squalls and job threats..." (Munro, 1995b, p. 5).

By March 1996, the reporting tone had changed, banner headlines proclaiming, for example, "Cash blow for Catholic college" (Tierney, 1996). The immediate response by the College to a planned reduction of 4.6% in its budget was "to seek to bridge the shortfall by various means of diversification" (p. 3). Within a few months the projected funding shortfall rose to 20% as a consequence of fundamental changes in governmental accounting and funding procedures. This precipitated a growing recognition within the Catholic educational community that the financial crisis facing St. Andrew's College was a threat to Catholic education. Indeed, Scotland's senior Church leader and President of the Catholic Education Commission for Scotland, Cardinal Thomas Winning, called for the Catholic community to support our "national Catholic college." In so doing he unequivocally stated that: "anything which threatens the college [is] a threat to our whole system and [he would] resist this with all the powers at [his] disposal" (Farmer, 1996, p. 1). The cuts affecting St. Andrew's College were by no means exclusive. Despite early disclaimers, the announcement that Moray House was to seek a merger with the University of Edinburgh was founded on similar funding insecurities (Cochrane, 1996; Pickard, 1997a, 1997b). In turn, the last remaining teacher education institution was forced to seek a merger. "In a climate that has forced Jordanhill and Moray House to seek the embrace of university partners, a smaller college was never going to survive....In the end money will talk" ("Teacher trainers" 1997, p. 25).

STRUCTURAL CHANGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

National fiscal considerations precipitated a radical United Kingdom review of higher education funding (Dearing, 1997). One impact of this review in Scotland has been to accelerate course design models more resonant with North American models of modularity and transferability. A concomitant aspiration was the enhancement of the academic rigor of extant teacher edu-

cation provision. Gordon Kirk, Principal of Moray House, claimed that a hostile financial climate was not the sole reason for his institution's seeking a merger. In a statement echoing recent Catholic education scholarship in the United States (O'Keefe, 1998), he asserted that the institution could survive but that "survival is not a laudable aspiration" and that such a limited aspiration was inadequate. As Kirk maintained, "I am paid to make my institution flourish" (Pickard, 1997b, p.13). The Principal of Moray House's partner institution, the University of Edinburgh, also claimed "that not only was a strong research center being formed but that schoolteachers seeking professional development, especially through higher degrees, would gain from access to university resources" (Pickard, 1997b, p. 1).

Similarly, the Principal of St. Andrew's College cast the merger proposals in a positive light, asserting that "the objective is to provide a major focus for teaching and research in education in the University of Glasgow, by bringing together the strength of the two organizations" (O'Neill, 1997, p. 7). In a joint statement announcing the terms of a proposed merger of the two institutions, the Principal said,

This positive move by St. Andrew's College allows us to take up a wider role in serving education in Scotland and we hope to take real strides towards an appropriate and harmonious place for Catholic education in contemporary Scottish society (O'Neill, 1997, p. 7)

The Principal of the University of Glasgow wished to highlight the "strategic benefits to both institutions and to the development of educational teaching and research in Scotland" (Glasgow University/St. Andrew's College, 1998)

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND IDENTITY

A fundamental anxiety which paralleled the more upbeat public pronouncements of institutional negotiators was a concern for the continued existence of traditional Catholic education. Such conceptions have revolved around notions of community, ethos, and identity in as much as Catholics have regarded their schools as providing a distinctive culture, ethic, and anthropology. Kelly gives voice to these concerns in asking,

whether or not we are coming to the end of what traditional Catholics regard as the essence of Catholic education.... If Catholic schools are characterized by their ethos, then the seats of learning which produce the teachers need that as well. The church will want the Catholic students segregated to receive all their training and ideally to have them taught by Catholics (1997, p. 6f)

This discussion of ethos and identity was kept alive in the press correspondence columns. For example, Grant called for an appreciation,

that the Catholic institutional culture, which has been so carefully nurtured at the Bearsden campus, is irreplaceable. [And that] The Catholic ethos, so important to the correct spiritual formation of our teachers, would inevitably be diluted with a transfer to the ever larger, University of Glasgow.... Although bricks and mortar are not all, and the Kingdom will come with or without our help, it does seem that a ceding of our teacher training responsibility to a larger, secular body due to financial pressure is at best worrisome and at worst a setback of decades. (1997, p. 6)

That many of the correspondents enjoyed a variety of views regarding what counts as the nature and purposes of Catholic education did not preclude a strong common sense of loss and change.

In November 1997, the University of Glasgow publicly accepted that it would have a statutory responsibility to the Secretary of State and through him, to the Catholic community of Scotland, for the continued education of Catholic teachers (Alba, 1997).

GOVERNANCE, STRUCTURE, AND DENOMINATIONAL TENSIONS

While many comments made to the press intimated the anxieties of the Catholic educational community about the continuance of separate provision, there were parallel anxieties within the University and elsewhere that the insertion of a structural Catholic presence in a major and ancient civic university would compromise academic freedom. One article declared that while the statutory obligations would indeed be protected “plans for a full, meaningful merger meant far more than simply relocating St. Andrew’s College.... After a merger there should be no states within states” (Wilson, 1997, p. 6). The unequivocal implication was that an independent Catholic presence would not be universally welcomed by the academic community within the University. On December 5, 1997 the *Senatus Academicus* of the University of Glasgow first formally discussed the proposed merger. At that time members expressed significant disquiet on a range of matters including academic freedom, the college’s research capability, and the governance implications. One senior member of the Divinity Faculty raised the prospect of a battle of “ideological control against academic freedom.” Further, another senior figure questioned whether the Church should appoint a dean to oversee teacher training when it is seen as an important part of academic freedom that other faculty deans are elected (Fraser, 1998).

These issues of governance embodied many other anxieties, especially in relation to staff appointments and promotions. In the proposed arrangements for the protection of the college’s mission, the new faculty would have a Board of Catholic Education. Intended to provide a safeguard for the Catholic educational community, “academics have demanded that its powers

be tightly defined. It is not [they have argued] to have any control of in-service education, technical education, or educational research" (Fraser, 1998, p. 1). In contradistinction the Chair of the merger committee argued that the Board was important and "was linked with the will to preserve the Catholic dimension in a way which was compatible with the other work of the university" (Fraser, 1998, p. 3).

EMERGING PATTERNS

The ebb and flow of the documented debate as outlined above included reports of formal statements from the Alliance Strategy Group (i.e., the merger negotiation group), position statements from representatives of both the College and the University, and comments by various interested parties. The relative importance attached at any given moment to specific issues was a reflection of the stage reached in the negotiation process and the perceived importance of the issue to particular groups or individuals. As ever in such matters, press coverage was seen as an important means by which representatives of both negotiating teams might report to their constituencies. Initially the focus was centered on financial matters, and though this was omnipresent, as the drama unfolded other aspects were accorded primacy. Finance soon gave way to issues of physical location (i.e., retention of the existing campus) and the related issue of identity. Reports of campus disposal as part of the parallel merger discussions at Moray House were not helpful, and scare-mongering accusations were made as to the potential asset-stripping intentions of the University. During these negotiations the St. Andrew's campus acquired an iconic status in the minds of many Scottish Catholic educationalists; thus, intimations of its closure were greeted as tantamount to a birthright betrayal. For others the publication of the Dearing Committee Report offered a new, optimistic dimension of opportunity—in relation to both research and enhanced engagement with the wider educational community.

When formal discussion within the merger group turned to matters of governance and management structures, there was a noticeable polarization in reported views—revolving largely around the means by which the College's Catholic ethos and mission could be maintained in a large secular organization (even with the agreement to create a new custom-built facility on the University's main campus). Related matters included the nature of the provisions to safeguard the College's statutory responsibility for initial teacher education for Catholic schools and the mechanisms for staff appointments by the University as well as approval by the Scottish Bishops Conference. The evolution of a negotiated compromise saw the emergence of certain categories of staff for whom approval would be necessary. As the discussions moved to a close, pursuit of such requests which would appear rea-

sonable in light of the willingness to forgo autonomy provoked something of a backlash from certain sections of the University community who perceived that any Church involvement in appointments would presage an encroachment into questions of academic freedom (Glasgow University, 1998). Nonetheless, a merger proposal document was duly signed.

It would be tempting, though too simplistic, to reduce the reported conversations within the Catholic community to two basic categories: traditionalist and transformer. It is clear, however, that of all the issues and concerns raised, two—mission and governance—were of over-arching significance in polarizing positions and that these two are inextricably related. Mission has at its core the essential purpose of the College; and governance, the arrangements by which this is to be realized. These two central dimensions of the public debate enabled the creation of a descriptive framework which plotted allegiance to particular forms of governance against given beliefs about the nature and purposes of Catholic education. From our analysis of the press reports, two distinct attitudes toward governance emerge: those who advocated direct ecclesial control and those who favored informal ecclesial influence. In respect to mission it was possible to distinguish those who wished to maintain the existing heritage from those who desired to transform it for the future. Thus it was that the diagram shown in Figure 1 came to represent four broad classes of attitude toward the merger, which we have labeled nostalgic, romantic, strategic, and synergistic. Within the parameters of this study these may be described as follows.

Figure 1
Analytical Framework

		MISSION ORIENTATION	
		HISTORIC	FUTURE
GOVERNANCE ORIENTATION	INFLUENCE	NOSTALGIC	STRATEGIC
	CONTROL	ROMANTIC	SYNERGISTIC

1. Nostalgic—Maintenance of the Inheritance; Direct Ecclesial Control
Characteristic features: High significance given to separate campus, identity, and name; focus on maintenance of tradition and traditional modes of operation; direct ecclesial control by Bishops Conference or directly appointed agents.

Financial attitude: Denial of the likely impact of financial constraints.

Stance on merger: Opposition.

2. Romantic—Maintenance of the Inheritance; Shared Responsibility (Simple)

Characteristic features: High value placed on institutional loyalty and idealized institutional memories; Vatican II seen as empowering laity within carefully defined limits in order to maintain the historic mission; ecclesiastical involvement direct and through nominated agents.

Financial attitude: Belief that resources must be made available and would be secured as a right.

Stance on merger: Acceptance with regret.

3. Strategic—Transformation of the Inheritance; Direct Ecclesial Control

Characteristic features: Maintenance of identity in modified form; measured development of the tradition including engagement with wider Catholic educational communities; ecclesial control both direct and by “gate-keeping” entry to first appointment of teachers and to paths to Principalship/Headship.

Financial attitude: Acceptance of the constraining impact of the financial circumstances and willingness to consider new funding and operational models.

Stance on merger: Reluctant acceptance.

4. Synergistic—Transformation of the Inheritance; Shared Responsibility (Complex)

Characteristic features: Identity per se is to be seen as of secondary importance to the mission; developing the inheritance is the central concern together with the promotion of public discourse; research is to be regarded as energizing; ecclesial involvement and influence both direct and indirect through openly appointed agents.

Financial attitude: Embracing the fiscal constraints as a catalytic opportunity for change.

Stance on merger: Welcome opportunity for enhancing discourse within the civil polity.

REVISIONING CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The Scottish Catholic population is small by international standards and while its educational institutions are both unique and limited in scale, they share in the wider structural challenges facing Catholic higher education worldwide. Hesburgh (1994) and his colleagues have documented many of these issues. Just as Notre Dame has engaged in an interrogation of the place and purposes of an important university in a plural polity, so the Catholic presence in Scottish higher education that is currently St. Andrew's College needs to ask searching questions as to its future role and the nature of its representation on behalf of the Catholic community.

Like many American universities, the University of Glasgow is an inheritor of the 18th-century Enlightenment; like them it has also become increasingly secularized so that its historic and successive Catholic and Presbyterian identities have evaporated. No longer do they advert to anthropologies which hold that all human history and activity rest upon a unifying theme: the ultimate sanctity of the person. This in turn poses significant questions for the University of Glasgow as an organization and the proposed faculty as the hope for Catholic teacher education, and indeed for a Catholic presence in Scottish higher education. These questions also emerge in the newspaper correspondence. For us, perhaps the most significant issue is: Can a large secular organization, which essentially operates in a postmodern context, find an authentic place for a distinctively religious voice? This question finds increased resonance when the extant theological provision in the University is considered.

The University of Glasgow has had a long-standing responsibility for the training of ministers for the Church of Scotland. Over the years this important role has been transformed into a more general provision for religious studies within the Faculty of Divinity. Consequently, the University only retains a small facility available to the Church of Scotland. As the established church in Scotland, its voice has been increasingly muffled by the forces of secularization. The ever-diminishing position of the established church in the public educational discourse induces anxiety for many Catholic educators. In using the matrix in Figure 1 we can see how such a scenario may lead to a defensive and anxious position about the future. This position is described here as Nostalgic (Category 1). For the nostalgic there are dangers in constantly hoping that the past will continue to be made present. The most significant of these is that the institution becomes increasingly irrelevant both to the individual and to the polity. In the context of middle-class America, Bennis points out the inherent dangers of "nostalgia."

...people who can afford to are increasingly retreating into their own electronic castles; working at home and communicating with the world via computers; screening their calls on answering machines; ordering in movies

for their VCRs, food for their microwave ovens, and trainers for their bodies; keeping the world at bay with advanced security systems. They refuse to acknowledge what is happening—and the costs to our whole society of what is happening—to those who lack their resources. Trend spotters call this phenomenon “cocooning” but it looks more like terminal egocentricity. (1989, p. 20)

A church college which lays claim to a mission to be in the world preaching good news cannot afford to partake in its own form of “terminal egocentricity”!

Whereas the nostalgic frame of reference may be characterized as being retrogressive by virtue of its implicit rejection of the ordinances of the Second Vatican Council, the Romantic (Category 2) attempts to embrace the notion of subsidiarity and its concomitant belief in lay responsibility. Therefore the Romantic may be distinguished by a greater willingness to engage in a discourse with the forces of modernity, however tentative; the categories and shibboleths deployed fail to break their attachment to the language of a previous age. Like the romantics of the aesthetic movement at the end of the 19th century, these romantics rely too much upon the past for their inspiration and signification. In doing so they limit their capacity to re-vision their own and the Church’s ability to serve the future. In transforming the “good news” for each generation the institutional Church necessarily draws upon historic forms; however, it must also take seriously its responsibility to revitalize, and so generate a dialogue with new and constantly changing social circumstances. In the particular case of this merger, those termed romantic are often unwilling to engage in dialogue that is future oriented, although they are manifestly energized by dialogue itself. They nonetheless believe that were they to be given power they could then return the college to its historic position and so sustain an older and, for them, a more wholesome and authentic tradition. For the romantics, pleasure is to be gained by entering into and resurrecting the past. In doing so they mistakenly perceive reminiscence for imagination. As Arendt would have it, they are therefore unable to “train [their] imagination to go visiting” (Birmingham, 1995).

The popular discourse in the press during the merger discussions tends to reflect operational thinking rooted in categories 1 and 2. These categories are by definition introspective and introverted, relying on appeals to their historic position and identity. By way of contrast, there have been voices raised in support of a more outgoing and developmental stance; voices which are termed here Strategic, which find an earlier resonance in the reflections of the current Principal of St. Andrew’s. He predicted that “Catholic education...will not survive if [it is] characterized by isolation, narrowness of outlook or curricular provision, or by claims based on historical legalities” (McGettrick, 1984, p. 139). This adumbration of the strategic changes

required of Catholic education is subsequently echoed in planning documents of St. Andrew's College and in the merger document submitted to the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (St. Andrew's College, 1997; Glasgow University/St. Andrew's College, 1998). The Strategic view, characterized by willingness to embrace new funding mechanisms and operational activities, recognizes the need to reposition the mission of the institution. It sees the necessity of embracing the power and language of market forces in delivering an expanded but largely traditional educational portfolio. It embodies much conventional management rhetoric. While this position has a number of attractions, it also carries inherent limitations. As Kouzes and Posner point out, "strategic planning...is not a magic potion. It's a process that detaches strategy from operations, thinking from doing" (1995, p. 244). Echoing Mintzberg (1994), who depicts "strategy making" as a "complex, interactive and evolutionary process," they go on to suggest that "strategic planning doesn't even begin to convey the feelings and emotions that people experience when they reach milestones" (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p. 110). In the context of our discussion these insights have a particular resonance borne out by the contradictory and contesting views witnessed to in the newspaper articles.

As much as the Strategic position underplays the central importance of emotional engagement in real change, in our terms, the Synergistic perspective more readily embraces the totality of the experiences which individuals may bring to the institutional enterprise. Posner and Schmidt, in a study of the congruence between personal and organizational values, drive right to the heart of what is meant here by the Synergistic (Category 4). They point out that real and effective transformation is itself a function of authentic dialogue which provides "a chance for individuals to engage in a discussion of what the values mean and how their personal beliefs and behaviors are influenced by what the organization stands for" (1993, p. 174). While a shared feature of the first three categories outlined in this study is the desire to maintain physical presence and being, those who adopt the Synergistic position attempt to realize its mission and identity in and through the individuals who comprise its body politic. It is not that they necessarily see any advantage in eschewing bricks and mortar, rather it is that they have confidence in the capacity of this body politic to reshape and revivify the Christian anthropology which gives rise to and justifies their continued existence as a corporate voice. This position is neither seduced by much of the contemporary social and educational rhetoric nor frightened to challenge its assumptions. In making such a stand and in engaging with the discourse of postmodernity, it sees itself as contributing to the agon in a robust way, confident in its own historic credentials but not tied to their historic forms. It offers both a constructive and challenging opportunity for the Catholic educational community to engage in self-reflection and dialogue with the wider polity on what

Christianity has to offer. As O'Keefe states, "pluralism does not necessarily dilute particularism" (1998, p. 23). In pursuing this idea it is the task and the challenge for a Catholic presence to move from the Nostalgic to the Synergistic in an authentic dialogue with a university and education system which has generally been shaped by "modernist rationalism."

CONCLUSION

This discussion has given rise to a number of issues of importance to Catholic education. First, it has attempted to offer clarification and analysis of some of the important social, financial, and demographic issues which gave rise to the decision to seek a merger between St. Andrew's College and the University of Glasgow. Second, it has offered an opportunity for further examination of the nature of public attitudes to Catholic education in Scotland at this time. Third, it has opened a range of generic issues which transcend the particularity of Catholic education in Scotland. Finally, it has proposed heuristic devices which may be used by Catholic educators and others to better excavate a range of personal and institutional reactions to change.

Many of the articles identified in this study reflect an apparent limited capacity for proponents of particular viewpoints to present a unified and conceptually coherent defense of their positions. We would suggest that the framework developed here might serve as a helpful means of generating more rigorous reflections by the Catholic educational community in the future. From the press reports, the notion of academic freedom emerged as a central issue for many colleagues in the University of Glasgow. Equally, from the perspective of the Catholic Church, the parallel concern was the disintegration of the holism implied in "a Catholic worldview." Ironically, both of these concerns emanate from a consideration of institutional ethos. Both positions, however, harbor fundamental limitations. In the former, the intellectual fallacy is its implicit closure of ontological discourse and hence infringement of genuine academic freedom. For the latter, the limitation has been its reluctance to open to scrutiny the sometimes taken-for-granted assumptions about its contribution to the common good. For both the task is to support a dialogue within and beyond the proposed faculty which acknowledges that academic legitimacy is to be found in an ethos of shared openness and a respect for diversity.

REFERENCES

- Alba, C. (1997, November 13). College to merge with university in 11m deal. *The Herald*, p. 1.
- Bennis, W. (1989). *On becoming a leader*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Birmingham, P. (1995). Hannah Arendt's dismissal of the ethical. In P. Van Haute & P. Birmingham (Eds.), *DISSENSUS COMMUNIS: Between Ethics and Politics* (p. 15). Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos.
- Boyle, R., & Lynch, P. (1998). *Out of the ghetto: The Catholic community in modern Scotland*. Edinburgh, Scotland: John Donald.
- Brown, S. J. (1991). Outside the covenant: The Scottish Presbyterian church and Irish immigration, 1922-1938. *Innes Review*, 42(1), 46-67.
- Cochrane, L. (1996, October 24). Top Scottish academic institutions to merge. *The Scotsman*, p. 3.
- Dearing, R. (1997). *Higher education in the learning society*. London: HMSO.
- Farmer, H. (1996, June 28). Huge cuts hit St Andrew's. *Scottish Catholic Observer*, p. 1.
- Findlay, R. J. (1991). Nationalism, racism, religion and the Irish question. *Innes Review*, 42(1), 19-45.
- Fraser, D. (1998, February 1). Catholic row puts merger in jeopardy. *The Sunday Times* [Online]. Available: <http://www.sundaytimes.co.uk/news/pages/sti/98/02/01>
- Gallin, A. (1996). *Independence and a new partnership in Catholic higher education*. Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press.
- Glasgow University. (1998, January). Report of the meeting of the Senatus Academicus of the University.
- Glasgow University/St. Andrew's College. (1998, February 11). Merger proposal between St. Andrew's College and the University of Glasgow, Glasgow. Joint press release.
- Gleason, P. (1997). The American background of Ex Corde Ecclesiae. In J. O'Keefe (Ed.), *Catholic higher education at the turn of the new century* (pp. 79-97). Chestnut Hill, MA: Center for International Higher Education, School of Education, Boston College.
- Grant, E. P. (1997, December 19). [Letter to the Editor]. *Scottish Catholic Observer*, p. 6.
- Great Britain Laws and Statutes. (1918). Education (Scotland) Act. Edinburgh, Scotland: HMSO.
- Hesburgh, T. M. (1994). *The challenge and promise of a Catholic university*. Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press.
- Kelly, M. (1997, November 17). A different class of Catholics? *The Scotsman*, p. 6f.
- Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (1995). *The leadership challenge: How to keep getting extraordinary things done in organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- McGettrick, B. (1984). Catholic education in Scotland: An overview of the current scene. *Scottish Educational Review*, 16(2).
- Mintzberg, H. (1994). *The rise and fall of strategic planning*. New York: Free Press.
- Munro, N. (1995a). Cut in funds threatens quality of teacher training. *Times Educational Supplement* [Scotland], p. 93
- Munro, N. (1995b, December 8). Training partnership launched. *Times Educational Supplement* [Scotland], p. 5
- O'Hagan, F. (1996). *Change, challenge and achievement: A study of the development of Catholic education in Glasgow in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*. Glasgow: St. Andrew's College.
- O'Keefe, J. (1998). *Visionary leadership in Catholic schools*. Glasgow: St. Andrew's College. J. Conroy (Ed.), Occasional Papers No. 6.
- O'Neill, R. (1997, November 21). College set for merger. *Milngavie and Bearsden Herald*, p. 7.
- Pickard, W. (1996, June 27). Cramond to close in college merger. *Times Educational Supplement* [Scotland], p. 1

- Pickard, W. (1997a, March 21). Hostile bid for Moray House. *Times Educational Supplement* [Scotland], p. 3.
- Pickard, W. (1997b, October 25). Moray House denies u-turn. *Times Educational Supplement* [Scotland], p.1.
- Posner, B. Z., & Schmidt, W. H. (1993). Values congruence and differences between the interplay of personal and organizational value systems. *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 12, No. 5, pp. 341-347.
- St. Andrews College. (1997). Strategic Plan. Glasgow, Scotland: Jun.
- Teacher trainers enter the all-university era. (1997, October 17). *Times Educational Supplement* [Scotland], p. 25.
- Tierney, M. (1996, March 22). Cash blow for Catholic college. *Scottish Catholic Observer*, p. 3.
- Treble, J. H. (1978). The development of Roman Catholic education in Scotland, 1878-1978. *Innes Review*, 29(2), 111-139.
- Wilson, J. (1997, November 14). Church to seek teaching pledge. *The Scotsman*, p. 6.

James C. Conroy is director of religious education and pastoral care at St. Andrew's College. He can be contacted at jcc@stac.ac.uk or at the Department of Religious Education and Pastoral Care, St. Andrew's College, Duntocher Road, Bearsden, Glasgow, G61 4QA, Scotland. Douglas McCreath, retired Assistant-Principal of St. Andrew's College, continues to work with the college in the area of effective school leadership and management. He can be contacted at dmccreath@stac.ac.uk or at St. Andrew's College, Duntocher Road, Bearsden, Glasgow, G61 4QA, Scotland.

Copyright of *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry & Practice* is the property of Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry & Practice and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.