Theological Education

Theory and Practice in Theological Education

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Introduction

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As chair of the ATS Publications Advisory Committee, I was invited by executive director, James L. Waits, to serve as guest editor of this issue of *Theological Education* which is devoted to "Theory and Practice in Theological Education." I gladly accepted this invitation. I am convinced that the final recommendations on ATS's publications, presented at the June 1996 Biennial Meeting in Denver by the advisory committee that reviewed all ATS programs and services, correctly identified some central issues about our communication among our members. One recommendation was that ATS continue to provide the present spectrum of valuable publications but that the journal *Theological Education* might become a refereed journal with a wider editorial board and a broader commitment to publishing articles submitted by our member institutions.

This open issue of *Theological Education* is a move in that direction. Articles were solicited from member schools on any of a variety of issues facing professional theological education. The response rate was encouraging. Here, eight especially insightful essays are presented on various aspects of the general theme "Theory and Practice in Theological Education."

First, Elizabeth A. Dreyer, in the opening article, discusses "Excellence in the Professions: What Theological Schools Can Learn from Law, Business, and Medical Schools." Based on a study conducted by the Washington Theological Union, Dreyer identifies how issues that face other professional education programs in North America are instructive for understanding how theological schools might improve their curriculum and learning environments. Theology students need to be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and values that will enable them to use leadership positions in church and society as a positive force for the common good. Ideally they will become competent representatives of their religious traditions and will strive to promote justice, fairness, and morality, and will try to improve the profession itself while they commit themselves to self-development.

Next, in "The Revolution in Ministry Training," Harry L. Poe of Union University explores various ways that theological institutions have tried to bring more intentional partnership between seminaries and churches in the preparation of future ministers. He draws upon reflections articulated both by the churches and by ministers themselves regarding the work of seminaries in

preparing persons for ministry. The "revolution" he describes is our new sensitivity about the need to provide various alternative measures to supplement traditional means of professional education.

A similar concern marks the essay "Theological Education by Conversation: Particularity and Pluralism," written by Mary Elizabeth Mullino Moore of the School of Theology at Claremont. Moore asks: given the impulses toward inclusiveness in Christianity and the value of Christian particularity in a pluralistic world, what vision is evoked for theological education? Her central message calls for conversation with others, including living in the presence of God, the communion of saints (past and present, North and South, East and West), the interreligious communion, and indeed with the whole of creation.

The next five articles investigate the general topic by addressing specific educational challenges regarding field education, distance education, recruitment of minorities, spiritual formation, and urban education.

Beginning these reflections, Donald F. Beisswenger of Vanderbilt University Divinity School focuses on "Field Education and the Theological Education Debates." He shows how theology needs those practitioners who work immediately at the embodiment moment of Christian faith, giving attention to the articulation of Christian faith at a particular time and place. He concludes by directing a series of specific questions about personal integration, process, staffing, placement, and conceptualization.

Similarly "The Questions of Distance Education," by Elizabeth Patterson of Fuller Theological Seminary, argues that the critical issues raised by distance education are not new. What is new is the possibility of responding to our challenging issues broadly and deeply enough to unify all sides into a common understanding of the tasks facing us. Thus, while distance education must design learning to achieve as many of the positive characteristics of the classroom and campus as possible, at the same time, it is argued, the traditional classroom must be open to the potentials of alternative mediums without being oblivious of either their limitations or creative possibilities.

Summarizing the research of Dr. Edwin Hernández and his committee on "The Attraction and Retention of U.S. Hispanics to the Doctor of Ministry Program" (a project funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts in 1994), two educators, Kenneth G. Davis of the Oblate School of Theology and Philip E. Lampe of Incarnate Word College, show the delicate balance needed between theory and practice. As we await the report's complete publication by Andrews University, their summary highlights the major conclusions. Three crucial factors are identified as most important: faculty members knowledgeable about Latino/ Hispanic theological and cultural thinking, supportive services such as counseling, and increased financial assistance.

The essay by Gordon T. Smith of Canadian Theological Seminary, entitled "Spiritual Formation in the Academy: A Unifying Model," grapples with an issue that will become more and more central to member schools in light of the newly adopted standards of accreditation promulgated by the Association in Denver. Spiritual formation and theological training are shown to be ineluctably essential and intertwined. They are said to be most effective when they complement each other in a way mutually reinforcing for the pursuit of wisdom.

The last article, "The Gifts of Urban Theological Education: A Personal and Professional Reflection" by Efrain Agosto of Hartford Seminary, although focusing on a specific setting of ministerial education, offers rich suggestions for the variety of contexts in which theological education finds itself. Precisely because urban theological education has made us more attuned to voices not previously heeded—such as the African American, Latino, inner-city churchgoers—all of us need to examine our consciences as we ask what are the neglected or forgotten voices not yet heard by many of our professors and students.

The staff of The Association of Theological Schools and members of the Publications Advisory Committee trust that these thoughtful articles will promote reflection on our ongoing search for what constitutes an excellent theological school. We look forward to receiving from members of ATS schools reflections and suggestions about how we might search for more effective ways of communicating with one another, especially through the printed word.

Excellence in the Professions: What Theological Schools Can Learn from Law, Business, and Medical Schools

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The Context for This Essay

In 1991, under the auspices of a grant from Lilly Endowment, the Washington Theological Union (WTU) initiated a three-year study designed to examine issues of excellence in theological education. The process, involving faculty, administration, students, trustees, and outside experts contained five major components: (a) an outcomes study made up of a series of hearings with graduates, their colleagues, and constituents; (b) reading and discussion of excellence issues; (c) workshops and presentations by outside consultants; (d) a written history of the WTU curriculum; and (e) an exploration of how developments in other professional schools might assist theological schools in their pursuit of excellence.

This essay examines developments in legal, business, and medical education to determine whether key aspects of discussions about furthering professional excellence in these fields might generate provocative ideas and/or questions for us as we reflect on issues of excellence in theological education for ministry. My objectives in this essay are to provide: (a) some sense of recent discussions among legal, business, and medical educators; (b) identification of those elements I consider most relevant and provocative vis-à-vis theological education for ministry; and (c) some questions for theological educators that emerged from this study.

Introductory Comments

An initial discovery was that there is an immense amount of ferment, questioning, sustained attention, and written reports surrounding professional education in the United States.[1] Interest is high and data are plentiful. Theological education has undergone similar scrutiny,[2] but I found little evidence of collaboration with the other professions in this process.

Perhaps the most consistent concern involves what some have called a "gap" between education and practice. Initial studies in law and business

appeared in the late 1950s as a response to perceived inadequacies in professional education. The medical community has produced a number of studies since the famous Flexner Report of 1910. These discussions have continued with recent, comprehensive publications to be discussed below. Criticisms fueling these appraisals include: (a) a too narrow internal focus in the schools; (b) lack of awareness of, and response to, the rapidly increasing rate of change in the world environment; (c) a sense of complacency among administrators and faculty that the old ways are still adequate; (d) lack of leadership; and (e) lack of quality in faculty research, curricula, and students. In general, the complaints coalesced around a perceived gap between the more formal, theoretical training of the schools and the demands of daily practice in a rapidly changing professional, social, global environment.

The "theory-practice" issue runs like a leitmotif in all discussions about professional education. Professional schools naturally embrace standards reigning in higher education as a whole. Content learning, research (somewhat narrowly conceived), and publication are valued over teaching skills or experiential, "hands-on" learning. This orientation often clashes with the needs of a given profession. One dean of a prominent law school thought that a clear distinction should be made between doctoral education focused on "perspectives" on the law (e.g., law and economics), and the education aimed at preparing lawyers to serve clients. In the latter case, practical skills should be prominent in the curriculum. He noted that before World War II, there were few skills courses in the standard law curriculum. Now in most schools, they comprise about one-fifth of it. He thinks this is an appropriate and needed development, and suggests that despite much protestation from the professoriate, it will continue to grow. His recommendation with regard to the endless theory-practice argument was just to "wait it out."

A former dean of a leading school of management also named this split as a major issue in business education. Some schools believe that graduate business education should concentrate on fundamental academic disciplines because this is (a) students' only opportunity to do so and (b) what schools do best. The "real world" aspects of management are best learned on the job. Others argue that it is important to expose students to the situations they will soon encounter, even at the expense of less academic training.

All groups found solutions elusive. Evaluation of environmental changes, and the ways in which education can address them successfully, are difficult and challenging. But the breadth and depth of the discussions do indicate some uneasiness with the status quo and a desire to respond, however gropingly, to the myriad changes in our world. There is also a sense that faculty members need to assume more responsibility to ensure that graduates are competent practitio-

ners, even though this may require the surrender of some individual classroom autonomy. The reports vary somewhat in breadth, and none purports to be exhaustive or prescriptive. Rather, they want to raise questions and invite dialogue about the future of their respective professions and to the educational structures preparing people to enter these professions.

Most discussions underline the need for individual schools to examine the issues at hand, to name and assess relevant environmental changes and needs, and to reflect on their specific location, capacities, and mission in order to initiate change in light of these discoveries. No national commission intends to offer general prescriptive recommendations for schools throughout the nation.

These discussions underline the seriousness with which educators in the professions take their responsibility to train excellent lawyers, business professionals, and physicians to serve society in a responsible and excellent manner.

Professional Education

Law

In 1989 the Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar established a task force that held seven plenary meetings from May 19, 1989 to March 28, 1992; conducted three surveys; and held four hearings.[3] The task force produced a volume entitled, *Legal Education and Professional Development: An Educational Continuum* (LEPD).[4] The central mission of the Task force was to identify requisite skills and values needed to practice law effectively, to describe what law schools and the practicing bar are now doing to advance the professional development of lawyers, and to recommend how the legal education community and the practicing bar can join together to fulfill their respective responsibilities to the profession and to the consuming public (LEPD, 8). In choosing to focus on skills and values, the task force did not intend to ignore or underestimate the important role that substantive knowledge plays in competent practice. It acknowledged that these were distinct issues, both of which could not be treated successfully in one study. However, the study's content suggests that skills/values are perceived as more central to improving legal education at this time.

The study identifies several changes that legal educators must take into consideration. These include an explosion in the number and use of legal services,[5] change in the gender makeup of the profession,[6] and the belated opening in legal education to minorities and other diverse populations.[7]

Three surveys were conducted of: (1) partners in Chicago law firms who have the responsibility to hire new lawyers; (2) lawyers currently practicing in the Chicago area who have been admitted to the practice of law since 1986; and

(3) lawyers practicing in rural and mid-sized towns in Missouri for ten or fewer years. The goal of the surveys was to identify the knowledge and skills that lawyers now consider important to the practice of law, where they acquired the skills, and their view of the role the law school did, or should, play in transmitting knowledge, skills, and values. A major thrust of the study was to identify teaching gaps in law school training, that is, areas which law school graduates think can be taught in law school, but which, in their view, did not receive sufficient attention in the law school setting.

Seventy percent of group one (lawyers hiring new employees) reported that at the hiring stage, oral communication skills, general appearance and demeanor, and class rank are most important. Group two (new urban lawyers) ranked oral and written communication skills, ability to gain others' confidence, and legal reasoning as the most important. They also noted that communication skills were acquired from their own experience, not from school or their law firm. However, 75 percent thought oral communication skills can be taught and 91 percent thought written communication skills can be taught. Group three (new rural lawyers) reflects similar concerns. The most important skills named were self-presentational skills, not technical legal skills; oral and written communication; and ability to gain others' confidence. Rural lawyers named "repeated experience" as the best teacher. Communication—a problem identified in studies done in the late 1970s—remains a central concern.

The surveys also uncovered some differences between the '70s and the '90s. Today, there is less emphasis on fact gathering and legal research. Another, rather dramatic difference has occurred in the area of professional responsibility.[8] Earlier, it was thought that ethical concerns could not be taught, were not all that important, and evolved in practice. In this study, 87 percent think that sensitivity to ethical concerns can be taught effectively and 68 percent think that they are receiving sufficient attention in law school. It is clear that professional responsibility has arrived as a substantive concern in law.

New urban lawyers found that a major source of learning was colleagues in their firm, persons who functioned as mentors and to whom one could go to ask questions and to learn the accumulated wisdom of lengthy experience. Rural lawyers were less likely to have the benefit of firm mentors.

The hearings generated the following issues:

1. Some change in legal education is needed to prepare lawyers for effective practice. [Supporting literature points to a variety of issues, relevant to theological education. One is the lack of attention to integration of knowledge from separate, sharply defined courses; another is connecting legal rules with legal practice.]

2. Graduates are not prepared to practice law without supervision. [The educational process is only one aspect in the training of excellent practitioners.]

3.   Law schools should be teaching the basics: practical skills, people skills, economic and management issues; life style issues; professionalism, ethics and other value issues. There was some emphasis on the need for more experiential learning such as student practice, observation, and role play, and on the need to integrate theory and practice.

4.   Such changes should include academics, bar examiners, practitioners, and judges. Many saw the need for mentors, more use of practitioners, and in-house clinics.

5.   Obstacles included cost, high student-faculty ratios, and law faculties that are resistant to change and lack appreciation for clinical education. Faculty are rewarded for publication, not teaching. Also, legal education is oriented toward the bar exam which requires heavy preparation in substantive law, leaving little room for practice-oriented courses.

While certain trends are visible, the hearings uncovered wide areas of disagreement about what a modern law school should be trying to accomplish and insufficient knowledge about the most effective ways to accomplish specific goals.

The task force hopes to assist law schools in setting goals and in focusing those goals in light of the strengths and resources of each individual school.[9] They want to encourage an incentive system that rewards innovative curriculum work and teaching. They are supportive of more effective clinical legal education and of efforts to determine what skills can be taught in the law school and which are more appropriately learned by experience, application, and responsibilities assumed after graduation. Ideally, they would like to provoke discussion among all sectors of the profession about the nature of the skills and values that are central to the role and functioning of practicing lawyers (LEPD, 124).

The task force report lists ten skills and four values. The first two foundational analytical skills are problem-solving and legal analysis. The first of these would seem to have significant relevance for ministerial education. Problem-solving is described as wholistic, creative, and critical. It points to one's ability to take full advantage of available resources and then to arrive at one's own best judgment and action.

The next five skills are considered essential throughout a wide range of kinds of legal practice. They are legal research, factual investigation, communication, counseling, and negotiation. The sections on communication and counseling seemed particularly instructive and relevant to ministerial education. One can imagine a variety of uses to which we might put the detailed breakdown of these skills.

The final three skills relate to advising clients about the options of litigation and alternative dispute resolution. They are: familiarity with options, adminis-

trative skills necessary to organize and manage legal work effectively, and skills involved in recognizing and resolving ethical dilemmas. The second of these three skills can be crucial in those ministerial settings in which administrative expertise is required to organize, enable, and coordinate significant numbers of persons involved in the multiple activities of a parish. Are students helped to make appropriate allocation of their time, effort, and resources? Do they identify and complete tasks in a timely fashion? Are they skilled in working cooperatively with others and in the orderly administration of staff/office personnel?

One would hope that our students would be fairly well equipped with the final skill—the ability to recognize and resolve ethical problems. But are they reflective about their own professional ethical behavior? More than some other social institutions, the church lacks formal structures of accountability, making self-regulation even more crucial. The Law Study calls attention to the distinctive power of self-government in the legal profession, requiring that every member of the profession scrupulously observe ethical rules in his or her own practice, aid in securing ethical observance by other lawyers, and report those who do not behave in an ethical manner. Making these concerns an integral part of the ministerial educational process could go a long way toward enhancing behaviors of self-regulation once an individual graduates.

The four values listed by the study are: (1) competent representation; (2) striving to promote justice, fairness, and morality; (3) striving to improve the profession; and (4) professional self-development. All these values are relevant to ministerial education. If we were to generate a similar kind of list for ministerial education, what modifications to this list would we make? The first value calls attention to one's sense of responsible service to constituents. As students grasp this aspect of their vocation, it could serve as the *raison d'être* of their theological education. Are students helped to identify what is required for competence and to take the initiative to make sure that these competencies are developed to a certain level during their degree program? This value also requires that an individual continue to gain competencies required by the demands of the ministry, even when they might go beyond areas covered in the curriculum. This value also considers factors that prevent competent service—undue stress, drugs, alcohol, emotional distress, physical/mental disability.

The second value—striving to promote justice, fairness, and morality—is most overtly visible in moral theology classes. However, one might raise the question of how this value is supported in other disciplines, and perhaps more importantly, how much we focus on the student's responsibility for his or her own personal, institutional, and professional behavior? Issues of ethical behavior, truth-telling, pastoral sensitivity, and political know-how could potentially be part of class material in all disciplines. This value also involves cultivating an attitude of reverence for all persons, according them due dignity and respect.

The third and fourth values—striving to improve the profession and one's own individual development—point to professional responsibility and ways in which one values and respects the ministerial profession. Do we help our students to develop a sense of the ministerial profession in itself and of their membership in, and commitment to, the profession as a whole? Does our curriculum make provision for discussions about what, exactly, we judge to be enhancements of the profession—things we would encourage students to work to bring about after they graduate? Issues about authority, mutuality, accountability, collaboration, and women's full role in the ministry readily come to mind. Are students made aware of their responsibility to mentor ministers who come after them, sharing with them the learning of their experience? The profession stands to be enhanced both through a variety of forms of individual continuing education and prayerful, theological reflection, and through participation in, and initiating efforts to improve the profession on personal, parochial, diocesan, regional, or national levels. Often this will involve collaboration with ministers of other denominations and faiths.

The following conclusions may be highlighted in light of our original question, i.e., are there elements in current discussions of legal education that might assist those of us involved in theological education?

1. **Collaboration**—There is a clear attempt to see legal education as a whole. The responsibility for excellence in the profession rests not only with legal educators, but with the practicing bar as well. Enhanced communication can begin to redress "gaps" between what the schools are doing and what practitioners see as necessary to excellent practice. [How do we use practicing ministers in our curriculum?]

2. **Social Change**—There is a sense that legal education needs to take more account of changes in the wider, social community that impinge on how law needs to be practiced in order to serve the needs of that society in an excellent manner. [How does social analysis influence our curriculum?]

3. **Student-Centered Education**—There is some encouragement to make legal education more student-oriented. This was visible in the decision to survey newly hired lawyers and in the suggestion that the Statement of Skills and Values might be given to entering law students to give them a clearer sense of the importance of acquiring skills and values in the course of their professional development, thus enhancing their motivation and ability to take significant personal responsibility for attaining the requisite skills. Students would be encouraged and assisted in developing a considered, long-range educational agenda aimed at excellence. A better informed student-as-consumer could enable students to play a more active role in shaping the educational opportunities available to them in law school and after (LEPD, 127).

4. **Uses**—The task force report can be used as an aid in the revision and development of courses and teaching methods that enhance skills and values and that systematically integrate the study of skills and values with the study of

substantive law and theory. It can also serve to benefit continuing education programs, law offices, and all practicing lawyers (LEPD, 128).

Business

In 1988, the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business commissioned Lyman W. Porter and Lawrence E. McKibbin to do a three-year study on the future of management education and development.[10] They conducted 300 interviews on more than sixty campuses and held several conferences to gather data. Common criticisms of business education at that time included insufficient emphasis on: generating "vision" in students, integration across functional areas, managing people, communication skills, external environments (legal, social, political), international business, entrepreneurism, and ethics.

The study showed that faculty were too narrowly focused in functional specialties and lacked work experience. They seemed complacent and did not perceive a need for change. This resulted in little long-range planning and little execution by leadership of plans agreed upon by members of the various institutions. Practitioners wanted students to have more training in "people skills," more knowledge of the "real" world of business, and more realistic expectations of the marketplace and what could be accomplished there.

The study concluded that business schools were not concerned enough about the need to respond actively to environmental changes. The authors also found a distressing tendency of schools to avoid the risk of being different. Many schools simply emulated what they thought were appropriate models and lacked the ability or will to find creative, diverse, energizing alternatives. The study recommended more attention to external environment, to ways in which information systems might be used in business curricula, to "people" skills, and to more integration and synthesis across specialties. Finally, they encouraged business schools to evaluate how they were attending to quality issues, the theory/practice link, the ability to adapt to change and to implement ongoing innovation that would keep step with the changing world environment.

In 1987, the board of trustees of the Graduate Management Admission Council formed a commission to explore the challenges facing the field in the 1990s and beyond. The report, *Leadership for a Changing World: The Future Role of Graduate Management Education* (LCW, 1990) reflects two years of wide-ranging conversations by the commission on issues concerning backgrounds of applicants to business schools, the educational programs of these schools, as well as changes in the environment that are influencing the field of business management. According to its framers, the report is not exhaustive, but seeks rather to raise questions central to the future of U.S. graduate management education, to engage the interest of decision-makers, and to encourage further dialogue. Its main goal was to suggest strategic issues for a future that will be characterized

by dramatic environmental change (LCW, 1). The study can be discussed under eight headings:

1. **Environmental Demands**—This section examines key changes that are transforming the global environment of business. Technology is developing at a very rapid pace, creating enormous practical and ethical complexity in the business environment. Globalization means that all markets are now interrelated and influence one another. "The curricula of American business schools have recently concentrated far more on the building of elegant, abstract models that seek to unify the world economic system than on the development of frameworks to help students understand the messy, concrete reality of international business" (Management Education and Development, 6). Finally, the business community must take into account demographic diversity—age, gender, race, and ethnicity.

2. **Implications for Organizations**—How will these transformations shape the future of organizations and of the managers who lead them? Effectiveness in business will require organizations that are agile exploiters of these changes, not those that are plodding reactors. Greater emphasis will be placed on local problem solving, teamwork, and on the ability to get things done without formal authority—all of which may result in increased stress.

3. **Implications for Managers**—Business education will need to offer a synthesis of knowledge and action. Successful managers will need to possess expertise in conceptual, theoretical issues and know-how to solve specific, functional problems. The discipline-based knowledge and technical skills alone are insufficient for successfully facing future challenges. There is also a call for closer collaboration between business schools and schools of arts and sciences.

Managers will need to possess a high tolerance for ambiguity in their institutional surroundings, as well as great personal flexibility. It is absolutely essential that managers be able to work effectively with others, to understand their ideas, and to cooperate with them in the managerial world of the 1990s and beyond. Managers must be "reflective practitioners," continuing to study their craft and actively apply what they have learned to people, environments, and institutions that continually present new and unstructured problems.[11] They will be guided by intellectual curiosity; will require patience, judgment, and wisdom; as well as the ability to maintain technical and analytical skills. Sensitivity to other cultures, good communication skills, and a high level of personal ethical values top off this list of managerial qualities.

4. **Implications for U.S. Graduate Schools of Management**—The committee warns that schools cannot adequately respond to these challenges by simply adding new courses and new experiences outside the classroom, but must rather embrace a new set of faculty priorities, as well as a reframing of the MBA curriculum. Individual schools need to assess whether or not they are addressing environmental changes adequately and if not, have the courage to make significant alterations in the overall goals and structure of their programs.

5. **Academic Rigor and Managerial Relevance: Toward a New Synthesis**—Current environmental changes demand taking a fresh look at the relationship between research/teaching and the demands/activities of the organiza-

tions employing students after graduation. The fluid context of business today places new demands on the process of scholarly inquiry which needs to be broadened to include more interaction and dialogue across, and even beyond, the boundaries of the established disciplines of the business school. There is a demand for more "outward thinking" in business school research and education. There is a call for academicians to spend more time in organizations, observing business practices first hand and, in turn, research needs to be tested in these environments. Evaluation of faculty must reflect the necessary balance between academic rigor and managerial relevance.

6. **The Importance of Collaboration**—There is a call for interdisciplinary group efforts in curriculum/teaching to help bring about synthesis between knowledge/action, rigor/relevance, and research/education. It is essential that schools increase the number of meaningful collaborations with the employers of graduates and with other corporate stakeholders. Deans and faculty should work with these associates to define the responsibilities each has in the lifelong process of management education, identifying particular competencies in order to coordinate efforts.

7. **Implications for MBA Students**—Students need to be able to frame problems, to find ways to manage change creatively and effectively, and to develop new attitudes and values. Some of these include: intellectual curiosity and the desire to grow through education seen as a lifelong process, a strong task orientation, realistic expectations, a willingness to delegate important duties to others, knowing both the uses and limits of interpersonal power and influence, and ability to derive a sense of satisfaction from work accomplished. The study also mentions respect for all individuals, valuation of diversity and ability to empathize with those who are different as important traits in managers. Finally, managers need to possess a certain amount of self-awareness and self-direction that will make them confident about making decisions, yet aware of their limitations and of the consequences of their actions on others.

8. **Implications for Graduate Management Faculty**—There is a plea for faculty to be educators as well as researchers. They need to possess skills in curriculum design, pedagogy, and student advising; a capacity for teamwork; and the ability to respond to change and diversity as collaborative efforts expand, new programs are launched, and the student body changes.

The report also notes that growth in knowledge and skills is unlikely to occur without a similar transformation in faculty attitudes and values. Past academic concerns must be supplemented by a commitment to educating prospective and current managers, appreciation for teamwork, and respect for cultural differences. Perhaps most difficult will be the development of an outward-looking vision that seeks closer relationships between research and practice. Such a synthesis does not necessarily entail a dilution of scholarly rigor. The framers of this text point to developments in medical education, e.g., the experiential curriculum adopted by several medical schools, to exemplify this point. They posit that a successful synthesis is not only possible but that it can also stimulate even more accomplishments in research.

The report underlines the need for leadership of deans and senior faculty to nurture this outward-orientation in younger faculty and in students. Leadership emerges as a key factor at all levels of business education and practice. I offer one example: Roger B. Smith, discusses leadership in terms of the arts.

> Whether you are carving a statue or reorganizing a corporation, you have a vision of what you want to create, as well as a sense of how to make that vision real by bringing different elements together according to an overall pattern . . . . And just as artists communicate their intent through their works, managers must be able to convey their vision in an inspiring and forceful way—in other words to lead—or else that vision will never be fully realized.[12]

The concerns of the business school reports are notably similar to those found in the legal education study, although the business literature conveyed a somewhat more urgent tone. These include bridging the gap between education and practice, the need for more collaboration, response to environmental changes, and a more student-centered educational program. The Preamble to the AASCB Accreditation Standards states that in such a rapidly changing environment, "management education must prepare students to contribute to their organizations and the larger society and to grow personally and professionally throughout their careers" (2). There are several discernible emphases in the business reports that may be helpful for our purposes.

Business studies speak frequently about the place and role of business schools within the larger university community, and of the need to include the liberal arts in the education of future managers. [Do we help students see connections between theology/ministry and literature/art/poetry/film?]

The studies call all segments of the business education community to engage more in what they call "outward thinking," that is, to connect educational content and process to what students will need to be effective managers in a rapidly changing environment. Environmental changes in economics, demographics, and the global market affect business in more direct and far-reaching ways than other professions and must be seriously considered in setting up curricula. Schools need to include and work with employers and other practitioners in the business community. [Do we need to make more use of social analysis of social/ecclesial environment and changes?]

This material emphatically places students at the center of the educational process. The authors presume that students will master content. What they emphasize is the need for students to be self-aware, reflective, and able to act creatively in a demanding, rapidly changing environment. They speak of qualities such as the ability to live with ambiguity, to work well with others, to

communicate well, to be intellectually curious, to be ethically sensitive, patient, wise, etc.[13]

Medicine

Evaluations of medical education have occurred at regular intervals since the 1870s.[14] For at least 100 years, critics have voiced the opinion that medical education is never quite up to its formidable task of meeting the evolving needs of the American public and therefore always in need of change.[15] The three changes most frequently noted are an explosion in technology, the emergence of new diseases, and the evolution of health systems that reduce physicians' autonomy. In addition, there is the growing uncertainty of financial support and the weakening of the public trust due to perceived misconduct and inadequate management of resources.[16] The Clinton administration's focus on health care is being read by some in the medical community as a threat. Some voice the fear that if medical education does not respond to the pressing needs of future physicians and the public, others will.[17]

Compared with thirty other advanced economies in the world, the health of the U.S. population ranks fifteenth to twentieth on most health indicators. In an analysis of eleven industrialized nations, the U.S. ranks lowest on life expectancy and infant mortality. Conversely, the U.S. ranks first in terms of state-of-the-art biomedical science and technology and in the percentage of the gross national product and expenditure per capita devoted to health care.[18] One explanation that is in the forefront of many discussions is the imbalance between the number of specialists and the number of general, primary care practitioners.

With full recognition that American medical schools and medical practice are among the best in the world, almost no one denies that medical costs are out of control and that changes in medical education need to take account of this and other problems. There is some sense that some institutions have modified their curricula, but that little progress has been made toward a fundamental reappraisal. Of the 10,399 graduates of 1983, between 35 and 50 percent reported inadequate time devoted to the management of patients' socioeconomic, educational, and emotional problems; patient follow-up; care of ambulatory and elderly patients; public health and community medicine; medical record-keeping; and self-evaluation and independent learning. One half to two-thirds believed that inadequate time was devoted to research techniques, preventive care, nutrition, practice management, and medical care cost control.[19]

The framers of the 1984 report of the Association of American Medical Colleges hoped that their report would lead to national discussion and broad consensus on fundamental principles to guide the general professional education of physicians whose practice environment and base of knowledge in the next century will differ significantly from those of today. In addition to concern

with defining the essential knowledge and skills students should learn, the report also invited debate on the personal qualities, values, and attitudes appropriate for individuals who hold such a unique position of trust and responsibility in our society.

The report also notes that the expansion of science and technology and the trend toward specialization are particular problems in medical education, but that they apply to other professions and to the overall character of education in the universities.[20] This context demands that medical students be prepared to learn throughout their professional lives. The learning must be self-directed, active, and independent.

The report notes as well that a 1925 study commissioned by the AAMC Commission on Medical Education identified problems in medical education not dissimilar to those of this report. Due to the inertia inherent in institutions of higher education, the implementation of those suggested changes was neither widespread nor sustained. They call for renewed effort on the part of leaders to begin to implement in the last fifteen years of this century what was optimistically predicted fifty years ago.[21]

The report draws five conclusions:

1. **Purposes of a General Professional Education**—The study calls for at least an equal emphasis on the acquisition and development of skills, values, and attitudes as on the acquisition of knowledge. An information-intensive approach to medical education is obsolete. Medical faculties should adapt education to changing demographics and modifications in the health-care system.

2. **Baccalaureate education** should be broad, encompassing study in natural and social sciences and the humanities.

3. **Acquiring Learning Skills**—Education should prepare students to be learners throughout their lives. Active, independent, self-directed learning requires the ability to identify, formulate, and solve problems; to grasp and use basic concepts and principles; and to gather and assess data rigorously and critically. Faculty should adopt evaluative methods to identify these skills or their absence in students. Present evaluations often lead students to be passive recipients of information rather than active participants in their intellectual growth. Students who learn independently develop abilities to seek out information and to analyze and apply it to the solution of problems. These students become critical, original thinkers who are constructively skeptical. Students whose self-confidence and prior experience have not promoted a drive for learning independently should be particularly challenged and provided the guidance they need to develop this ability.

4. **Clinical Education**—Emerging physicians will best be served by clinical education designed as an integral part of general professional education. This initial experience in clinical medicine profoundly affects the personal development of students. Clinical clerkships require careful structuring. By

identifying and describing the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that clinical education should contribute to general professional education, medical faculties can design more appropriate settings for clinical clerkships and ascertain whether or not they are accomplishing their purpose. The focus of learning should be on patients and their families. Basic science and clinical education should be integrated.

5. **Enhancing Faculty Involvement**—While discipline- and specialty-based administrative structures work effectively in some ways, they are less effective in promoting the interdepartmental and interdisciplinary work necessary for the design and implementation of a program of general professional education. Such structures rarely succeed in fostering communication and close working relationships among the faculty members responsible for planning and conducting educational programs. Rather, deans might establish interdisciplinary and interdepartmental groups that have the responsibility and the authority to plan, implement, and supervise an integrated program, subject to oversight and approval by the general faculty. Curriculum committees are rarely able to achieve such consensus.

Faculty members should have the time and opportunity to establish mentoring relationships with individual students. Medical students often lack the close interaction with faculty members characteristic of graduate study. Students complain that they see many faculty members, each for short periods only and that they neither know nor are known by faculty. This situation is inconsistent with a general professional education directed toward the personal development of each student.

Programs are needed to assist faculty to expand their teaching capabilities beyond their specialized fields. Faculty who guide students in independent learning must challenge students to be involved actively in their own education rather than being passive recipients of prepackaged information. To create such a learning environment, faculty will require assistance in developing the skills they need to be effective and stimulating guides and mentors. Faculty also need to be able to guide students through the travails of a rigorous program involving pressure, disruption of their personal lives, and encounters with suffering and death.

The values and attitudes of deans and department chairpersons can be more important in bringing about these changes than quantitative measures of teaching effectiveness. Institutional leaders are key to motivating faculty to devote their time and energy to improving the educational process.

Several areas covered in the discussions of medical education invite reflection:

While advancing technology and knowledge explosion are forcing medical schools to evaluate their educational programs, the forces that will affect medical education the most are external—the health needs of the population and national financial constraints.[22] Social analysis is central in determining the situation of a particular population group. Attention to public health and the very transformation of the term "health" led educators to address questions from the perspective of the patient and the population of a community. [Has

there been a comparable transformation of the word "ministry," and if so, what are the contours of this change? To what extent do we examine our educational process in terms of the needs of the communities graduates will serve?]

There is a concern that the skills to be learned in clinical placements are not adequately specified. This results in inadequate evaluation of skills and inadequate knowledge of whether the students have been exposed to realistic and well-supervised clinical education that adequately prepares them for the practice they will encounter. Medical studies also indicate that there is a lack of involvement of faculty with students in clinical placements and a concern that faculty do not pay sufficient attention to the shaping of students' personal qualities, values, and attitudes. One group suggested that senior medical students provide faculty with feedback about the relevance of their courses to their clinical experience. Another group suggested an integrating course for seniors. The most radical suggestion was to modify the biphasic nature of medical education by distributing learning in basic and clinical sciences throughout the curriculum. The most significant obstacle is the lack of interaction between basic science and clinical science faculty. [How do we integrate classroom and field work experiences? Are faculty adequately aware of students' field work experiences? What kind of communication is desirable between academic faculty and field supervisors?]

There is considerable emphasis on the need to train students to become creative, independent thinkers and lifelong learners. Many advocate including explicit opportunities for students to develop skills of research and critical thinking. [What are the specific, concrete aspects of our pedagogical practice that address this issue? Do we give enough attention to the differences among students in order to attend more directly to a students' needs and capacities—both those who are gifted and those who have difficulties with academic and/or ministerial work?]

The report advocates faculty cooperation on an interdisciplinary and interdepartmental basis.

The report emphasizes the need for institutional structures and resources to help bring about suggested changes. Examples include broadening criteria for faculty promotion to include creative teaching and curricular innovation and ways to address departmental "turf" issues.

There is some call for more involvement of practicing physicians in defining essential knowledge and skills and educating medical students.[23] [To what extent do we presently consult practicing ministers on curricular issues, and what are the arguments for or against increasing this kind of consultation?]

Conclusion

The many common elements visible in the materials reviewed should not obscure differences. Each school was encouraged to assess its own particular situation and implement recommendations in light of its distinctive mission, strengths, and weaknesses. This regard for individual settings may result in a great deal more diversity than is evident in the studies. Second, some educators

continue to argue forcefully that the best way to train leaders for society, e.g., in law, is by teaching students the skills of rigorous scholarship and publication. Such a sentiment represents a position on professional excellence quite different from that reflected in the studies reviewed. Third, some persons interviewed expressed skepticism about the extent to which individual schools would heed the recommendations at all. There is no guarantee that a given institution will have the interest, ability, confidence, creativity, or resources necessary to assess needs and implement change. The influence (or lack thereof) of this research on professional curricula will not be visible for several years.

The elements of the Lilly Endowment grant to examine issues of excellence in theological education, while less comprehensive and systematic than the national studies examined here, nevertheless reflect an attempt at a systematic approach to data gathering. Both the 1990 survey of WTU graduates and the 1992 Impact Study have as their locus the practice of ministry. The aim of both studies was to get a sense of how well the WTU prepares persons for ministry. In the process, we also gained a limited sense of what doing ministry today actually involves.

The results of each element of the Lilly study have generated conversation and revealed areas of success as well as areas that need improvement in our educational program. For example, the adequacy of the curriculum to prepare persons to be excellent practitioners in today's changing church and concerns about collaboration are two issues that come up repeatedly.

The aim of this portion of the Lilly grant has been to broaden our conversation to include discussions in other professional schools in order to see if these discussions might instruct us. While the content of legal, business, medical, and theological education is distinct, I have found interesting commonalities in perceived inadequacies in the educational system, in areas of pedagogical method and professional practice, and in the need to adapt to changes in the larger global environment, some elements of which are of common concern to all four professions. The following questions emerge out of my brief examination of this broader context.

Theological Education for Ministry: Some Questions

Have we identified and articulated clearly the major social and ecclesial factors that characterize the fluid context of a rapidly evolving ministry?

How do we ascertain, evaluate, and discuss in a concrete, empirical fashion how individual courses/divisions contribute to the excellent practice of ministry as that is experienced in the ministries our graduates will enter? For example, are faculty and students clear about how a Christian anthropology class might influence or facilitate responsible ministry in an ethnically diverse situation?

Have we creatively assessed the factors that might block innovation, e.g., resources, attitudes, institutional considerations, ecclesial expectations?[24]

Do we see ministerial education as a continuum, including life experience, theological school, and practice and if so, how is this perspective manifest in our educational practice? In what ways do we take account of the life experience of students? In what ways do we wish to communicate and collaborate with practitioners of ministry? How do we understand the crucial, but different capacities of educators and practicing ministers to foster excellence in the ministry?

Are our degree programs structured in a way that leads students through a coherent and progressive educational experience, leading to more complex operations and greater intellectual curiosity?

In what ways (direct and indirect) does our curriculum attend to the formation of personal professional values and ethical practice in the ministry? Do we address common personal issues such as depression, stress, frustration, alcoholism, and loneliness that affect the practice of ministry in a negative way?

How does our curriculum foster the identity of the minister as a professional in society? Do our students see themselves vis-à-vis members of other professions in terms of their responsibility to serve society and to assume crucial leadership roles in their respective areas? Do we see the training of leaders as perhaps a distinctive goal of a theological education, and if so, what does this mean, and how is this executed in the educational process?

Would it be desirable to identify those skills and values that we see as integral to excellence in ministry and then to examine how the curriculum addresses these issues?

In what ways do we approach theological education from a student-centered perspective? Are there concrete structures in place (both in the classroom and in field work) that encourage and assist students to take active responsibility for their ministerial preparation? Are our structures flexible enough to allow for some range of diversity of student needs? Does our curriculum allow for some students to pursue genuinely advanced, specialized work that builds on faculty and student interests and current ecclesial needs?

Have we considered the value of designing an experimental, student-centered, first-year experience with a small number of students and faculty from various disciplines?[25]

Do we encourage and reward faculty for initiating collaborative projects and innovative pedagogical approaches and/or experiments?

In this literature, perhaps the one idea that I found most provocative was the vision of the professional as *leader* in her or his local community, in the profession, and in the larger society. Some prefer to look at law, business, medicine, or ministry in a narrow, self-contained way. Others look upon these

professions as vehicles for social transformation with the attendant risks and responsibilities. Does our educational process inculcate a proactive rather than a reactive mentality with regard to nurturing and influencing the "spiritual health" of the faith community we serve? As one law professor puts it to his students, "There are persons who read articles about law and society and there are persons who write articles on law and society. Which do you want to be?" It strikes me that the point he is making is not limited to the legal profession, nor to students at first-rate research institutions, nor to those who devote themselves to publication. At many different levels, it can apply to all the professions and to a variety of institutions that take their mandate to train leaders and public servants seriously. I was left with the question: How does one shape a curriculum/learning environment that will instill in students not only the desire and the willingness to be religious leaders, but one that will also equip them with the requisite knowledge, skills, and values to enable them to use their positions in church and society as a positive, shaping force for the common good?

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ENDNOTES

1.   Although I did not look at engineering schools for this project, an article in the *Washington Post* (February 16, 1993) revealed that they were discussing the same kinds of issues that surfaced in law, business, and medicine. The article is entitled "Redesigning First-Year Engineering," and describes a five-year, $60 million experiment, funded by the National Science Foundation. First-year courses are focused on real projects, e.g., designing shelters for the homeless, rather than on an exclusive diet of math, physics, and chemistry. Thomas M. Regan, head of the University of Maryland's ECSEL (Engineering Coalition of Schools for Excellence in Education and Leadership) says, "We're changing the education process. It's not taught in a frontal lecture style. The classroom now is noisy. They're working in groups, and the faculty act as a consultant or a facilitator." Howard University's Mobolaji E. Aluko notes, "We're not just trying to teach good engineers. We're building better people."

2.   Some examples include: The Cornwall Collective, *Your Daughters Shall Prophesy: Feminist Alternatives in Theological Education* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1980); Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983); Edward Farley, *The Fragility of Knowledge: Theological Education in the Church and the University* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988); Don Browning, ed., *Practical Theology: The Emerging Field in Theology, Church and World* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983); Joseph C. Hough, Jr. and John B. Cobb, Jr., *Christian Identity and Theological Education* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1985); Katie Cannon, et al., (The Mud Flower Collective), *God's Fierce Whimsey: Christian Feminism and Theological Education* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1985); Lewis S. Mudge and James N. Poling, eds., *Formation and Reflection: The Promise of Practical Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987); Katarina Schuth, *Reason for the Hope: The Futures of Roman Catholic Theologates* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1989); the ATS journal, *Theological Education*.

3.   Hearings were with: (1) representatives of ABA Young Lawyers Division; (2) clinical law teachers; (3) a wide sample from the 1990 ABA Annual Meeting; (4) deans and other representatives of law schools.

4.   The text, known as "The MacCrate Report," has four divisions: I: The Profession for Which Lawyers Are Prepared; II: A Vision of the Skills and Values New Lawyers Should Seek to Acquire; III: The Educational Continuum Through Which Lawyers Acquire Their Skills and Values; IV: Recommendations.

5.   By 1990 there was one lawyer for every 320 persons in the U.S. From 1880 to 1940, there was one lawyer for every 780 persons. As of 1991, there were 777,000 lawyers. In Washington, DC, there is one lawyer for every 27 residents. The number of ABA-approved law schools increased from 136 in 1965 to 175 in 1990. J.D. enrollments rose from 56,510 to 129,580 in 1990-91 (LEPD, 18).

6.   Women comprised four percent in mid-1960s, 40 percent in 1990s. Law is increasingly a second career and recruiting patterns have had to adjust to an increase in older applicants of both sexes. Women seem better able to identify with the disenfranchised and are raising questions about legal practice and structure. (LEPD, 21).

7.   The formal racial barrier against African Americans entering the legal profession was lifted in 1943, but it was not until 1950 that the first African American lawyer was knowingly admitted to the ABA. From 1877 to 1939, Howard University Law School was the only substantial source of legal education for African Americans. In 1939, North Carolina Central University Law School was established and, in 1947, Texas Southern University Law School and Southern University Law School in Baton Rouge were

founded. It was not until 1964 that the Association of American Law Schools' Committee on Racial Discrimination could state for the first time that no member school reported denying admission to any applicant on grounds of race or color. In 1964-65, there were 433 African American students out of a total law school population of 50,000. The percentage of African American J.D. enrollments has risen from one percent in 1965, to 4.3 percent in 1972, to 6.3 percent in 1991-92. (LEPD, 23).

8.   In 1974 the ABA adopted a new accreditation standard—"instruction in the duties and responsibilities of the legal profession." By 1986, more than 80 percent of ABA-approved law schools mandated a course in the category of Professional Responsibility, up from 53 percent in 1975. See Lewis D. Solomon, "Perspectives on Curriculum Reform in Law Schools: A Critical Assessment," *University of Toledo Law Review* 24 (Fall 1992), 3.

9.   A number of law schools have implemented changes in response to the MacCrate Report (and the earlier Cramton Report of 1979). Examples include Harvard and Georgetown (experimental, first-year track); Columbia (revamped first-year curriculum); Illinois Institute of Technology/Chicago-Kent College of Law (enhanced writing program); New York University School of Law (experienced-based thinking); Mercer University School of Law and the University of Montana (holistic curricular reforms).

10.   Porter and McKibbin, *Management Education and Development* (AACSB, 1988). The two major previous studies, R.A. Gordon/J.E. Howell, *Higher Education for Business* (Columbia University Press, 1959) and F.C. Pierson, *The Education of American Businessmen* (McGraw-Hill, 1959), were focused on internal issues, especially the lack of quality in faculty, research, curricula, and students. These studies were followed by *Higher Education and Business*, 1963; and *Educating Tomorrow's Managers*, Committee on Economic Development, 1964. Also helpful is *Achieving Quality and Continuous Improvement Through Self-Evaluation and Peer Review: Standards for Business and Accounting Accreditation* (St. Louis: AACSB).

11.   See Donald A. Schon, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1987).

12.   Roger B. Smith, "The Liberal Arts and the Art of Management" in Johnston, *Educating Managers*, 22.

13.   This material reminds one of the standard tracts on virtue and the formation of character. Would it be helpful to make use of this tradition in a relevant, personal way for our students?

14.   A good historical perspective on medical education in the U.S. is Kenneth Ludmerer's *Learning to Heal: The Development of American Medical Education* (New York: Basic Books, 1985). Major studies include Abraham Flexner's report to the Carnegie Foundation in 1910, *Medical Education in the United States and Canada*; Lowell Coggeshall's report for AAMC in 1965, *Planning for Medical Progress Through Education*; the AMA's *Graduate Education of Physicians* in 1966; AAMC's 1984 *Physicians for the Twenty-First Century*; Josiah Macy's 1980 study, *Graduate Medical Education, Present and Prospective: A Call for Action*; and the University of Chicago's Centennial Conference entitled *The Future of American Medical Education* (October 17-18, 1991).

15.   Samuel Hellman, M.D. et al, *Academic Medicine* 67/11 (November 1992): 709.

16.   Samuel O. Thier, M.D., "Preventing the Decline of Academic Medicine," *Academic Medicine* 67/11 (Nov 1992): 731.

17.   See "The Health Care Mess: Doctors Under the Knife," *Newsweek* (April 5, 1993).

18.   Alvin R. Tarlov, M.D., "The Coming Influence of A Social Sciences Perspective on Medical Education," *Academic Medicine* 67/11 (Nov. 1992): 726.

19.   August G. Swanson, M.D., "Medical Education in the United States and Canada," *Journal of Medical Education* 59/II (Nov. 1984): 41.

20.   Steven Muller, "Physicians for the Twenty-First Century," *Journal of Medical Education* 59/II (1984): 1.

21.   In a preliminary survey conducted by Louis Harris and Associates, they discovered that proposals perceived to have merit by 7 in 10 or more in nearly all the groups surveyed included: (a) greater emphasis on teaching through problem solving; (b) increased opportunities for students to develop skills in critical analysis of medical literature; (c) providing explicit incentives for faculty who make an extensive commitment to the education of medical students; (d) developing a system for evaluating effective teaching by the medical school faculty; (e) using teaching evaluation as a significant factor in tenure decisions; (f) providing greater opportunity for personal contact between students and faculty; (g) generally increasing the involvement of faculty in the education, supervision, and evaluation of medical students. The survey also notes that opinion about whether major or minor changes were needed was equally divided. Those leaning more toward the need for fundamental change were associate deans for academic affairs (50%), associate deans for student affairs (55%), clinical science faculty excluding department chairs (53%), residents (53%), students (53%), and teaching hospital administrators (57%). Those leaning toward only minor changes were full deans (54%), basic science faculty (52%), departmental chairs (48%), and practicing physicians.

22.   See Steven K. Schroeder et al. "Academic Medicine as a Public Trust," *JAMA* 262 (1989): 803.

23.   The preliminary Harris Survey noted that 76% of physicians, 79% of residents, and 89% of students supported this. Only about half of faculty, deans, and administrators supported this idea, some of whom thought the idea deserved merit, but simply would not succeed.

24.   For an analysis of obstacles to curricular reform, see Lewis Solomon, "Perspectives," 35-38.

25.   This is the approach taken by Harvard and Georgetown law schools. Georgetown was aided in this experiment by a $296,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For the most part, the program involves repackaging existing material into new courses. See Lewis Solomon, "Perspectives," 10.

The Revolution in Ministry Training

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During the late 1980s and early l990s a number of theological seminaries of all denominational and theological stripes engaged in major studies to determine the perception by churches and ministers of the job the seminaries did in preparing people for ministry. These studies began to appear as enrollment in the seminaries entered a period of sustained decline. The results of the studies had a striking similarity regardless of the theological position of the schools or the churches.

The findings consistently held that seminaries do a good job of giving students a solid biblical/theological foundation for ministry. Liberals felt that their schools gave a good liberal foundation and conservatives felt that their schools gave a good conservative foundation. The almost universal complaint, however, came in the area of preparation for the practice of ministry. Graduates of seminaries felt unprepared for the challenges of ministry, while the churches felt that seminaries did not turn out people ready for ministry. Critics of the seminaries charge them with an excessive concern for theory over practice, while defenders of the seminaries warn that a pragmatic agenda threatens to rob the church of its core of faith commitments.

The 1980s spawned a variety of alternatives to the traditional means of preparing for ministry. Some of theses alternatives grew up within seminaries as supplements to the traditional seminary education, and some of them grew up in the churches as an alternative to seminary. Innovation sometimes emerged as an effort to serve a ministry need, and it sometimes emerged as a strategy for survival of the institution. Declining enrollments in the face of declining denominational support for theological seminaries has forced some schools to mutate or die. Hartford Seminary saw the handwriting on the wall earlier than most. It responded to the challenge by letting go most of the faculty, dropping its basic degree program, selling the campus to create an endowment, and transforming itself into a research institution and center for continuing education. Though this approach provides an example of creative preservation of an institution, it does not provide a model for how to address the basic issues that gave rise to the crisis.

Seminaries Alone Can Do It

Many of the approaches to innovation came as a means to increase student enrollment. These approaches reflect a seminary self-image as a place for dispensing knowledge. Innovation that emerged from this mindset sees the challenge of declining enrollment and income as primarily one of figuring new ways to squeeze students into what seminaries already do. This approach means doing the same thing at a different time, in a different place, with a different schedule, or through some medium other than physical presence.

Off-campus centers have proven successful in boosting enrollment for many schools. With the increasing trend toward the regionalization of theological education, students do not travel great distances to go to seminary the way they once did. The schools that can economically "take their show on the road" stand to boost enrollment and income. New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary runs major off-campus centers with enrollment in the hundreds. The centers succeed by targeting major population areas with a high concentration of Southern Baptist churches not served by another Southern Baptist seminary. Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary invaded the South several years ago when it opened a branch campus in Charlotte, North Carolina. Bethel Theological Seminary opened a branch campus in San Diego, California, far from the Minnesota snows and Scandinavian roots of the mother campus. Fuller Theological Seminary and Regent College operate a center together in Seattle, Washington. Western Seminary opened a campus in Phoenix, Arizona, which grew so rapidly that it has now separated from the mother institution to become a freestanding seminary.

Changing the meeting time or the schedule of classes has added students to a number of seminaries. In the old days, most seminaries did not have Monday classes in order that students and faculty would have a day to travel from their preaching assignments of the previous Sunday. This noble tradition lingered long after the concern for train schedules had ceased to be an issue for the automobile-equipped clergy of the interstate highway generation. The addition of Monday-only classes afforded an opportunity for ministers to attend seminary in those denominations that do not require seminary education for ordination. Baptist schools in particular and evangelical schools in general derived some benefit from the extra students who drove in from great distances to take three classes on one day. For the most part, however, seminaries offered courses without necessarily having a plan to offer the degree in a timely manner. Schools scheduled classes on the basis of who might be willing to teach in an intensive three-hour format rather than on the basis of a scheme that would allow a student to graduate.

Distance courses of different types have also allowed seminaries to enroll extra students. In its earliest form these courses went by the odious term of "correspondence courses" and suffered the derision of both faculties and accrediting associations. A major advance came in distance education with the development of the Institute for Theological Studies (ITS), which operates as a consortium of evangelical seminaries to broker courses on audio tape. The taped classroom lectures come with a student guide that includes weekly assignments. Schools that use this system normally assign a faculty member to monitor the progress of students who use the ITS tapes as an independent study. Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon, undertook one of the most ambitious approaches to distance education in the 1980s under the leadership of Earl Radmacher. Western used the latest technology available at that time, which was videotape, to record classroom sessions for use as distance courses. The experience revealed some of the limitations of video when it is used only as the "talking head." Though hundreds of students have managed to pick up a course here and there through taped courses, this approach has never delivered a degree. It has been a way of enrolling students in courses.

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, developed a hybrid of the off-campus center and the distance course through the use of its television satellite. Southwestern has its own television production studio and televises courses from the main campus to its off-campus centers. This approach allows students to have some interaction with the professor in real time which the traditional taped courses do not allow. The expense of acquiring a satellite has kept other seminaries out of this mode of delivery, but The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, Southwestern's sister school and perpetual rival, has begun development of a course delivery system to its off-campus centers that uses interactive video through the telephone system. This technology involves a send/receive unit at the main campus and at the off-campus center. When Bethel Theological Seminary first explored this technology two years ago, each unit cost more than $70,000, but now the unit cost has declined to about $45,000. Once again, these methods of delivery do not represent a significant change in what seminaries do; they represent a different method of delivering what seminaries already do.

Seminaries Do Nothing Right

Another direction for change in theological education has come from the critics of seminaries who believe seminaries do nothing right. This group would see theological education primarily as training for tasks through skill development. This sort of training can best be accomplished by the churches

and para-church groups. Most of those who hold this view advocate moving from an academic model to a clinical model. They speak of ministry training relating more to the kind of preparation a physician would receive in a hospital setting as they prepare to practice medicine.

Ralph Winter has advocated taking ministry preparation out of the hands of the seminaries and placing it in the hands of the churches. Winter developed the World Center to do this very thing, with his major concern relating to the preparation of missionaries. The World Center operates a church-based course called Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. A number of seminaries give transfer credit for this course. Winter's model calls for expansion of course offerings so that the entire master's degree may be earned in a local church. Like most of the other church-based models, however, this approach merely duplicates what the seminary does in a church building rather than in a seminary classroom. The model assumes that a class will lead to more practical application if the room in which it meets is located in a church building. On the other hand, this model does provide the churches a greater control over what people will learn. A church has the freedom to set its own priorities for ministry training.

A growing organization that helps churches do their own ministry training is the Biblical Institute for Leadership Development (BILD), located in Iowa. BILD supplies prepackaged course designs in the subjects of a theological curriculum that is intended to allow the pastor or other staff members of a church a resource to provide the equivalent of a seminary education to church members. This approach has a strong appeal for the church that has grown frustrated by the quality of students graduating from seminaries and has decided to train its own from inside to fill staff vacancies. Normally, this approach appeals to larger churches that have staff demands that require more involved training.

Carl George of Fuller Theological Seminary has advocated an approach he calls the "teaching church." A teaching church has abandoned the seminary as an outmoded institution and concentrates on training its own members for the work of ministry. A number of large churches have moved in this direction. For the most part, however, these efforts correspond to a lay training program that the Southern Baptists developed in the 1930s as their primary strategy for church member discipleship and training. Its name has changed from Training Union to Discipleship Training, but its focus has remained the same. It has a full curriculum of courses that deal with issues as diverse as doctrine to leadership to family ministry issues.

What George calls a teaching church as implemented by such churches as Leith Anderson's Wooddale Church in Minneapolis actually corresponds to

the lay level of equipping of Discipleship Training rather than to the vocational ministry preparation of seminary. Churches that have pursued the teaching church model have also discovered that lay people are not interested in doing an entire program of study leading to what would correspond to a seminary degree. They take the occasional course that will help them in their church work or the doctrinal study that will enrich their faith. Some seminaries have had frustrating experiences trying to partner with teaching churches with the expectation that they have found the "cash cow." On both sides the partnership is construed as the delivery of classes in the church building in order for the church members to earn a degree. Not even the average megachurch has sufficient numbers of members interested in earning a degree to make such an approach cost effective.

Teaching churches do an effective job of equipping the saints for the work of ministry, but their effectiveness lies in equipping laity rather than clergy. A growing concern of churches attempting to deliver master's-level training in such areas as pastoral counseling or systematic theology is that the church staff does not feel qualified to train people at this level. Even with the dissatisfaction over what seminaries do poorly, seminaries still seem to have a place to provide preparation in the areas that the churches do poorly.

Doing It Together

The effort to bring a more intentional partnership between schools and churches has appeared from several different directions in the past. Duke University Divinity School developed a program some years ago for Methodist pastors who had not attended seminary to come to its campus in the summers. In that way they could continue in their ministries but receive some training along the way. Moody Bible Institute developed a master's program that allows a person serving in ministry to take several courses a year and complete a degree over ten years. The seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) require their students to spend one year working in a church without taking any academic classes during the course of their seminary career. From different ecclesiastical perspectives, these programs recognize the need for seminaries to teach in collaboration with ministry.

While Lutheran polity allows the denomination to require formal training for ordination and service as a pastor, even the Lutherans and other denomi-nations with similar credentialing procedures find an increasing number of lay people filling staff positions in churches. Parachurch ministries have long relied upon people who begin service without seminary training. Many groups within the free church and Pentecostal traditions do not require or expect

seminary education for service. Almost half of the pastors of the 38,000 Southern Baptist churches do not have seminary degrees. While many people enter the ministry with the expectation that one day they would like to go on to seminary, once people have established themselves in ministry and started families, it becomes exceedingly difficult to leave the ministry in order to move to seminary to prepare to enter the ministry.

Several truly revolutionary models for ministry preparation have emerged in the last five years that actually involve building on the respective strengths of churches and seminaries without blaming either one for not doing what it cannot do. The first of these new models came with the creation of the Conservative Baptist Seminary of the East (CBSE). The school has no permanent campus. Instead, the faculty goes from church center to church center, like the circuit-riding preachers of early America. Students must have an approved internship in a church, which provides the context for learning. A major portion of the degree involves work outside of class that the students accomplish in their ministry under the supervision of their churches.

When I served at Bethel Theological Seminary as associate dean for academic affairs and director of the Doctor of Ministry program, I took part in the development of another evolutionary model. In response to a brochure about our D.Min. program, a pastor wrote to me indicating that he did not meet our basic admission requirements because he had not been to seminary. He liked our approach to D.Min. studies, though, and he wondered why no one had developed a way for pastors to pursue the M.Div. degree on the same model of in-ministry learning.

For years D.Min. directors had claimed that the D.Min. degree would teach seminaries how to do a better job of the M.Div. degree. It occurred to me that the reason ministers get so much out of a D.Min. program is because they bring so much to the table in terms of experience. They know the issues of ministry and they know their own areas of weakness. The basic seminary degree will always appear to be too theoretical for the person who has not had full-time ministry experience. Seminaries teach to the blank slate. Field experience in its various forms tries to simulate ministry experience, but at best it only provides a rough approximation.

When I received the pastor's letter, Bethel had entered a moment of openness to change in the face of the familiar story of declining enrollment, shrinking financial support, and eroding denominational support. Instead of lapsing into a survival mentality, President George Brushaber challenged the faculty to exercise its creativity in addressing the fundamental issues of theological education. Brushaber led the school through a process of reasserting its mission in the face of the new realities of ministry in the United States

and the world. The Vision 2001 committee, which included broad representation from the seminary's constituencies, concluded that the school's purpose was not to deliver courses or grant degrees, but to prepare people for ministry. In this climate, I proposed an M.Div. model based on the D.Min. model.

The In-Ministry M.Div. is open only to people in full-time ministry. It ideally serves people who live at a distance from the campus. They come to campus as though they were in a D.Min. program: two weeks in January and two weeks in June. Each time on campus they take two courses. During the spring and fall they take a distance course. So far, the program looks no different from the old approach of scheduling different times for classes and different ways of delivering courses.

Because of the intensive two-week contact time on campus, the design calls for a protracted period of assimilation. Students actually receive their assignments a number of weeks prior to coming to campus and begin interacting with the professor in small groups mediated by a telephone bridge. Instead of the normal assignments related to the academic community, course assignments involve application to ministry in the six-week period following the time on campus. Instead of writing an exegesis paper for a course on Romans, a student might do the work of the exegesis paper, but use it to develop a sermon series.

In addition to the application base of the courses, those taught on campus integrate with each other. A Bible course might be offered with a preaching course. A theology course might be offered with a preaching course. A leadership course might be offered with a church history course. The two courses aim at demonstrating the relationship between the classical course and the practical course while showing their application to ministry in the course assignments.

The distance courses are light years from the old correspondence courses and free students from the necessity of attending an off-campus class through interaction with a professor by video hook up. By using computers and a bulletin board server at Bethel, students can take part in work groups during the fall and spring courses while living thousands of miles apart. Once a week the work groups meet with their professor for a regular "class" via telephone bridge while they sit in their studies all across the country. This model necessarily moves beyond the lecture method as the primary mode of instruction as it builds on preferred adult learning styles.

This approach deals with a number of major issues. It creates a true partnership between the church and the seminary whereby the church's ministry becomes the agenda for the course experience. It allows the large church to train its own in what is peculiar to the large church, while it makes available to the large church the theological undergirding that most evangelical

churches desire. At the same time it provides the same opportunity for rural churches or inner-city churches. It also allows for collegial interaction among people who are dealing with ministry issues around the country.

Conclusion

The enrollment of seminaries should be increasing, because the population of the United States is increasing. Unfortunately, leadership often reconciles itself to statistics without considering the theological implications. The conventional wisdom now states that seminary students will be older adults. The theological implication of this statement is that God no longer intends to call young people into the ministry. The problems of seminaries cannot be separated from the problems of the denominations and the churches. Evangelicals often complain about their flagship institutions being taken over by liberals, but more often than not the institutions have been left sitting on the side of the road because people stopped being interested in them until they realized that they did have some value; then it was too late. This old scenario constitutes part of the current crisis in theological education, but where seminaries engage creatively with the true mission God has given them, exciting days lie ahead.

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Theological Education by Conversation: Particularity and Pluralism

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Several years ago I met a couple who were expecting their second child. One of the couple was an ordained pastor, and both were very much involved in the Christian church. As we discussed our children, the couple explained that they did not plan to take their children to church until they were much older (at least 12 or 13). They would, then, take their children to visit a variety of churches and religious communities. They wanted to avoid biasing the religious choices of their children because they wanted their children to be free to make their own choices at an appropriate age.

These parents faced a dilemma that is common in every form of educational institution, that is, the tension between formation and freedom. In their own unique experience of the dilemma, they chose to maximize freedom for their children by minimizing explicit religious formation. They chose to keep their children outside of religious particularity until the children reached an age of comprehension, able to make their own choices within pluralistic options.

Contrast this story with that of many Mennonite churches in which parents bring their children to church every Sunday and send them to Mennonite day schools and colleges. When the young people leave home for work or study, the church keeps them on a roster so that the Mennonite congregations in their new locations can reach out and include them in their fellowship.

In the traditional Mennonite community, a choice is made that is quite different from the one described in the first story. The choice is made to maximize religious formation so that the children and young people will be able to enter religious conversation within their own Mennonite community and, with a clear Christian identity, to converse outside their community.

These two contrasting stories represent very different ways of teaching Christian particularity in a pluralistic world. In the first story, the focus is on pluralism to the exclusion of particularity; in the second, the focus is on particularity with much of pluralism being left outside the close community life. Herein lies the dilemma: Is Christianity inherently besieged by an either/ or choice between particularity and pluralism, or is its particularity the very force that impels Christians to embrace the pluralistic world? To what extent do our religious traditions support exclusiveness or inclusiveness, and how

does that shape our teaching? And to what extent can we learn to be Christian without conversation with communities of other faiths?

The educational dilemma is one that emerges in higher education as well as in families and close-knit religious communities. Cornell W. Clayton identifies the dilemma in the way university faculties approach curriculum decisions. He recognizes that higher education is afloat in terms of values: "Having abandoned the commitment to a curriculum centered on Western thought and values, we are uncertain not just about what values and ideas to substitute, but also about whether *any* values should be taught."[1] The effort to be apolitical is a "dangerous mirage," however, because we always *do* pass on values.

Clayton himself chooses a principle of selection around Western democratic values recognizing the role of higher education in communicating those values and teaching students the skills needed to discern and act on those values. Clayton is critical of static and arbitrary curricula, but he is also suspicious of the university's flight from Western tradition because this very tradition has been "the basis for liberal democratic government."[2] In making his case, he warns against some of the dangers of inclusivist approaches to curriculum. He says of these approaches: "There is room for all perspectives and all subjects. By including all, we endorse none—supposedly making the curriculum politically neutral and culturally objective."[3] Clayton has advocated instead for education toward a particular, democratic political perspective "to prepare students to participate in building a just society."[4] In so doing, he recognizes the formative power of education and makes choices about what kind of formation seems most promising.

The case made by Clayton, alongside the two stories of particularity and pluralism, is a reminder of Paulo Freire's dictum that education is never neutral. Education always serves to form persons into a world, or to disassemble or transform that world. For Freire the educational contrast is between reinforcing the *status quo* and enhancing the practice of freedom:

> There is no such thing as a *neutral* educational process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, *or* it becomes 'the practice of freedom,' the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of the world.[5]

For Freire, like Clayton, education is bound to have an effect—an influence on future generations. But, unlike Clayton, Freire is suspicious of "the logic of the present system," and he is motivated to inspire and equip people in "the practice of freedom." Again, we have the tension between formation and freedom.

This dilemma strikes a cord with us who teach in theological education where pressures bear upon us to form persons in Christian faith, even Christian faith of a certain denominational or orthodox sort. At the same time, we face pressures to prepare persons to think critically about their faith traditions and to live in a culturally and religiously diverse world where hopefully they will learn to live justly and peacefully with other peoples and with the earth. No wonder that the tension between theological education and religious studies looms so large.

Insofar as theological education is understood as taking place within a faith community, and religious studies as standing outside a particular faith community, the contrast seems all too simple between the role of theological education in forming particularity and the role of religious studies in inspiring critical reflection, disengagement, or the practice of freedom in the context of religious pluralism. Herein lies a problem, namely, the problem of overly simplistic separation of formation and freedom, particularity and pluralism. Such a separation fails to take account of the contribution of religious formation to the practice of freedom, or of particularity to living well with pluralism. Likewise, the separation does not recognize the contribution of freedom to religious formation, or of pluralistic interactions to the fullness of particularity.

The underlying assumption of this essay is that theological education should not be torn asunder by this debate; rather, it should be shaped both by the particularities of Christianity and by the values discovered in relating with people of other religious and cultural traditions. Christian formation and freedom might even be enhanced in theological education as we learn to teach Christian particularity in relation to our pluralistic world. The thesis of this essay is that Christians live in the tension between formation and freedom, particularity and pluralism, and that tension is represented in Jesus Christ himself. Although Christians vary greatly in what they believe about Jesus and his teachings, a common centering point for Christianity is God as revealed in Jesus Christ. I will argue here that this very center is the source of basic impulses to embrace the pluralistic world, and that this center is discovered most fully when we practice theological education by conversation, engaging with our own historical traditions and with diverse religious communities, seeking to know ourselves and others.

Christian Uniqueness: Possibilities and Problems

A wide range of Christian theologians affirms that the Christ-centeredness of much Christian tradition can guide Christians in their relations with other religious traditions. This center can also be seen as a significant ground from

which to engage in theological education by conversation. Wolfhart Pannenburg recognizes that though much ambiguity exists within Christianity and across all religions, the uniqueness of Christianity still resides in "the promise of God in Christ."[6] Building on a similar theme is Monika Hellwig, who argues that the unique truth claim and contribution of Christianity to a wider ecumenism is the role of Jesus Christ and the relationship of Jesus to God.[7] For both Pannenburg and Hellwig, this uniqueness is not cause for closing interreligious communion, but is the spark that contributes to such communion.

Many Christians argue that uniqueness is at the heart of any religious tradition. Jürgen Moltmann argues, "A religion which has given up claiming uniqueness . . . is of no special interest."[8] In a similar vein, John Cobb argues against a pluralism grounded in common essence; he says that each religion is unique, and each has its own unique claim to superiority based in its ability to achieve its own norms.[9] Although Cobb recognizes the limits of openness, he recognizes also the way that the distinctiveness of a religion is sometimes the very source of its openness. For example, he notes that the openness of the Abrahamic religions in acknowledging the good in other religions is related to their belief in God who is "present and active in the world always and everywhere."[10] Though this openness has its limits, and these religions have often been prone to exclusivism and intolerance, Cobb sees uniqueness as critical for interfaith dialogue.

One could add to Cobb's point that the very term "Abrahamic religions" represents one of the limits in interreligious dialogue, and one of the foci of self-critique that could emerge in dialogue. Jews, Christians, and Muslims have characteristically described themselves this way when they come together, focusing on the binding figure of Abraham and giving little attention to the women, Sarah and Hagar, who were active figures in their ancestry as well. Both the presence of women in the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim stories of origin and the religious differences that relate to these women are thus ignored. John Cobb describes the norm for dialogue as "the ability of a tradition in faithfulness to its past to be enriched and transformed in its interaction with the other traditions."[11] Perhaps, we could add to that the ability of the interacting traditions to wrestle with some of the more painful issues within each tradition and between the traditions.

Some dangers are actually exacerbated by the denial of particularity and uniqueness; in fact, Lamin Sanneh argues that the denial of particularity often represents a subtle imperialism or a rejection of the significance of religion. He notes that the move to dialogue in the relationship between Christians and Muslims "coincided with a Western liberal pessimism about the value of religion in general, and Christianity in particular."[12] Sanneh argues that particu-

larity in itself is important because it "refers to the specificity and concreteness of the human situation."[13] Human beings are not disembodied spirits, but are concretely attached: "All that we know, claim, feel, observe, and have is grounded in distinctive and particular ways of being human. There is no such thing as Miss or Mr. Universal Humanity."[14]

Not only is particularity a reality, but religious particularity is important to the depth of interreligious encounter. If both Muslims and Christians are motivated by the claims of their faith upon them, they can enter genuine dialogue; otherwise, the dialogue may be an "illusory substitute for religion."[15] In regard to the Christian interest in dialogue, Sanneh argues: "if Christ's claims on us are not valid, then dialogue with Muslims in the name of Christianity is a subterfuge, and that is a hollow foundation for any meaningful conversation."[16] What religious people really have in common are their religious commitments, and without those, they have not much to share with one another in interreligious dialogue.

Sanneh gives another rationale for particularity that is also important here, and that is the perspective of Third-World Christians who have always known Christianity to be one particular community among others (rather than thinking of pluralism as a post-Christian development). For many of these Christians, "responsibility for pluralism is one side of the coin and responsibility for Christian particularity is the other."[17] They are, therefore, speaking in a different voice from Western Christians: "[W]hen Western Christians are calling for an end to Christian exceptionalism (what some have called the 'myth of Christian uniqueness'), Third World Christians for their part are calling for greater application of the gospel in church and society."[18]

The case for uniqueness, so positively stated thus far, does raise memories and fears of interreligious animosity, misunderstanding, and destruction. This is especially foreboding for Christianity because Christians, from the beginning of their history, have often been guilty of naming their uniqueness by drawing sharp distinctions between Christians and Jews, and later, between themselves and Muslims. Whether in the first century or the twentieth, Christians have committed horrors in the name of Christian uniqueness and superiority. The dangers of ignoring uniqueness are thus paralleled by dangers of focusing entirely upon uniqueness. The teaching of the church has often reinforced a competitive approach to distinguishing among religions, making uniqueness a cause for claiming the superiority of Christianity.

This danger was already evident in the early church. The idea of reaching God *only* through Christ was a way of defending the Christian faith, but it was often done as a polemic against the Jewish people from whom Christians were seeking to distinguish themselves, especially in the midst of threats to their

small, struggling community in the Roman world.[19] The dynamic was complex, but Burton Mack notes that many reform movements in the first century of the Common Era (C.E.) drew upon "the glorious heritage of Israel."[20] The relationship between Judaism and Christianity must be seen in that light; it was in part a "battle for the right to carry the legacy of Israel into the future."[21] Certainly since Augustine, that battle has loomed large, and the anti-Judaism in Augustine, and in those theologians and church leaders who followed, has created a climate in which the twentieth-century destruction of six million Jews by a Christian state was possible.

Ironically, the desire to focus Christianity in Jesus Christ often reveals a sharp contrast between Jesus and the actual lives of Christians and Christian communities. This is a particular concern of David Rausch, who emphasizes that "Jesus Christ had a flawless attitude toward those of other religious and racial backgrounds."[22] Alongside the life of Jesus, he notes, "Ironically, His followers have faced and continue to face some of their greatest challenges in the area of prejudice and racism."[23]

We can see that claims to uniqueness are endemic to Christianity, but the forms of these claims are multiple. In fact, the very stories and teachings that open access to the person of Jesus are stories of the multiple communities who were seeking in the first century to define their own identity.[24] Christian communities have always been faced with the challenge of defining their identity in relation to Christ, to the realities of their own communities, and to the world around them.

In light of this discussion, what are the challenges for teaching? Clark Williamson and Ronald Allen relate the Christian search for identity to the teaching ministry of the church, especially evident through the first four centuries.[25] Teaching was designed to express central tenets, to interpret and reinterpret Christianity in relation to the life of the people, and/or to counter false teaching. The particular forms of teaching were often shaped by the relationship of the Christian faith to other religious traditions and to competing traditions within Christianity.

One challenge for teaching now is for Christians to discern what lies within the uniqueness of their faith tradition to guide them in relating with the world and with other religious traditions. Certainly a spirit of openness is needed if Christian particularity is to be a force for justice and mercy in the pluralistic world and a force for tending the earth, rather than a force for oppression, alienation and destruction. Persons who have been heavily involved in interreligious dialogue often emphasize the urgency of such openness. Wolfhart Pannenburg states, "In order to engage in genuine interreligious dialogue, Christianity . . . must be open and ready to accept whatever truth the Christian can accept and learn from other religious traditions in order to incorporate

those elements of truth into our own understanding of God and of his revelation."[26]

This spirit of openness does not have to be imposed from the outside because the spirit of openness in regard to truth claims is inherent to the biblical tradition. Wesley Ariarajah argues, "The insistence on absolute and objective truth comes from certain cultural and philosophical traditions that are alien to the Bible."[27] Ariarajah claims that biblical writings are not so much a projection of objective truths, but rather "a struggle to understand, to celebrate, to witness and to relate."[28] These dynamics of the biblical witness are suggestive for theological education. Perhaps we need to move beyond a dichotomized tension between formation and freedom and seek our vocation in understanding, celebrating, witnessing, and relating.

Impulses Toward Inclusiveness

The spirit of openness can be found within Christianity itself, which is far more than a body of beliefs and actions. The very nature of Christian faith is dynamic, and the dynamism inspires an open approach to theological education.

Christianity, like other religious traditions, is a movement that stirs deep passions within the religious community and reaches into the world. To say that Jesus Christ is at the center of the Christian movement is not to say that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus define the boundaries of Christianity, though some Christians would argue that. Instead, one can say that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus have been the *motivating center* of the faith community. Christ reveals God and the God-human relation in a way that inspirits the Christian movement. For some Christians, Jesus Christ alone is at the center; for others, the center is described as the Trinity; for still others, the center is the movement of God in all times and places and through the whole cosmos.

The point here is not to debate the definition and limits of the center, but to express the dynamic power of the impulses sent forth from that center. Four impulses will be considered here, all of which represent the particularity of Christianity in a pluralistic world. These are the impulses toward love, toward the future, toward the world, and toward the transformation of the world.

Impulse Toward Love

At the heart of Christianity is love—a love that does justice. In all three synoptic gospels, the central command is to love God with all one's heart and soul and mind and strength (though strength is omitted from the Matthew version—Matthew 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-28) and to love one's

neighbor as oneself. These commands are a reiteration of two commands in the Hebrew Bible, the first appearing several times in Deuteronomy, including the introduction to the *Schema*: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." (Deuteronomy 6:4-5) The second command to love one's neighbor as oneself also derives from the Hebrew Bible (Leviticus 19:18).

This impulse pervades the Christian community around the world, appearing as the most common theme in Christian hymnody and poetry. One African expression of the impulse is based on John 13:1-17 and set to the tune of a Ghana folk song:

> Jesu, Jesu,
> Fill us with your love,
> Show us how to serve
> The neighbors we have from you.[29]

The impulse to love becomes the central inspiration for interreligious dialogue—a point made emphatically by Wesley Ariarajah. Ariarajah describes God's love for the world as God's form of dialogue, and he sees within God's love the calling to humans to be in dialogue with one another.[30] For him, the gospel is a message of acceptance, and to say that God will not love you unless you repent or believe is to reverse the order.[31]

This does not mean that Christians can make exclusive claims to the impulse of love. Again and again, Christians living in pluralistic contexts identify loving spirit and loving acts in other traditions.[32] The challenge for teaching is to teach the double message that God loves all and God loves you.[33] The love of God for the world is understood to be both universal and particular.

Impulse Toward the Future

In addition to the impulse toward love is the impulse toward future—the promise of a better world to come and the consequent awareness of how incomplete, inadequate, and unjust is the present world. John Cobb sees this as the center of Christian uniqueness, the future-orientation of Jesus Christ. For him, Christology is not centered on the divinity and humanity of Christ so much as on the eschatological promise revealed in Christ. Such a view is grounded in God's actions through history and God's promises for the future; within such a view, no faith statement can be seen as static or final.[34]

This historical view of Christian faith is natural to a community that is grounded in a historical view of God and God's work. The Christian community, throughout biblical and historical tradition, has been grounded in memory and vision, and memory itself is both historical and eschatological—looking back-

ward and forward.[35] In such a community, the teaching task is to enhance both memory and vision through worship, formal education, and community life.[36]

The impulse toward future is not inspired only through the Christian historical tradition, however; it is also inspired by realities of our modern, pluralistic world. According to Jürgen Moltmann, interreligious dialogue is inspired by common peril, and he identifies three conditions for dialogue that exist today: life-threatening, global conflict; awareness that life-serving truth is at stake, and the need for urgent changes in order for life on earth to survive.[37]

Impulse Toward the World

A third impulse is toward the world. This impulse is grounded in the basic understanding of God as Creator and Lover of all the world. In Genesis God creates all people and the earth, and enters covenant with the whole human race.[38] Wesley Ariarajah concludes from the creation stories that God's concern is for all peoples, and this is a primary reason for interreligious dialogue:

> It is this biblical faith that drives us into dialogue. If my Hindu, Buddhist, or Muslim neighbor is as much a child of God as I am, and if nothing that either of us does to reach or know God can fall outside the mercy and providence of God, then we are indeed brothers and sisters. We are pilgrims, not strangers.[39]

Unless this brief picture of Christianity be misleading, readers should also note that the impulse toward the world does not always lead toward inclusiveness; in fact, it sometimes inspires a spirit of particularity in ordered communities that self-consciously define themselves apart from the world. Such particularity usually involves standing apart from other religious traditions as well as from impure parts of Christianity. Ascetic communities in the history of Christianity have often taken this particularistic stance, following strict disciplines to set themselves apart from a world that is perceived as "oppressive or unfriendly."[40]

Other movements have grown up within Christianity that represent the commitment to stand against impurity within and outside of Christianity. One such movement is the Anabaptist community that arose in the wake of the Reformation in Switzerland and formed tightly ordered communities committed to high moral standards and strict adherence to the gospel as presented in the New Testament. The Anabaptists, for example, have traditionally stood against the world; they are reflected today in such communities as the Mennonites and Amish. Though these communities have not usually been antagonistic to other religious traditions and have placed great importance on pacifism as a moral value, they have carefully avoided blending with other traditions; they

have stood firmly against perversions of Christianity and have emphasized the importance of conversion and baptism in Christian faith.

The education in these communities is naturally shaped by the ordered community life itself, marked by separation, social obligations, and discipline.[41] In Old Order Amish societies, for example, most teaching takes place by example, and neither lecture nor intellectual analysis is prized. According to John Hostetler and Gertrude Huntington, the Old Order Amish Christianity is taught largely through ritual and daily living: "Christianity for them must be lived, not talked. They are critical of the person who shows off his (sic) knowledge of scripture by frequently quoting passages."[42] They add, "Where Bible passages are memorized or read, it is done for the sake of shared experience rather than intellectual analysis."[43] Such homogeneous Christian communities as the Old Order Amish are able to teach by socialization; particularity for them stands very much in the foreground while pluralism stands only sketchily in the background.

Though all Christian communities take a stance toward the world, the nature of that stance will vary in degrees of openness and inclusiveness, as well as in the intended functions—whether to reinforce, subvert, or reform the larger culture. The nature of education will likewise vary. In very open communities, education tends to be more formal and analytic, whereas close-knit communities following strict disciplines tend toward more informal and ritualistic patterns of teaching.

Impulse Toward Transformation of the World

One last impulse is a natural outgrowth of the other three—the impulse toward the transformation of the world. In a tradition that is focused on God's love and God's promise of a better world to come, people live in hope. When that same tradition is self-conscious in its stance toward the world, the eschatological hope is understood in relation to the world. The approach to this essay itself reveals the transformative impulse, for even in the dialogue with other religious traditions, the need to be self-critical about Christianity and to express hope for a fuller, more just future is very important. The Christian vision is that God and God's world transcend the beliefs and actions of Christian people.

Already we have said that Christians testify to God as creator and lover of all creation. Already we have said that the Christian faith community was born in a matrix of transformation, and the faith tradition was passed on in a continuing matrix of transformation, with different emphases in different eras of Christian history.[44] But now, we add that transformation is an impulse that arises from the center of Christianity—from the messianic hope that new life is possible through God.

The Christian focus on conversion can be understood in this light. Jürgen Moltmann describes conversion as "turning around, the turn from violence to justice, from isolation to community, from death to life."[45] Conversion is variously understood in Christian communities, but the basic impulse of conversion is to be dissatisfied with the *status quo* and hopeful for the future. For many Christian theologians, this hope is the source of judgment on the present world and the challenge to Christians to participate in the redemptive work of God. Johann Baptist Metz warns against envisioning a messianic future that reinforces the *status quo* of bourgeois Christianity, and Isabel Carter Heyward warns against theology that denies the significance of human agency in redemption.[46] Both reflect the traditional impulse of Christianity toward the transformation of the world, but without the imperialistic definition of conversion that has been part of so many missionary efforts of Christians.

The discussion of impulses in Christianity reveals the tension with which this paper began—the tension between particularity and inclusiveness. If the center of Christianity is taken to be the love and promises of God revealed in Jesus Christ, then, the particularity of Christianity actually commands us to be inclusive, to practice love and justice toward our neighbor and to the whole of creation. The measure of our teaching, then, is the degree to which our message and manner conform to the love of God and participate in hope for a transformed world. To teach Christian particularity in a pluralistic world is to embody the love of God that is revealed in Jesus Christ and is larger than any of us can comprehend or imagine.

Theological Education by Conversation

Given the impulses toward inclusiveness in Christianity and the value of Christian particularity in relation to a pluralistic world, what visions are evoked for theological education? Only a sketch is offered here, but hopefully this sketch will provoke artistry in further conversations about theological education.

The central vision offered here is conversation—living with others. The heart of theological education is being with others, which includes living in the presence of God, the communion of saints (past and present, North and South, East and West), the interreligious communion, and the whole of creation. Living with others with fullness and depth requires us to understand, celebrate, witness, and relate. This is all part of conversation.

Conversation with God is seeking to know God through the study of God (theo-logy), through prayer and ritual (worship), through interpreting the community's witness to God (Bible and history), and through the analysis of religious practice (arts of ministry). If conversation with God is to be fostered, the

whole of community life will be seen as part of the curriculum (the course to be traveled), and liturgy and learning will be woven together, not for the sake of formation, but for the sake of seeking to know God.

Conversation with the communion of saints is itself a conversation with particularity and pluralism. To live with the saints is to converse with the fullness of Christianity—with its diversity of individual and communal expressions and with its multiple impulses and movements. The communion of saints includes those saints of the past whose voices have been loud or muted, whose presence has been visible or invisible. Our challenge in theological education is to reconstruct the biblical worlds and the history of Christianity, learning to cross the enormous cultural gaps to understand and relate with those worlds so different from our own.

Further, we will seek to know the passions, concerns, and visions of people in different parts of the contemporary world, learning to be at home in diverse cultural communities and learning to learn from those whose passions and visions are different from our own. The greatest hope for our own enlarged vision of God and the world is the possibility that we will learn from those who are other than us. As Lamin Sanneh has urged Western Christians to understand interreligious dialogue from the standpoint of Third World Christians who have much to teach about living with pluralism, the whole thrust of this essay is an invitation to conversation with the communion of saints wherever they are. Such conversation just may convert us to greater self-consciousness and other-consciousness, and we may become a transformed people.

Conversation with other religious traditions is the natural, but often ignored, outgrowth of the Christian impulses toward inclusiveness—the impulses toward love, the future, the world, and the transformation of the world. In a world such as ours, the Christian tradition cannot be understood in isolation. We need what Paul Knitter calls a conversational approach to truth: "In the conversational approach to truth, based on our new awareness of pluralism, we recognize that the Christian truth that we have discovered, or that has been given to us by God, can be neither 'the whole truth' nor 'nothing but the truth.'"[47] Knitter's assumption in his conversational hermeneutic is that "Christian tradition, by itself, is inaccessible."[48]

For Knitter, this means a movement beyond mono-religious theological education, and it includes a marriage between theology and religious studies, despite the danger of anonymous imperialism by the hard-core pluralists (like John Hick and Knitter). Knitter raises concerns about the alternative danger of isolationism that is inherent in the postliberal "good neighbor policy" grounded in distinctive "'cultural- linguistic' systems."[49] Practically speaking, a conversational approach means that Christian theological education requires the study

of theological traditions other than Christianity—not just in the form of a course, but also in the life of the community and in interaction with the subject matter of many courses.

The purposes of conversation with other religious traditions are multiple, but four will be named here. One purpose is to help people live with the reality of religious pluralism. This has been more of an accepted reality in the East than in the West, but religious pluralism is increasingly visible and influential all over the world as communications and interaction among diverse religious communities increase. The second purpose of conversation is to foster personal contact among people of different faiths, thus, to encourage the breakdown of prejudice and the increase of understanding.[50] A third purpose is to foster cooperative action among diverse religious communities—action that will contribute to the common good. And a fourth purpose is to encourage ethical practice that is just and caring toward persons of other traditions. Paul Badham has demonstrated close links between theological theory and ethical practice toward people of other traditions. He points out that the first Church Council to teach an exclusivist position toward people of other faiths was the Council of Florence (1438-45); the theological adviser for this Council was Cardinal Juan de Torquemada, whose nephew Tomas de Torquemada became the Grand Inquisitor of Spain. Badham discerns a relationship between the uncle's theory and the nephew's practice.[51] Such a relationship suggests the urgency of persons' developing a theology that will foster just and caring ethical practice; such a theology is probably best formed in conversation with people of other faiths.

Conversation with the whole of creation is living in the presence of the earth, interacting with the realities of the life-bearing soil and the death-bearing destruction of the environment. Theological education in conversation with creation is an education that engages people with the whole of the natural world (indeed the cosmos), in the issues of war and waste and destruction in its many forms, and in acts of caring for life. Practically speaking, this suggests the importance of the theological community's caring for its own soil and air and quality of life, as well as actively engaging issues that affect the global community. The energy and water consumption of a theological campus and the efforts to live regeneratively with the land are part of what is taught; likewise, the way in which students, faculty, administration, and staff interact with one another and with the people of their community are subject matters of theological education. These are all part of the curriculum.

Perhaps the last word on particularity and pluralism should be an invitation to see the tension between these phenomena as our greatest opportunity to reform theological education. Perhaps the very idea that we have to choose

between particularity and pluralism, or to develop one and then the other, is the problem. Perhaps the interaction itself is the locus of hope, and we can find our way to the hope of particularity and pluralism as we engage in theological education by conversation.

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ENDNOTES

1.   Cornell W. Clayton, "Politics and Liberal Education," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 8, 1992, B1-2.

2.   Ibid., B2

3.   Ibid.

4.   Ibid.

5.   Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Herder & Herder, 1970), 28.

6.   Wolfhart Pannenburg, "Religious Pluralism and Conflicting Faith Claims," *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*, ed. Gavin D'Costa (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1990), 103-104.

7.   Monika K. Hellwig, "Christology in the Wider Ecumenicism," ibid., 116.

8.   Jürgen Moltmann, "Is 'Pluralistic Theology' Useful for the Dialogue of World Religions?," ibid., 155.

9.   John B. Cobb, Jr., "Beyond 'Pluralism'," ibid., 81, 92. Cobb believes that most religions make some claim to universal value, and at the same time, teach humility about their own formulations and express some appreciation for other religions. Further, most religions can be enlarged in terms of the norms they use to judge themselves and others. (86-87)

10.   Ibid., 90.

11.   Ibid., 92.

12.   Lamin Sanneh, "The Universal and the Particular in Muslim-Christian Dialogue," *Ecumenical and Interreligious Perspectives: Globalization in Theological Education*, ed. Russell E. Richey (Nashville: Quarterly Review Books, 1992), 91.

13.   Ibid., 94-95.

14.   Ibid., 95.

15.   Ibid., 96.

16.   Ibid. Sanneh emphasizes this point: "If Christians offer to Muslims a religious discount of Christianity because they want to take Muslims seriously, for example, then they must *either* imply a similar move for Muslims, which would be just a version of Christian unilateralism, or else concede the truth of Muslim claims, which leaves them with conversion as the only viable option. In either case, whether it is Christian

unilateralism or conversion to Islam, Christians will only have traded in different versions of one-sidedness rather than advanced the cause of genuine dialogue." (95)

17. Ibid., 104.

18. Ibid.

19. S. Wesley Ariarajah, *The Bible and People of Other Faiths* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1985), 24.

20. Burton L. Mack, *A Myth of Innocence* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 13.

21. Ibid. Mack adds that "the unbelievable concentration of authority upon the figure of Jesus that accrued during this early period is related directly to the quest for legitimation in the face of such competition." (ibid.) Even the views of Jesus expressed by different movements of Christianity were "correlated with positions taken by the group in the process of distinguishing itself from that form of Judaism experienced as its competitor, as well as from other movements stemming from Jesus." Thus, the early shaping of Christianity was done vis a vis movements within Judaism and Christianity.

22. David A. Rausch, *A Legacy of Hatred: Why Christians Must Not Forget the Holocaust* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 1. Rausch's assumptions about the accessibility of Jesus' attitudes is much different from Burton Mack's. He is drawing upon the Bible as a revelation of Jesus' vision for diverse people, rather than a revelation of diverse communities' visions of God and the world. The realities of Christian concern for the issues of particularity and pluralism are evident in both, however.

23. Ibid. Rausch develops these ideas by noting that prejudice toward persons outside of Christianity was often paralleled by prejudice toward persons within Christianity. For example, Hitler's campaign against the Jews was paralleled with judgments of worth within the white Christian community as well, with the pure Aryans valued over the Slavs, Ukrainians, Poles, and mentally and physically ill. (6-7) Saying this is not a claim for the equality of persecution, but an observation regarding the complex interplay between attitudes directed outside and inside the community.

24 Mack, 311-312. Burton Mack calls the gospels "myths of origins," developing the idea that the stories served the purpose of explaining the origins of the various communities.

25. Clark M. Williamson and Ronald J. Allen, *The Teaching Minister* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991), 50-55.

26. Pannenburg, 103. From Pannenburg's perspective, this kind of openness does not lead to relativizing, but to "an awareness of the provisional character of our present experience and knowledge to the effect that the Christian should be enabled to recognize his or her need for deeper insight, not least in a situation of encounter with other religious traditions." (ibid.)

27. Ariarajah, 27.

28. Ibid.

29. "Jesu, Jesu," *The United Methodist Hymnal* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989), 432

30. Ariarajah, 30-33.

31. Ibid., 30-31.

32. Kosuke Koyama, Japanese-American theologian, is only one among many for whom this tenet is very important. See: Koyama, *50 Meditations* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1979), 72-73.

33. Williamson and Allen, 79. The double message suggests an uneasy relationship with truth. Truth claims become less important than the demands of love.

34.   Cobb, 81, 90-91.

35.   Bruce Birch, "Memory in Congregational Life," *Congregations: Their Power to Form and Transform*, ed. C. Ellis Nelson (Atlanta: John Knox, 1988), 20-42.

36.   Ibid., 31-35.

37.   Moltmann, "Is 'Pluralistic Theology' Useful for the Dialogue of World Religions?," 155-156.

38.   Ariarajah, 1-3. Wesley Ariarajah's interpretation is fitting here because that which is named in the two creation stories of Genesis includes the whole world as the early Hebrews might have known it. For this and other reasons, I would add that God's covenant, as revealed in the Genesis creation stories, was a covenant with all of creation.

39.   Ibid., 11.

40.   Vincent L. Wimbush, ed., *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 2. The readings in the book reinforce the basic thesis of the collection: "that ascetic behavior represents a range of responses to social, political, and physical worlds often perceived as oppressive or unfriendly, or as stumbling blocks to the pursuit of heroic personal or communal goals, life styles, and commitments." (2)

41.   John A. Hostetler and Gertrude Enders Huntington, *Children in Amish Society: Socialization and Communal Education* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc.), 4-9. The separatism and communal disciplines are grounded in Amish theology: "An underlying theme in Amish society is a world view conditioned by Christian dualism, that is, a world containing opposites, such as good and evil, light and darkness." (5) Hostetler and Huntington identify two biblical texts that epitomize the Amish message of separation: " 'Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God'" (Romans 12:1) . . . 'Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?' (II Corinthians 6:14)" (5)

42.   Ibid., 49.

43.   Ibid.

44.   Burton Mack documents vividly the dynamic interplay of early Christian communities with the traditions they had inherited and their unique social-historical situations. These communities were receiving and recreating even as they formed into distinctive communities. See, for example: Mack, 16, 114-120, 289. A similar dynamic can be seen through the history of the church, and Williamson and Allen describe this dynamic of transformation in their overview of church history as it relates to the teaching ministry. See Williamson and Allen, 47-64. The perspectives and conclusions of the authors are quite different in these two books, but the dynamic of transformation is common to both.

45.   Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions* (London: SCM, 1990), 102. He adds, "Conversion is life in anticipation of the kingdom of God, on the basis of the prevenience of this kingdom." (102-103)

46.   Johann Baptist Metz, *The Emergent Church* (New York: Crossroad, 1986); Isabel Carter Heyward, *The Redemption of God* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1982).

47.   Paul F. Knitter, "Beyond a Mono-religious Theological Education," *Shifting Boundaries*, eds. Barbara G. Wheeler and Edward Farley (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991), 160-161.

48.   Ibid., 161.

49. Ibid., 163-165. Knitter himself emphasizes the movement beyond Christian uniqueness, which is different from the thesis of this paper, but as regards the urgency of interreligious pluralism in theological education, his thesis coincides very much with the thesis presented here.

50. Paul Badham, "The Case for Religious Pluralism," *Many Mansions: Interfaith and Religious Intolerance*, ed. Dan Cohn-Sherbok (London: Bellew Publishing, 1992), 85. Badham argues here that personal contact discourages Christians from taking an exclusivist position, makes them more aware of their prejudices, and contributes to understanding.

51. Ibid., 84.

Field Education and the Theological Education Debates

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There has been much creative ferment within theological education in the past fifteen years, but the role of theological field education has received scant attention. Field educators have a unique and special perspective that can make an important contribution to the discussion of theological education as a whole.

This article is based on data derived from a questionnaire completed by delegates to the 1993 biennial meeting of the Association for Theological Field Education. This empirical study asked persons to consider the purpose and shape of theological field education within theological education. Forty-two usable questionnaires provided the data for the study.

In this article I discuss the present purposes and goals of theological field education as reported in the data. I also discuss some changes in theological field education anticipated in the next several decades, and then reflect upon the meaning of the data and explore its relevance for the ongoing discussion of theological education.

Present Understandings of the Purpose and Goals of Theological Field Education

The first two questions in the survey focused on purpose and goals. The aim was to discover what purpose governs *present* programs of theological field education.

Question 1: Persons were asked to identify the primary purpose of theological field education within their seminary or divinity school curriculum. This question aimed to elicit the most prominent purpose within the consciousness of the person. Thus, no categories were given to suggest any particular purpose.

1. Forty-two percent of the respondents indicated the primary purpose to be the integrating of academic study with practical issues of ministry. This choice of the governing purpose of theological field education was made three times more often than any other.

2. Fourteen percent indicated the primary purpose as developing skills for the work of ministry. One often hears field education defined almost totally in terms of this purpose. It is significant to note, therefore, the smaller percentage of responses regarding this purpose.

3. Fourteen percent indicated the primary purpose as integrating what students know with their personhood, life in the spirit, and professional skills in the work of ministry. Again integration was identified as the primary purpose, but with a broader view of what needs to be brought together.

4. Five percent indicated the development of pastoral identity and an appropriate sense of pastoral authority as the primary purpose. Both identity and authority relate to participation in a community wherein these issues need attention.

5. The remaining answers were scattered over a variety of other views.

At this juncture we note the large percentage of respondents who chose integration as the primary purpose of theological field education.

Question 2: Persons were asked to examine a list of possible goals for theological field education and rank them according to their impact on present programs of theological field education. The order below indicates the priority given by respondents to twelve possible ways of stating the purpose of field education, one being most important, and twelve least important.

1. To assist students to integrate academic study with ministry.

2. To assist students to develop a pastoral identity and an appropriate sense of pastoral authority.

3. To assist students to develop various skills for the work of ministry.

4. To assist students to integrate academic knowledge with personhood, life in the spirit, and professional skills.

5. To assist students to learn to do theology in ministry.

6. To assist student to develop a theology of ministry.

7. To assist students to grow in interpersonal skills.

8. To assist students to identify areas for personal growth and engage such growth.

9. To assist students to develop their life in the spirit, spirituality, and a sense of the holy.

10. To assist students to develop the ability to work with colleagues in the work of ministry.

11. To assist students to develop a global and cross-cultural consciousness.

12. To assist students to develop social change and liberating skills.

The four highest priorities in the rating were the same as those given in the more open-ended answers to question 1. However, there were changes in the order, which are noted below.

1. Twenty-six percent of respondents placed integrating academic study with ministry perspectives as the primary goal. Nineteen percent placed this as the second highest goal. Ten percent ranked it as their third highest goal. It was evident that integration continued to serve as the priority goal when field educators considered their present programs of field education.

2.   Nineteen percent chose the development of pastoral identity and an appropriate sense of pastoral authority as the primary goal of field education. Twelve percent placed it second, and seventeen percent third in importance. Seventeen percent placed it fourth in importance. This particular goal was valued more highly here than in question 1, where it was fourth in importance.

3.   Development of skills in the work of ministry was selected as the primary goal by fourteen percent of respondents. Seven percent ranked it second in importance. Twenty-four percent placed it third in importance.

4.   Fourth in importance was integrating knowledge with personhood, life in the spirit, and the development of ministerial skills. Twenty-four percent placed this as first priority. However in the cumulative rating process we used, it was fourth in importance. This resulted because only seven percent placed it as second in importance, and only ten percent as third.

Again we find that field educators continue to envision integration as the primary goal of field education. If integration is the primary goal, we would assume that the structures and processes utilized in field education would be oriented toward achieving this goal. If this intention is operational, it would govern structure and process. However, goals are often displaced by other goals in practice without a shifting of the rationale following the change. From this data we could not determine whether integration does in fact serve as the governing purpose and goal in field education. Further study on this questions is needed.

It was also interesting to note that developing global and cross-cultural awareness, along with social change and liberating skills, were last in the priority ratings. This was somewhat surprising given the emphasis on these two matters within theological education as a whole. However, the phrasing of the question may have shaped the answers. For instance, social change and liberating skills may have been included in the answers regarding skills. Global perspective may have been interpreted as consciousness which is done in places other than field education and supervised learning.

Changes Anticipated in Field Education in the Next Decades

The third question asked respondents to arrange the listing from question 2 in a priority order for a field education program in the next decades. The scale below moves from more central at the top to less central at the bottom. Answers were as follows:
- to assist students to integrate academic and ministry perspectives
- to assist students to integrate knowledge with their personhood, life in the spirit, and professional skills

- to assist students to develop a pastoral identity and an appropriate sense of pastoral authority
- to assist students to develop social change and liberating skills
- to assist students to strengthen interpersonal skills
- to assist students to develop a global and cross-cultural consciousness

(NOTE: All the factors mentioned above were believed by the respondents to be important in the decades ahead, even though some were not ranked as high as others.)

Several comments are in order:

1. The concept of integration as the primary goal persists. Nineteen percent ranked it as the most central goal for the future. Ten percent had this as second in importance. We note that this goal is still listed first, but is not as highly rated as in the first two questions.

2. Second in importance was the integrating of what persons know with their personhood, spiritual life, and ministry skills. Seventeen percent placed this as the first goal and twelve percent as the second. If one combines the answers to 1 and 2, more than fifty percent place integration as the highest goal in future planning.

3. Fourteen percent of the respondents placed development of skills for the work of ministry third most important.

4. Fourteen percent placed pastoral identity and pastoral authority as the third most important goal, equal to number 3 above.

5. Seventeen percent placed development of social change and liberating skills as fifth priority. This increases in importance when considering the future.

6. Nineteen percent placed growth in interpersonal skills as fifth in importance. Considering all of the conflict within congregations and the culture at large, one might expect this goal to be identified.

7. The final goal listed as important for the future was developing global and cross-cultural consciousness. Fourteen percent placed this as the seventh most important goal for future planning.

In summary, we note what has been consistently identified in the first three questions: the insistence on integration as the governing goal of field education. The four top-ranked purposes and goals were identical throughout the study, as well, even though their relative importance varied.

What Is the Meaning of the Data? Some Initial Reflections

Integration and Purpose

A significant conclusion was the identification of integration by field educators as the primary purpose and goal of their work. Survey participants

generally described the integration as bridging the gap between academic perspectives and ministerial perspectives, though more about this will be said later.

What this suggests is that field educators perceive a problem of fragmentation within theological education. The student's academic studies are not clearly related to their social existence in ministry. Knowledge learned in the classroom is not closely related to the requisites for situations of ministry. The knowledge in the classroom, it appears, needs to be related to the tasks of preaching, caring, educating, administering, and advocating.

Field educators have claimed as a primary calling the engaging of this problem. While there are other stated purposes and goals, this one is central, according to the study. Integration remains, at present, the governing goal.

Integration and the Larger Discussion of Theological Education

The broad discussions of theological education over the past decade have addressed the problem of fragmentation. Some suggest the problem derives from a particular approach to the work of theological education. David Kelsey in his book, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate*, suggests that the "Berlin" approach to theological education, articulated by Schleiermacher, engenders the problem of fragmentation. This approach to theological education led to the development of two rather discrete areas of theological work: (a) helping students develop an understanding of Christian faith through exposure to persons doing research in biblical, historical, and systematic fields and (b) educating students for church leadership.

The primary goal of this approach is to develop a critical perspective in students, creating a commitment to the necessity of interrogating all religious knowledge to avoid distortion and to seek after the essence of faith. From such study persons develop knowledge, understanding, vision, and normative patterns to guide church leaders.

Along with critical, disciplined consciousness came the task of using this knowledge to meet the demands of church leadership. Understandings of church leadership and the skills needed are attended to in theological education by a potpourri of courses, practicums, and field engagements. Those who hold this model often say that one cannot be trained in church activities. Rather one is schooled in how to study critically. One can appropriate, rather easily, the relevant ministry disciplines.

H. Richard Niebuhr put it this way: "Of course, they [students] need to have experience in relevant kinds of 'doing', whether in personal living or in church activities, in order to have at hand the 'doing' whose meaning is to be examined critically and theoretically. But providing that experience in 'doing' is not

constitutive of the school. What is constitutive of the school is theoretical reflection on the meaning of the 'doing' . . . when it is done to the end of capacitating students to continue in the same ways for the rest of their lives." (quoted in Kelsey, page 88)

The problem of fragmentation in theological education intensified over the years, and the present debate derives, in part, from this intensification.

There is another approach to theological education: the alternative to the "Berlin" approach has been called by David Kelsey the "Athens" approach. This approach accents a movement from sources to personal appropriation of the traditions and revealed wisdom in such a way that it forms identity and transforms persons and communities.

The teacher shares his or her struggle to appropriate wisdom regarding the study of divinity and the tradition. The teacher mediates this wisdom to the student. However, the mediation is indirect. Teachers provide a context within which students learn. Teachers serve as a midwife. If the teachers learnedness becomes overly dominant, it stifles the student's learning. The goal is to help the student undergo a deep kind of formation, a personal appropriation of a wisdom about God, self, world, and creation.

Public purpose also shapes the learning process. Learning is not just a personal matter: it is for the sake of public life, ecclesial life, and church leadership.

Kelsey argues that the theological debates have been over different models that have taken historical form, using various elements of Berlin and Athens. Institutions of theological education represent a continuum in which various emphases shape one's approach.

Field Educators and the Fragmentation in Theological Education

The reason integration became so central for field educators, we argue, is that the "Berlin" approach to theological education, which created the bifurcation and fragmentation, became especially apparent as students engaged the social world, whether in a church or social agency. Students experienced fragmentation and wrestled with combining the two perspectives as they learned about Christian faith and the work of ministry. James and Evelyn Whitehead, in their book *Method in Ministry*, speak of the fragmentation as the problem of two theologies: one academic and another derived from practice. Students thus drew from two theologies to interpret their experience and guide them in shaping responses to the situations within which they ministered.

Field educators indicated in the survey that they addressed the integrating task through various educational methods: supervision, reflection seminars, readings, assignments of various sorts, and in the evaluation process.

A Broader Integration Including the Person

A broader integration was mentioned as the primary goal for field education by a significant percentage of those surveyed. This approach included integrating not only academic and ministry perspectives but also focused on matters of the student's vocation, assessment of one's particular gifts, issues of spiritual development, and development of virtues and character.

Other Primary Goals in Addition to Integration

Two other primary goals were indicated by a significant percentage of the respondents. First, fourteen percent ranked the development of ministry skills as the primary goal. This was significantly lower than one might have thought. When field education is the subject of discussion, development of ministry skills is often seen as its primary purpose. This is especially evident in reading the literature about theological education over the last decade. Those speaking about field education often limit it to developing skills in the activities of ministry. Second, development of pastoral identity and authority was also indicated as a primary goal by a significant percentage of respondents. How this is related to the broader understanding of integration needs to be explored further.

Concluding Questions

What is meant by integration? Identifying integration as the *telos* of their work does not tell us how the word is used. Field educators believe there is a fragmentation within theological education for which they have assumed some responsibility, but it was not clear from the study just how that is conceived.

Various understandings of fragmentation seem to be operating:

1. It refers for some to the fragmenting of the mind from the heart.

2. The fragmentation was often identified as between academic study (whether scripture, history, systematics, or ethics) and activities found central to the work of ministry. The survey instrument framed the fragmentation issue in these terms.

3. The fragmentation between knowing, being, and doing was also noted. Here a broader disunity is described between one's spiritual life, personal growth, and public leadership, whether in church or society.

4. It also refers to the fragmentation of theory and practice, the task of connecting a theory of practice with the reality of situations in which persons find themselves.

5. It refers, on occasion, to the fragmentation between personal faith and social realities, the segmentation of the private and the public.

6.   It refers often to a fragmentation between the ethos of the academy and the ethos within a church or community.

While the understandings of the fragmentation may be different, field educators seek to connect, to bring together, to be repairers of the breach, to integrate. How they do this depends in large part on how they view the split, the fragmentation.

Is there congruence between purpose, structure, and process among field educators? Field educators might need to ask if integration is in fact their operational purpose and goal. Is that how they actually view their task? If one looked at what is done, would it be clearly evident that this was the intent? Is the goal of supervision to help students integrate? Is the purpose of reflective seminars primarily integration? Is that how effectiveness is determined? If it is, there is congruence. If not, can congruence be achieved?

What about field education staff? Field educators need to define more clearly just what knowledge, perspective, skills or educational background should undergird the work in field education. One leader in theological education said he knew few persons who had a long-term commitment to be a field educator. In his experience, persons in the field desired to move into other areas such as management, pastoral care, or theology. They often seemed to desire a more recognized discipline, he believed.

Can field educators develop a clearer sense of their discipline? Can a clearer approach to theology be identified and requisites for ministry be shared? Will the field become better defined? Some questions important to such an inquiry are these: What will be the identity of field educators within theological education? Are they educational administrators or teachers? Should it be a tenured position? Is there a way of speaking of the governing purpose of this work in other ways than integration?

How shall this field be assessed? Should field educators be assessed like other professors? Is there a responsibility to do ordered inquiry, research, and publication? How shall that be defined? Are there distinctive tasks to this work? What are they?

What placement issues need attention? Given the increasing gap between rich and poor, the continued evidence of the deep reality of racism, as well as continuing patriarchal structures and polarization around issues of sexuality, what kinds of placements might be vital for students as part of their theological education? Some programs require presence with the poor and the marginalized along with placement within ecclesial structures. This matter poses issues for further clarification.

Which conceptual issues need attention by field educators? Conceptual problems remain for clarifying the role of field education within theological

education. There is, at present, a rather sophisticated and effective educational technology within the field education enterprise. Field educators, generally, do solid and careful work. There is a continuing professional concern to deepen the theory and practice in the field. There has been a growing interest in thinking theologically about field education. This moves field educators beyond educational method to seek connections with theological education as a whole. Yet more needs to be done to articulate conceptually the role of field education within theological education.

One might assume that the perceptions regarding the purpose and goals of field education as expressed in the survey will continue into the future. The structures and processes now in place, along with a sense of accomplishment, would derive from achieving the purpose and goals related to integration. Integration may continue to serve as the primary goal unless an alternative purpose becomes evident and is persuasively argued.

However, this writer believes an alternative way of stating governing purpose would help clarify the role of field education. This clarification will need attention in the years ahead. Field education does provide an important space within which to assist the integrating process, but for field educators to assume total responsibility for integration relieves the faculty as a whole from attending to this important matter. The total curriculum and faculty have responsibility for integration, we would argue. Field educators have their role to play but should not assume that task alone. It must be shared by all the faculty and find a place in all the courses. The problem of fragmentation cannot be solved any other way.

Recent studies on the nature of practical theology will be useful in clarifying the role of field education. It has been increasingly recognized that theory always derives from practice, from practical questions and concerns. Theology always occurs at sundown, one theologian suggests. Thus the work of theology needs those who work more closely at the embodiment moment of Christian faith, giving attention to the articulation of Christian faith at a particular place and time. The goal is to understand situations in such a fashion that one's personal or corporate calling becomes clear. Persons, including field educators, who work at the incarnation or enactment of theology into personal and social life have an important role in the creative work of theology.

Field education has secured a place in theological education. That role will need to be redefined within the context of developments in theological education as a whole. This study has attempted to clarify how governing purposes are identified by field educators themselves. From that data we have offered some reflections on the meaning of the data and its implications for the development of field education in the future.

(NOTE: A complete report of the survey mentioned on page 49 may be found in the Proceedings of the 23rd Biennial Meeting of the Association for Theological Field Education held in Minneapolis in 1995.)

Donald F. Beisswenger served as director of field education and professor of church and community at Vanderbilt University Divinity School for twenty-eight years. In retirement he plans to continue research regarding the role of field education within theological education, especially education amidst increasing poverty and injustice.

The Questions of Distance Education

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In 1972, Jesse Ziegler, then the executive director of ATS, made a prediction. He described the seminary of the future as "core groups of students engaged in working ministries but meeting with faculty teaching teams to engage in critical supervision and reflection on their ministries . . . . Videophones, FM radio stations, videotape, all would be used for linking together the entire teaching-learning enterprise of the group."[1] In June of 1996, the new ATS accrediting standards were adopted, including the following:

> 10.2.1.4 *External independent study*. This type of extension education provides for-credit courses for individuals engaged in external independent study . . . where regularly scheduled, in person conversations with faculty or other students are unlikely to occur. Such courses typically employ printed, audio, video, computer, or electronic communication as primary resources for instruction.   . . . [N]ot more than one-third of the total credits required for completion of an ATS-approved basic degree can be earned by external independent study.[2]

Ziegler's predictions notwithstanding, this move seemed almost unimaginable as recently as five years ago. The essays of the four task forces for the ATS Quality and Accreditation Project on "The Good Theological School" did not address distance education.[3] Like extension education a generation ago, the growth and interest in distance education have come from more pragmatic directions, and, like extension, distance education is here to stay. Currently, a moment of opportunity exists that might avoid the polarization that has characterized the advent of extension programs. A study of what is known about the outcomes of distance education, brought into dialogue with the discussions of the aims and purposes of theological education, might benefit the entire enterprise. The intent here is to provide some foundations for this discussion. This paper makes no pretense to be an exhaustive study of the research; rather, it is a representative sample of basic issues and concerns that have emerged in reviewing the research literature on distance education.

What Is Distance Education?

Distance education serves as lightning rod and hologram, attracting and reflecting the conflicts in our foundational beliefs about the nature of education. Current approaches can be divided into two general camps: (1) those who believe distance education is nothing more than an extension of traditional forms of learning with distinctive delivery systems and (2) those who regard distance education as unique from traditional education and needing its own scholarship.[4] Definitions of what constitutes distance education vary in emphasis, but they tend to agree on a few key points. Education is distance education when the following are present:

1. Separation of teacher and learner, most commonly in both space and time, for a majority of the instructional process. This is the key factor that distinguishes distance education from extension education.
2. The sponsorship of an educational organization that supervises, sets parameters, and accredits courses and curriculum.
3. The use of some medium for communication that connects teacher and learner and carries the course content.[5]
4. The existence of two-way conversation, albeit noncontiguous. The requirement for this two-way communication has become a central defining point in the distance education literature.[6]

The history of education has always been linked to the history of communication. In modern times, it was the creation, in the mid-1800s, of a reliable pennypost system in Europe and the United States that created the possibility of distance education through correspondence study. William Rainey Harper, first president of the University of Chicago, established correspondence education for baccalaureate and master's degrees in 1892, and other schools followed. By the end of the nineteenth century, correspondence schools also provided access to academic study for women, for immigrants, and for others desiring to move into the economic middle class. Support for this first form of distance education was one product of the democratizing impulses of the late 1800s. The goal of bettering oneself through education had an economic, pragmatic focus that began to push higher education away from its classical roots and toward a more professional and ultimately vocational focus. Distance education, which found its ultimate expression in the entrepreneurial proprietary school, has almost always been on the pragmatic edge of educational philosophy, entwined from its beginnings in the controversies over the uses of higher education.[7]

The second generation of distance education was made possible through the development of electronic communications technology, beginning in the early twentieth century with the radio and telephone, and continuing to the present highly sophisticated teleconferencing and interactive video technologies. Each new method of communication that became accessible at the lay level was quickly used for educational purposes, both in the traditional classroom and as a delivery system for distance education, and each of these second-generation technologies is still in educational service nationally and internationally. It is often the low technology mediums that provide the most reliable methodologies for distance education, although they rarely receive the excitement accorded the newest technology. For example, the lowly audiocassette is one of the most commonly used means of transmitting information, but it is almost invisible next to the attention lavished on computer technology, a still uncertain and evolving medium for education.

Computer technology, based on microchip and fiber optic cable, has created the third generation of distance education. Computers provide the potential for almost unlimited access to information, and interactivity—rather than an effort—is claimed as a defining component of third-generation distance education. Many see this as the door that might return education to a dialogical Socratic ideal.[8]

It is necessary to distinguish these generations, because each has a quite distinct pedagogical style, yet the claims and concerns about one generation tend to be applied to the others. However, there are some conclusions evident from even a brief study of the evolution of distance education. First, it is clear that whenever some new form of communications technology becomes accessible at the lay level, it will be used for educational purposes.[9] The millions of persons who "log on" to the Internet weekly are simply the newest expression of those who once waited eagerly for the bookmobile or the mail carrier, who drive to work with Books on Tape, or who watch television beyond the sitcom level. People have learned how to learn from all forms of media. And when technological advances become popular, the classroom incorporates them.

Second, each shift in communication also shapes our understanding of the nature of knowledge, and therefore of the nature of education. When information is a limited resource, seekers come to drink at the well of those who control that resource. When it becomes a commodity, those seekers become shoppers. One hopes for a world of self-directed, intrinsically motivated autodidacts, but the reality may be a population for whom marketers package knowledge to suit individual whim. Education for *all*, the original goal of distance education, can become education for *each*, to be purchased from competitive offers for the best deal, most painless terms, and highest payoff. Educational quality is meaning-

less in such an environment, but there are even more serious issues. As Paulo Freire has taught us, education is never neutral.[10] As individual study, independent and self-paced, toward individual goals and individual satisfaction, distance learning communicates a particular set of values that may be antithetical to concepts such as group membership and faithful responsibility to a common good. Second-generation media are a highly potent educational influence at the non-cognitive level, the level at which attitudes, beliefs, and meaning are formed.[11] And what does it mean for our measures of mental stability if virtual reality has the potential to shape our discernment of that which exists? In education as elsewhere, the text is not only in the curriculum; it is also in the structures.[12]

Third, the majority of distance education programs provide access to education for those persons whose life situation has somehow made nontraditional education a benefit, if not always a necessity. Access and equity have been driving principles behind educational reform, but those principles have not always been pertinent to theological education. One of the most urgent demands for our attention is the question, "Who, and what, is theological education for?" Distance education connects with our strong beliefs in equality and self-improvement, but theological education traditionally has viewed itself as involving the formation of a specific chosen/called population. While distance educators tend to view themselves as delivering on the Great Commission, theological educators have more often understood their role to be the shaping of the few who will carry that Commission responsibly. Further, that training has been understood to involve a formational component that seems antithetical to education at a distance. We are pushed into a consideration of what is meant by formation—whether it does in fact occur in connection with traditional methods of theological education, and does not exist at a distance; whether it is an authentic goal or an excuse for outmoded authoritarian needs for control.

The Outcomes of Distance Education

Research on distance education is of widely varying quality. It is a new field and much of it is pragmatic—case studies, descriptive or one-time studies, presentations of papers at conferences. The vast majority of the research deals with the same question: how does some form of distance learning compare in outcomes with traditional classroom settings? Most studies deal with the first two generations of distance education, and brief summaries of the literature cover hundreds of projects with similar conclusions. The research on computer-mediated learning is limited and lacks the convincing impact of the other studies. I will present brief summaries of the first two generations, and illustrative studies of the computer generation research.

Correspondence Education Outcomes Studies

College-level correspondence education outcomes have been studied since the 1920s.[13] Contemporary reviews of this research conclude correctly that correspondence students at the college and adult level can perform equally well or better than their traditional counterparts on outcome learning measures, and often the course content is mastered more quickly than in the classroom. Correspondence study can communicate content cheaply and instructors know what the student is studying. Although it is essentially a one-way communication medium, the reality is that there are few "pure" correspondence courses anymore. Most feature a combination of telephone, computer, study center, or audiovisuals of some type, which strengthen the correspondence course. Correspondence study remains the predominant method of distance education; worldwide, a 1985 survey estimated that 95 percent of distance education was by correspondence.[14]

Radio–Television–Audio Cassette–Teleconferencing Outcomes Studies

Although these mediums are quite varied in how they deliver education, principally in whether they are predominantly audio- or visual-based, the results of hundreds of research reviews are consistent: overall, there are no significant differences in student performance on outcome measures between those who listen to radio lectures, or use telephone technologies, audiocassettes, or television, and their more traditionally educated counterparts.[15] Television particularly has received a tremendous amount of research attention, spurred in part by its widespread use in rural K-12 education. A typical example would be a 1967 Stanford-based study that reviewed 207 studies with a total of 421 separate comparisons between televised and traditional classroom instruction. In 308 of those comparison studies there were no significant differences in student learning, while 63 studies showed outcome differences in the direction of televised learning, and 50 showed outcome differences in favor of conventional classroom learning.[16] Although the individual studies reviewed are of varying quality and differing methodologies, the general picture that emerges cannot be easily dismissed. Second-generation technologies are a valid, and valuable, instructional possibility.

Computer Studies

Initially computers were used as "teaching machines," and the programmed teaching that resulted produced strong differences in achievement on examinations, particularly in elementary grades, in the direction of the computerized systems. However, the outcomes for programmed learning cannot be used in

support of distance education because, in many studies, the teacher was also present.[17]

The current interest in computer use, however, is in computer-mediated education. Here, the computer is used to facilitate rather than to provide instruction, through computer conferencing and electronic mail, and through access to databases. On-line or "virtual" classrooms are newcomers to the field of distance education and outcomes studies are more scarce. At the anecdotal level, faculty have reported higher levels of student thought and participation when discussion occurs via computer conferencing than they experience in their traditional classrooms.[18] One study by Linda Harasim found that students learn as well, as measured by midterm and final exams and grades, in computer-mediated courses as face-to-face.[19] However, the study also found that more mature and better students learn more, while students without good study habits or with basic reading and writing difficulties learn less. Other faculty have identified this same difference.[20] Students in the Harasim study reported more sense of equal participation and greater contact and closeness with the instructor, and an increased ability to get advice and counseling, as compared with other distance education or traditional methodologies. Others have concluded that social interaction does occur as computer-mediated communication users adapt to that medium, and that in fact highly interactive tasks such as conflict resolution do happen over e-mail.[21] When the Open University of the United Kingdom (OUUK) began using computer conferencing, only 157 of 847 students surveyed felt that conferencing was as good or better a means of "socializing" as a face-to-face tutorial. They did, however, feel that the psychological effect of having the ability to contact the tutor or get help electronically was very strong. And some students felt reassured at the point of one of the most frequently cited drawbacks of distance education—not being able to assess their progress in relation to other students.[22]

One two-year comprehensive study matched several college-level courses offered either fully or partially on-line with other sections taught in traditional classroom settings, using the same teacher, text, and midterm and final exams. After two years, the primary finding was that there were no significant differences in course mastery, although students felt that the computer-mediated courses were more challenging because of the requirement to participate actively on a daily basis rather than just taking notes in class.[23] Faculty in other studies have also reported that computer courses require more time and interaction than is true of face-to-face classroom instruction.

One small study raised some important questions. Advocates of computer-mediated education are hopeful about the opportunity that anonymity provides for marginalized students to become equal participants in a virtual classroom discussion. However, this study found that only a minority of students actually

participated in the debates. Students felt dissatisfied with discussions that went on over the course of days, and although the discussions are theoretically viewed as emotionally safer than face-to-face, these students felt that their contributions were more, not less, open to public ridicule. They reported that there were ways to establish status and hierarchy rankings, just as in the face-to-face classroom. The students also reported sensory overload. The amount of information that was exchanged in conferencing was overwhelming, and the content of most messages was regarded as trivial. The *n* of this study was very small (twelve students) and the results may say most about the quality of teacher preparation for such a course, but the findings highlight potential problems that should be recognized.[24]

Evaluation

Reviews of hundreds of studies that point to the same conclusions are compelling. Although it is premature to make conclusive statements regarding the outcomes of computer-mediated education, the learning of the first two generations seems to have happened at least as well through distance education mediums as in traditional classroom settings, and, in a significant portion of the studies, it happened better.[25] It seems safe to say that, for several kinds of cognitive learning, these methods of distance education can be at least as effective as the traditional classroom.

However, there are caveats to this conclusion, and the best researchers in the field are cautious about overstating what can be generalized from these studies. The most obvious weakness overall is the lack of consistency in the definitions of learning and how it is measured. Most measure retention and/or application of course content immediately after completing the instructional unit. It is not clear that the higher levels of cognitive learning have been included in the vast majority of these studies.[26] Words may not be the most effective means of evaluating learning that involves skills, attitudes, or processes. Although traditional classroom learning evaluation finds such measures difficult to design as well, there is a broader potential repertoire available in face-to-face settings.

Another difficulty with generalizing the results of these studies is that student populations are not always held constant. The dropout rates in distance education can be high—from 30 percent to 80 percent—making retention a major issue for distance educators.[27] Because motivation is foundational to learning, if only the most motivated students remain in a distance education course, the comparisons to the traditional classroom may not be valid.

The finding of "no significant difference" is so consistent that it has led one education expert to state that "the best current evidence is that media are mere vehicles that deliver instruction but do not influence student achievement any

more than the truck that delivers our groceries causes changes in our nutrition . . . only the content of the vehicle can influence achievement."[28] This writer is describing studies that attempt to control the differences between mediums. Such designs may dilute the uniqueness of one particular medium in comparison to another. When that occurs, the "no significant differences" result may simply indicate that the study has controlled differences well. A more fruitful research path might be created by allowing the uniquenesses of one or more mediums to be used as fully as possible, and then to identify the strengths and weaknesses of those unique characteristics for the teaching/learning process.

Education and Formation

The discussions of the "aims and purposes" of theological education over the last few years contain implicit or explicit understandings of theological education as having purposes beyond the transmission of content knowledge—purposes found in terms such as moral development, formation, spiritual maturity, character, and other relatively intangible goals. Theological education that takes these holistic purposes seriously must strive toward effective concept attainment in its students, and must also concern itself with the elusive realm of noncognitive development. It is at this point that the findings of "no significant difference" for distance learning falter. Distance education outcomes that deal with the noncognitive domain have not been studied. This is not a weakness of distance education research only; the affective domain is an elusive concept in the traditional classroom as well. Although there have been several attempts to develop taxonomies of affective learning,[29] the difficulties in conceptualization, in definition, and in measurement continue to hamper such attempts. However, most educators agree that "deep learning" involving values, attitudes, and beliefs does not occur unless the affective domain is also involved.[30]

Education has sometimes been defined as that which remains when everything else one learned has been forgotten. The hope of that "something else" is perhaps at the heart of the resistance to distance education, for those who believe it occurs. Alexander Astin has studied college students for thirty years. He comes as close as any researcher has to demonstrating that the "something else" does exist, and that it is impacted by the experience of student involvement with the college experience. At the age of the traditional college student (a vanishing breed), affective learning is influenced by peer group involvement, by student-faculty involvement, and by involvement in the campus experience.[31]

At the adult level, few such studies exist. Adult students in the OUUK who were interviewed over a six-year period describe a sense of self development, of seeing the world differently, of changing as a person.[32] Another study assessed

how much and in what ways their OUUK education featured in accounts of students' lives. Two-thirds of the students talked about improved morale and confidence, and even more talked about using course content to solve current life problems.[33] Laurent Daloz, in his anecdotal report of education and mentoring, believes that the educational experience, for adults, becomes a search for meaning. He places a high emphasis on individualized mentoring as a required aspect of distance learning, and his students report significant affective changes in their understanding of the world and of themselves.[34] Apparently the experience of adult higher education can provide a "something else" impact on the lives of those who participate, even when that education is from a distance. It should be noted, however, that the programs reported all include a strong personal presence requirement; in the OUUK, for example, in-person tutorials may occur as often as once a week, and there are fairly high levels of guidance and mentoring, as well as potential for in-person interaction with other students.

Both affective and cognitive learning appear to improve when interaction increases.[35] Participation in a learning group alone will increase cognitive learning outcomes; groups that are directed by a tutor or supervisor increase results even more.[36] Even in computer-mediated courses, which are much more immediately interactive than other distance education mediums, a coordinator increases the persistence of discussion, and knowledge about network partners also increases interest in interaction.[37] The best instructional motivator and the best instructional support for both cognitive and affective goals appear to be interaction with a teacher.[38]

The need for interaction carries over to student attitudes about learning. In various studies, students rated traditional instruction higher for content and interest;[39] and rated traditional instruction as more enjoyable with a perceived greater opportunity to ask questions and be involved.[40] One literature review concluded that, although students perform as well in a distance education environment as in a traditional classroom, and appreciate the flexibility and convenience, they still prefer the interaction of the traditional classroom.[41] However, other studies have found that, although students prefer live face-to-face interaction, they felt they learned more from other students than is usual and found the instructor to be more accessible in interactive video/audio than in the classroom.[42]

One of the more troubling elements in distance study is that it comes at a time when theological education has an almost unanimous commitment toward the necessity of incorporating diversity as a foundational value. Such diversity has tremendous potential for enriching learning, but in distance education, where the learner is dependent on packaged course materials, students may not have access to much diversity. Further, for all the theoretical emphasis on

distance education as a medium for equality, thus far Caucasian and middle-class students are very overrepresented. And research indicates that underrepresented constituencies may do less well in distance settings than in the classroom unless there are strong support systems built into the process. Such studies have made us aware of the need for support structures on campus; these findings must be attended to in individualized learning as well.[43]

Beyond improving learning, there is also an ethical component to the interaction required for formation. Education at its best moves the learner from one state of understanding to another, and that process will necessarily include times of disequilibrium. At such times, when the learner's emotional state is unsettled, and particularly when dealing with matters of faith, it is incumbent on the teacher to serve as monitor, guide, and reassuring presence.[44] The commitment of a theological faculty to educate must include a commitment to contain and to offer support in such disruption. The classroom offers a more immediate setting for such containment: nonverbal student cues, the opportunity for students to learn from one another, the faculty member's ability to deal with apparently threatening questions while continuing to model a mature faith stance. Distance education will need to find the means to meet this responsibility.

However, to the extent that traditional classrooms are large and impersonal, with little opportunity for dialogue, students will not have as great an opportunity for noncognitive formational learning as they might have in an intentionally interactive distance setting, which has built-in means of access to faculty and other peer learners. The irony, of course, is that the more distance learning expands to include such efforts, the more it will take on the appearance of the traditional classroom experience. The hope is that both ends will meet in a well-integrated middle.

Recommendations

The research is sufficient to allow some conclusions and recommendations for those who are still at the happy point of considering their distance education options. To date, much of distance education has had a decidedly market-driven quality to it. Responsible approaches require equal attention in four areas: student needs, faculty support, curriculum choices, and methodologies. And from the beginning, the educational mission of a particular school needs to be held central as the plumb line against which to measure all educational decisions. Other conclusions and recommendations include the following:

1. Technology should not drive educational processes. The priority in choosing how to teach, and certainly, what is taught, should be driven by the learning goals of a particular course. The suitability of distance education for the

subject taught is a foundational question. Unfortunately, our propensities toward high-end technologies seem to propel us toward the most sophisticated methods we have available. When the first decision is the decision to use a particular technological medium, the educational process becomes shaped around that goal. The reverse should be the norm.

The best approach to distance education, as well as to traditional education, is to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a particular delivery method, and to have a range of repertoires through which to shape learning. For example, lecture is the most efficient means of presenting course content. That lecture could happen just as well by audio or video as face-to-face. Incorporating visuals into course presentations increases the potential for learning, because most people learn more through a combination of sensory input, whether on-site or at a distance. Student motivation and involvement in "deep learning" require interactive methodologies. Other kinds of learning require practice, repetition, and immediate feedback. And formation—the learnings that contribute to shifts in self-understanding, in adjusting world-views, in working out conflicting and possibly internally threatening or challenging information—requires the presence of, or easy access to, a supportive "authority figure."[45]

2. Those who will be expected to use new methods should be well supported. Faculty need training in the skills required to work with technology in their own subject areas, and they need support for experimentation and innovation. Above all they need time, in order to learn and practice new approaches. In the classroom, one can rely on a certain degree of spontaneity to help create the teachable moment, and that "live" element has allowed good teachers to enter the classroom with a flexible teaching plan. This spontaneity is lacking in distance education, and therefore course organization and structure require more attention.[46]

Faculty will be the critical factor in the success of distance education. They are not spigots, to be turned on at the discretion of technology experts. Their objections to distance education require attention, their efforts require support, and for any distance program to succeed, it must be built into regular faculty life and course-load arrangements, rather than being treated as an add-on.

3. Two-way interaction is required. Minimally, an on-site support person is critical to the effectiveness of the distance classroom to coach students, monitor activities, and coordinate materials.[47] To some extent, classroom interaction can be re-created. Interactive learning materials and instructional methodologies can go a long way toward bridging the gap of distance and time, but there is no ultimate substitute for interaction with a teacher.

Students also benefit from interaction with one another. Systems that encourage such interaction have higher retention rates, and at least one system has discovered that the promise of studying in groups is positively correlated

with the decision to matriculate in the first place. Students who were placed into study groups as an initial means of orientation to academic demands refused to disband the groups until they completed their programs.[48] Schools must attend to this need for peer interaction; student face-to-face groups develop their own subcultures, which may not reflect the values of the central campus unless the school has made intentional efforts toward socializing these students.[49] Such socialization has long been recognized as an essential element in education which is to have an affective impact.

4.   Students in distance education are much more reliant on library assistance than on-campus students may be, and yet librarians are sometimes ignored in the planning for distance education. Access to a reading list is not enough. The effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the library services provided can be a significant aid, or barrier, to distance students. The library becomes a central component in the design of distance learning, and librarians need to be involved in such planning from the beginning. Fortunately, professional theological librarians are often on the cutting edge of educational technologies.

5.   There is a fundamental question in distance education which has yet to be solved: is it learner characteristics or qualities of the teaching that create successful learning experiences? Both sides of the equation need attention. Researchers have looked at student demographics, at learning styles, personality variables, emotional maturity, self-concept, motivation, persistence, achievement, and satisfaction. No overall picture emerges, but there are conclusive fragments. Prior academic achievement is significantly correlated with successful completion of a distance education course or degree.[50] Older, married students are more successful in distance education courses; those who need support from others on difficult tasks, and who find it important to discuss coursework with other students, tend to be less successful.[51] Although students may prefer learner-controlled courses where the student regulates the pace of learning, the dropout rate is less in a teacher-controlled one.[52] It is safe to conclude that students who do well in a traditional program will do well in distance education, and that students who are more at risk will do less well than they would in a traditional program. One of the conundrums of distance education is that the nontraditional students for whom the programs are envisioned may be the ones who would benefit most from the on-campus structures. Admissions patterns for distance students will require careful attention.

6.   Approaches to distance education spread across a continuum on at least three pedagogical issues: degree of student autonomy, amount of structure, and amount and type of interaction. On one end of each of these continuums would be the independent learner, studying whatever interests her or him, without

guidance or intervention. Proponents of this approach point out, correctly, that people learn by themselves all the time. At the other end of the continuum of distance education is a tightly regulated course that looks very traditional except for the missing classroom. The decisions that position a particular distance education experience on the continuum have to do with the degree of student choice of course content, objectives, resources, assignments, pacing of study, and means of evaluation, and with the amount of interaction provided between student and teacher. Standardization of these elements is one of the challenges facing those who will use distance education methodologies.

7.   Teaching and learning should become a research priority. Most of us who are responsible for the development of both curricula and instruction need better understanding of the paths and processes of adult development—of how persons develop identities, interact to create meaning, experience deep learning. What is it that we assume happens on campus? The defining issue in distance education is the *distance*, and yet the reality is that most theological schools no longer have much control or even connection with the lives of their students outside of their presence in class. There are at least as many external variables that influence the development of students as there are campus ones, and we need to acknowledge these variables and design education in a way that utilizes rather than ignores them. Educational systems are a part of a larger social context within which our students (and our faculty and staff) are shaped and developed. This is true for all of our students, but distance education has brought the question into high priority.

Conclusion

Ever since Socrates, education has been viewed as a process that involves not merely the assimilation of knowledge, nor even training in thinking. At its core, education has been understood as shaping ways of being—the internalizing of beliefs about what is the good, the true, the beautiful, both for the individual and for the larger society. Ultimately, theological education must decide if it is to function at this level, if its task is the transmission of our deepest values and the shaping of lives toward those values. If so, "the importance of personal contact and relationship-building remains a critical component of most effective distance education programs and is likely to increase as technical capabilities expand."[53] Distance education will make a good servant but a very poor master. When the classroom does not exist, we are forced to reinvent it, in some form, but we cannot assume that formation is happening automatically simply because a classroom does exist. Distance education must design learning to achieve as many of the positive characteristics of the classroom and campus

as possible, and the traditional classroom must be open to the potential of alternative mediums even while remaining cautious of both their potency and their shortcomings. The critical issues raised by distance education are not new; perhaps what might be new is the possibility for a response to the challenges of these issues that is both broad enough and deep enough to unify all sides into a common understanding of our task. The means cannot ever become a substitute for the ends, as we all, and each, attempt to maintain faithfulness to that task.

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ENDNOTES

1.   Jesse H. Ziegler, "Key Issues Facing AATS in 1972," *Theological Education* 9:1 (1972): 29-30.

2.   See *Bulletin 42,* Part 3, Procedures, Standards, and Criteria for Membership (Pittsburgh: The Association of Theological Schools, 1996), 68.

3.   See *Theological Education* 30:2 (Spring 1994) on "The Good Theological School."

4.   Michael Moore, ed., *Contemporary Issues in American Distance Education* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1990).

5.   Although many definitions focus on the use of a technological medium, written correspondence remains a highly used medium of distance education.

6.   See, for example, Desmond Keegan, "On Defining Distance Education," *Distance Education* 1:1 (1980): 13-36, and Terry Ann Mood, *Distance Education: An Annotated Bibliography* (Inglewood: Libraries Unlimited, 1995).

7.   For a history of those controversies, see, for example, Gerald Grant and David Riesman, *The Perpetual Dream* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978); Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987); Robert M. Hutchins, *The Higher Learning in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952); Clark Kerr, *The Uses of the University* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 3rd ed., 1982); Frederick Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962).

8.   Linda Harasim, ed., *Online Education: Perspectives on a New Environment* (New York: Praeger, 1990) and Robin Mason and Anthony Kaye, eds., *Mindweave: Communication, Computers and Distance Education* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1989).

9.   The key term here is "accessible at the lay level." It took more than a generation for overhead projectors to move out of bowling alleys and into the classroom.

10.   Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Seabury Press, 1972).

11.   Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (New York: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1985).

12.   Richard Guy, "Research and Distance Education in the Third World Cultural Contexts," *Research in Distance Education* 1 (1990) ed. Terry Evans (Victoria, Australia: Deakin University Press), 48-58.

13.   John R. Verduin Jr. and Thomas A. Clark, *Distance Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991).

14.   Suzanne St. Pierre, "The Need for Expanded Research in Correspondence Instruction," *Continuing Higher Education Review* 54:2 (1990): 79-93.

15.   Thomas L. Russell, "The 'no significant difference' phenomenon as reported in 214 research reports, summaries, and papers" (North Carolina State University, Office of Instructional Telecommunications. Unpublished document, 1995).

16.   Gorwin C. Chu and Wilbur Schramm, *Learning from Television: What the Research Says* (Washington: National Association of Educational Broadcasters, 1967).

17.   See Verduin and Clark.

18.   Bonny N. Goodwin, "Perceptions and Attitudes of Faculty and Students in Two Distance Learning Modes of Delivery," *Beyond the Text,* eds. T. Evans and B. King (Victoria, Australia: Deakin University, 1991). Also Sally M. Johnstone, "Research on Telecommunicated Learning: Past, Present and Future," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 514 (March 1991): 49-58.

19.   See Harasim.

20.   David. L. Wilson, "Self-Paced Studies," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 2, 1996), A19-20.

21.   Joseph Walther, Jeffrey Anderson, and David Park, "Interpersonal Effects in Computer-Mediated Interaction," *Communication Research* 21:4 (1994): 460-487.

22.   Robin Mason, "An Evaluation of CoSy at the Open University," *Mindweave,* eds. R. Mason and A. Kaye (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1989), 115-144.

23.   Starr Roxanne Hiltz, "Evaluating the Virtual Classroom," *Online Education,* ed. L. Harasim (New York: Praeger, 1990), 134-183.

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The Attraction and Retention of U.S. Hispanics to the Doctor of Ministry Program

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In 1994 The Pew Charitable Trusts approached Edwin Hernández to undertake the most ambitious study ever attempted concerning the means of attracting and retaining U.S. Hispanics to graduate schools of theology.[1] The entire theological community was well served by his assent, and his first move was the wise decision to convoke an advisory committee that was representative of the U.S. Hispanic communities.[2]

In addition to a series of listening sessions held around the country,[3] the committee prepared a written (Spanish and English) survey instrument. Approximately 7,900 deliverable questionnaires were mailed to U.S. Hispanics who have had some seminary or ministry experience, and to others who were subscribers and/or members of Hispanic-related journals and associations. The response rate was 24%. This response to one mailing was quite remarkable considering that the questionnaire was 36 pages long and contained more than 300 questions.

A complete report of the survey and listening sessions will be published through Andrews University. This article summarizes only the findings of the 182 respondents who expressed an interest in the Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degree.

The D.Min. is a professional doctorate that is designed to advance the general practice of ministry and is often directed toward a particular specialization. Normally, a Master of Divinity degree is required for admission as well as: (1) a minimum of three years of full-time pastoral experience and (2) concomitant, full-time ministry while in the program. It usually takes three to five years to complete, ending with an applied research project, upon which a final paper is based.[4] Tuition and fees for an entire program average $8,537 to $10,230. Generally, larger schools charge less than smaller ones, and independent schools less than those affiliated with universities.[5] The D.Min. is designed for those in parish ministry who consciously use their experience as a "text." Hence,

it is generally arranged around intensive rather than semester-long classes with assignments oriented toward and completed during the student's actual ministry.

One hundred and thirty-four men and 46 women of those surveyed expressed an interest in the D.Min. Seventy-two percent were married and 3.9% divorced. Although a majority (52.7%) were born outside the United States, only 2% could not read and speak English. More than 65% were U.S. citizens. One can infer, therefore, that these students are highly acculturated, will not normally require visas, and are proficient in English. Of course, they would add diversity to any D.Min. program, a desired but often elusive goal. Hispanics currently make up only 1.5% of the enrollment in D.Min. programs of ATS member schools.[6]

Of the respondents interested in the D.Min., more than one-third resided in the southwestern United States. Approximately 18% lived in Puerto Rico, 14% in the Northeast, and 10.6% in the Southeast. Geography is a major factor in attracting these persons to the program of study. Almost 81% of those surveyed responded that an academic program within 250 miles of their home would increase their interest. More than 89% expressed a decided interest in studying in a city with a significant Latina/o population. A similar number was unwilling to relocate in order to pursue the D.Min. It would seem, therefore, that those theological schools located in cities and regions with large Hispanic populations have a distinct advantage in attracting this population to their D.Min. programs.[7] Of course, if the students can commute, their expenses for housing and meals can be reduced, and according to this survey, the single most important consideration in attracting and retaining Hispanics to any graduate theological program is finances.

Unlike the general U.S. Latino/a population (more than 65% of Mexican descent), this sample of respondents was largely Puerto Rican (35.8%), followed by Mexican American (21.2%). That is particularly surprising when one recalls that South Americans and Cubans tend to be the more highly educated Hispanic groups.[8] One could surmise that they would be in a better position educationally, and, therefore, more interested in pursuing a doctorate.

Another surprise was in denominational affiliation of the respondents. While almost 23% identified themselves as Catholic, the next largest group identified themselves as Seventh Day Adventists (12.8%), followed by Baptists (10.6%).[9] What was perhaps not surprising was that more than half of the respondents were former Catholics. However, 17.4% identified themselves as former Pentecostals. A possible explanation for this denominational change could be that a majority of these individuals claimed to have become more liberal since their seminary training began.[10] This seems unlikely, however,

because the most frequently identified period by respondents for denominational change was before college. Moreover, such a reason would be the reverse of a trend begun in the mid-1960s of a decline in the membership of churches and denominations considered to be more liberal and a corresponding increase in those considered to be more conservative.[11]

While almost 65% of the total respondents were ordained, 43.9% of the Catholics were laity. Another 22% were women religious. Therefore Catholic schools especially must not ignore the majority of interested students from their own denomination who are not clerics. However, only 27.3% of these Catholic laity hold the qualifying M.Div. degree. Of those who hold a D.Min. or who are enrolled in the program, 90% were Protestant and 88% were male. However, if future interest among these respondents is any indication, we should see increasing numbers of women and Catholics applying to D.Min. programs.

Neither the educational nor the ministerial requirements for the D.Min. appeared to be problematic. More than 85% of respondents had more than three years of ministerial experience, and 80% held at least a master's degree (46.3% the M.Div.). Based on these respondents, however, it would seem that the time to market the D.Min. to them would be between three and five years after the completion of their master's. Moreover, every inquiry must be addressed. Almost three-quarters of respondents had applied for admission to only one school. Finances, as noted above, was the single most important deciding factor in this group's educational decisions. Almost 36% earned less than $35,000 annually, and only 19% earned more than $50,000. More than 85% had to support two or more dependents on one income. While the reported earnings of this group were markedly higher than the average Latino/a wage scale,[12] one must remember that a tuition of even $7000, paid over four years, would constitute a significant sacrifice for many of these potential students.

In addition to convenient location and financial aid, schools that show sensitivity to students' culture and faith beliefs were more attractive to those surveyed. More than 90% said that a concentration in Hispanic studies would be a lure. An even higher percentage responded favorably to the presence of Hispanic faculty. Non-Latino/a professors who are knowledgeable of Hispanic cultures appealed to 76.7%.

Students seem to be quite willing to study in a school outside of their denominations if that school is accepting of, and sensitive to, their own faith traditions. More than 73% said that they would be willing to study outside of their faith traditions. Curiously, while the respondents were not overwhelmingly Presbyterian or Methodist, seminaries of those denominations were just as attractive to them as those that are Baptist or Evangelical. Pentecostal seminaries were the least attractive, followed by Catholic seminaries. This may be due in

part to the perception that those denominations are more conservative,[13] or it could indicate that some schools are perceived to be more exclusivist and less ecumenical, and thus unattractive to persons of other faith traditions. However, from a list of the most important factors for considering a school, consonance with personal belief was less important than financial assistance or professors with expertise in the student's field.

The four greatest perceived barriers to the respondents fulfilling their desire to pursue a D.Min. were: (1) availability of financial aid; (2) affordability of the program; (3) distance to school; and (4) financial indebtedness. Thus three of the four perceived barriers related to finances. Fewer than 27% said that they could pay even $6000 for a full D.Min. program. Interest in flexible payment plans was expressed by more than 76% of respondents.[14] On the other hand, the potential for greater future income or job opportunities was a rather unimportant consideration. The overwhelming motivation for pursuing theological studies was a sense of vocation, calling, or service to their faith.[15] Further encouraging news related to the D.Min. was that fully 96.7% said they did their graduate training in order to develop their *ministerial* skills.

This appears to be a group that is highly motivated by faith, well educated, and desirous of learning skills that are applicable to their pastoral settings.[16] If this is true, they are tailor-made for the D.Min. degree,[17] and they appear to be serious about their studies. In fact, 134 of the respondents gave us their names and addresses in order to receive information on a D.Min. program.

The three most important factors in their selection of a school in which to do graduate-level work were: (1) the reputation of the program; (2) recommendation from friends or religious leaders; and (3) location. One of the best ways to attract them, therefore, may simply be to reach out to them—through word of mouth and local, personal contacts.

The five specializations that were most attractive to these students were: (1) pastoral counseling; (2) evangelism; (3) Hispanic theology; (4) preaching; and (5) cross-cultural or bilingual ministry. The top career goal was professional ministry in a parish setting. The next most important goals were seminary teaching or administration, and counseling. Given the context of these respondents, there was some consonance between their goals and desired specializations. There was an anomaly, however, concerning those who plan to teach in the future. The area in which most wanted to teach was New Testament, not one of the top desired specializations.[18]

Successful D.Min. programs, therefore, need to be affordable and sensitive to the students' faith traditions, cultures, and learning goals. Other strong draws for Hispanics (more than 83.7%) were the intensive course modules characteristic of the D.Min. Mentoring with a Latino/a scholar was of significant interest

to 74.5%.[19] More than 58% responded favorably to the concept of an "electronic classroom"; slightly fewer (56%) were attracted to the idea of a correspondence course. One hundred and three respondents were members of at least one professional society. The more specifically Hispanic the professional society, the more likely these persons were to be members; only five belonged to professional groups not founded by Latino/as.

This did not hold true for the types of journals read, which seemed to fall more along denominational lines. One hundred and six respondents read journals associated with a particular denomination. *Christianity Today* was read by more respondents than *Apuntes,* although the *Journal for Hispanic/Latino Theology* was read more than *America* or the *National Catholic Reporter* (but not *Apuntes*). While this was somewhat balanced by high readership of the publications of the (mainly Hispanic) professional associations to which they belonged, it still suggested that marketing a D.Min. probably requires use of a broad range of Christian media with emphasis not only on Hispanic journals, but on those most likely to be read by the denomination to which one seeks to appeal.

If past history is any indication, the design of the D.Min. to work in concert with a minister's church responsibilities seemed to be a plus. Church responsibilities were virtually the only strong reason indicated for having left graduate or seminary education. Even "feelings of cultural isolation" were less important.

One interesting finding was the fewer than expected racial or ethnic barriers these respondents felt or perceived they will feel. Eight out of ten said that their ethnic background would either have no effect or would have a positive effect on their job opportunities.[20] Almost seven out of ten respondents felt that their specialization would be somewhat or very helpful to their employment.

On the issue of past discrimination, it seemed that problems existed more among students than faculty, but more with faculty than with administrators. The majority said that their schools had administrators committed to hiring minorities and had faculty who were sensitive to minority issues and open to diverse ideas. However, the perceptions concerning Latino/a faculty were quite mixed: 33.8% disagreed with the statement, "There are no Latino/a faculty members," while 26.4% strongly agreed.[21] The presence of Latino/a faculty seemed important also because many students chose to speak to Hispanic faculty or administrators about their personal concerns. Well over one-third felt that Anglo faculty had lower expectations for minority students than for their white counterparts.[22] Opinions also varied concerning the curriculum's consideration of cultural experience; however, 46% agreed that the curriculum did take cultural experience into consideration. Respondents indicated that courses reflecting a minority perspective seemed to be lacking. Although faculty received higher marks than may have been expected, administrators fared even

better: more than six out of ten respondents felt administrators are *not* insensitive to students. Administrators and others, however, need to address the fact that more than 23% of respondents said that they had experienced discrimination some or most of the time.[23]

Almost 65% of respondents who hold doctoral degrees indicated that they would take their doctorates again if they had it to do over. Few seminaries seemed to offer faculty mentors at the doctoral level, but students who had mentors consistently rated their help positively. Unfortunately, students were considerably more likely to have encountered Hispanic faculty in their master's-level work than in their doctoral-level work. Nonetheless, the importance of Latino/a faculty was stressed by the respondents, the factor most important after financial accessibility.

A clear majority of the respondents rejected the notion that seminary distances them from Latino/a realities; 63.8% said it had actually given them the tools to better understand Hispanic realities. Seventy-nine percent said that their scholarship was linked with involvement in Latino/a issues, and 67% rejected the notion that seminary education had changed that commitment. A similar number felt that their education had actually *increased* their commitment to serve Latino/as.[24] More than 65% said that seminary training had met or surpassed their expectations for preparation to minister among Hispanics. A majority (though a smaller percentage) said the same concerning insights gained into Hispanic contributions to theology.

More than 46% thought that there was not a significant number of Hispanic students in the school they attended. This seems particularly important because almost 60% studied with fellow Hispanics. Also, students judged their peers as less understanding than faculty or administration: almost 60% said that their fellow students knew little about Hispanic cultures. This may explain why only one-third agreed that Hispanic students "fit in." Nevertheless, a solid majority believed that students of different races related well to one another, had some bonds of trust, and enjoyed a sense of community.

The top three factors identified as most important for improving the "quality of your degree program for Latinos/as" were: (1) faculty members who would become more knowledgeable about Hispanic/Latino theological and cultural thinking; (2) more supportive services (e.g., counseling); and (3) increased financial assistance. Again we are confronted with the most important factor for attracting and retaining U.S. Hispanics to graduate schools of theology—making accredited programs affordable.

One hundred and forty-eight respondents said that they had been offered financial aid, and 68% of those said that what was offered was adequate. Three to four years of aid was the mean indicated, which would be adequate for a

Doctor of Ministry program. Only about one-quarter received grants, fellow-ships, or financial aid from their respective denominations. Based on their financial statements, financial aid equivalent to at least 75% of the cost of a doctoral program, and sustained for three or more years, would seem to be a good target for schools that seek to attract Hispanic students.

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ENDNOTES

1. This refers to schools accredited by The Association of Theological Schools (ATS).

2. The committee included Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, Danny Cortés, Kenneth Davis, Allan Figueroa Deck, Justo González, David Maldonado, Jesse Miranda, Ana María Pineda, Luís Rivera Rodríguez, Olga Villa Parra, and Sarita E. Brown.

3. These were convocations of groups of Latina/os who gave oral input concerning their experience of theological education. All members of the advisory committee were most grateful to those who participated in these sessions, and those who completed and returned the survey instrument.

4. This is based on documentation from the Doctor of Ministry program as offered at the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas, which is approved by ATS.

5. Daniel Aleshire and Jonathan Strom, eds., *Fact Book on Theological Education, 1995-1996* (Pittsburgh: The Association of Theological Schools, 1996). For more information about the Doctor of Ministry degree, consult the Association for Doctor of Ministry education.

6. Ibid.

7. More than 69% were interested in the accredited mobile programs that are increas-ingly common. These programs were particularly attractive to Puerto Ricans on the island.

8. Isabel Valdés and Marta H. Seoane, eds., *The Hispanic Market Handbook* (Detroit: Gale Research, Inc., 1995), 102.

9. See for instance Kenneth B. Bedell, ed., *The Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches, 1995* (Nashville: Abingdon Press). Because the chief researcher was Adventist and the research was done at an Adventist university, it is possible that more names were available from this denomination or that more were motivated to respond.

10. Not quite one-third said that they had become more conservative. Only a very small number said that *education* had influenced their decision to switch denominational affiliation (a large majority said it helped make them more ecumenical), but future research could investigate the connection between denominational changes and conser-vative or liberal theological attitudes.

11.   Wade Clark Roof and William McKinney, *American Mainline Religion: Its Changing Shape and Future* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987). For a different theoretical model and extensive bibliography on this issue, see my article "The Hispanic Shift: Continuity Rather than Conversion," *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology,* 1, (3) May 1994: 68-79.

12.   Marlita A. Reddy, *Statistical Record of Hispanic Americans* (Detroit: Gale Research, Inc., 1993): graph 593.

13.   Research should be done on this question. Could it have something to do with the perception that these denominations are less ecumenical or with the fact that so many of the respondents are former Catholics?

14.   Work study was notably unappealing.

15.   These figures approached 90%. The next highest motivation was the ability to pursue one's intellectual interests. However, the third most deciding factor was the availability of financial assistance.

16.   They are not looking for honorary degrees: 55.7% said that a reputable doctoral program would help them to find employment in their field.

17.   Almost three in four are not engaged in scholarly work for publication. More than half feel that church responsibilities hamper their desire to continue their studies. The D.Min., of course, is designed for this audience.

18.   However, a close second interest to teaching was pastoral counseling, followed by preaching and religious education.

19.   Interestingly the ability to network with Latino scholars and ministers was only slightly more appealing than the ability to network with non-Latinos: 74.4% and 70.7% respectively.

20.   Almost 48% said that their schools were somewhat or very actively recruiting Hispanic students.

21.   More than 12% heard faculty make improper remarks about minorities, a small but still unacceptable number. About half as many had experienced threats or insults. More than 18% were criticized for not speaking proper English. These all indicate areas for improvement.

22.   Students felt that they had relatively equal access to faculty and generally enjoyed a supportive environment.

23.   About 10% felt excluded from school activities on the basis of ethnicity. Again this is a relatively small number, but clearly unacceptable, especially from educated, committed Christians.

24.   About half agreed specifically that their education had influenced their "involvement in social and economic issues of the Latino community."

Spiritual Formation in the Academy: A Unifying Model

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I remember the speaker, the setting, the tone in the air, and my feelings as I listened to the presentation. The message that day was a call for character development in the men and women who attend theological schools. The speaker affirmed that we *must* develop character. But further, he insisted, we had a choice to make: would we emphasize content or character? Would we focus on education and academic excellence or would we commit ourselves to the formation of character?

It was a sobering moment for me. It amazed me that formal education and spiritual formation were being placed in adversarial positions. I was also deeply disappointed. The message that day was simple: the classroom emphasized truth, as something comprising content, and this was not something that would be necessarily helpful in the formation of Christian character.

In retrospect, I suspect that this does in some respects represent a common or popular notion. People tend to think that the academy is less than helpful in the formation of Christian character. And it is a popular perspective that often subtly influences the thought and behaviour of educators.

There has been a growing recognition of the need for character formation as part of one's formal education. And theological schools have responded with programs to encourage the development of character and spiritual maturity.

This has been an appropriate response, but often it has been based on a false premise or assumption: that the academic process—formal education with all its programs, assignments, classes, and examinations—is not of itself part of the formation of character. Further, many are suspicious about formation programs and activities, and view them as a threat to the limited time available for study. The two are pitted against each other and polarities develop—with some urging that we give ourselves to character formation and others who are disgruntled because these co-curricular activities seem to be less than substantial contributions to the mission and purpose of the school and are viewed as interruptions.

We urgently need a model for an understanding of the place and role of spiritual development within the academy. How does it happen? What is the role of formal education in this process? How can the curriculum (broadly conceived) include spiritual formation in a way that complements the classroom?

Some Basic Assumptions
Regarding Education and Spirituality

First, some fundamental assumptions I bring to this discussion.

1. We can affirm the priority of spiritual maturity as one element of the goal and purpose of theological education. Some may speak of it as the defining purpose and objective. But it is probably better to acknowledge that that would be the priority of a local church. Theological schools have a more limited role. Nevertheless, we are and must be committed to spiritual growth and character development for every member of the academic community. In the end, those people who effectively fulfill their vocations are those who have a deep commitment to God, a clear discipline in their lifestyle and behaviour, and a clear sense of apostolic calling and service for their fellow human beings.

Many theological schools have been passive rather than pro-active and intentional about character development. Administrators and faculty often assume that the school would focus on the academic agenda and that the development of character would care for itself.

Yet if it is imperative that the people who graduate from our schools be men and women of both competence and character, then character formation must be as much a part of the agenda of the academy as competence. It should be something about which our schools are intentional and pro-active.

2. We can and must affirm that education is a means to this end. By education, I mean what we normally think of as formal study. This would include the classroom and the library and the whole academic experience where students are encouraged to examine truth through the various disciplines. In this regard, we need to affirm the redemptive value of academic study. We cannot divorce formal study from the program of character formation. We cannot pit education and spirituality against each other.

The mind is renewed by truth. Classrooms and libraries are ideal places in which to respond to the apostolic injunction that we take every thought captive for Christ. Spiritual formation, therefore, includes study. It is not just something that complements or accompanies study. The discipline of study is an essential component of spiritual formation. Rigorous intellectual exercise is good for the soul. Few things are so redemptive as the honest exploration of truth.

A lecture on justification by faith, for example, is part of spiritual formation. A study of the nature and character of evil can be a vital aspect of one's complete spiritual character development. This principle would apply to the whole range of the liberal arts. My own experience in university included the tremendously valuable study of nineteenth-century Russian literature—a course that was one of the most formative events in my life.

The classroom is then an essential venue of spiritual formation.

3.   Affirming the redemptive value of formal study cannot and does not constitute a blanket endorsement of all that happens in the classroom.

To be redemptive, at least three factors need to shape and influence formal study. It happens best when there is, first, a clear and fundamental commitment—a clear sense of one's basic loyalties—including a commitment to justice, righteousness, and truth. The classroom plays only a partial role in the development of this fundamental orientation. Other vehicles of spiritual formation—such as worship—may be most formative in nurturing this basic allegiance. The point is that the classroom is most effective in spiritual formation when this commitment is clear.

Second, the classroom is most effective when study is informed by prayer and worship, when formal study arises out of communion with God and nurtures, directly or indirectly, a relationship with God. This is why we should look to nonacademic programs of spiritual formation to complement formal study.

And third, the classroom is most effective in the formation of the whole person when it is informed by reflection on personal vocation. The ideal is for study to arise out of a sense of one's apostolic responsibility in the world. Studies come alive when we see their relevance for the call of God on our lives. This does not mean that we see everything or study only that which directly informs our work in the world. Such a perspective would lead to a utilitarian pragmatism and a truncated ecclesiology which in the end serves neither the student nor the kingdom well. But our studies are most formative when we reflect on truth—all of God's truth—from the perspective of our vocation to serve God in the church and in the world.

In all this, then, I am insisting that we do not need to accept the false notion of academic objectivity or scientific inquiry that suggests that a confessional stance is contrary to true study.

This does not mean that a Bible class becomes nothing more than a devotional study of the scriptures. A devotional reading of scripture is essential and a means of grace, but spiritual formation comes through the rigorous study of scripture. To suggest that a devotional reading is preferred or that critical study and research are less than helpful is a failure to appreciate the importance of careful study in spiritual formation. What we are calling for is critical scholarship that is informed by spiritual commitment.

4.   Spiritual formation happens when there are activities designed for specific ends in the formation of character that complement the formal academic program.

Often, we find that we have too many expectations of formal education. Some will complain that students who have been in class do not know how to pray. But this would be like criticizing a driver education program because the students could not drive after they sat in a classroom discussing how an automobile functions.

Formal study and education can do some things well. The academic process is an excellent vehicle for certain purposes. But it cannot do everything well. Consequently it is best to work with the assumption that some things are learned well in the classroom and other essential things are best learned in other settings.

Just as the classroom is not the place to learn how to drive a car, it is similarly not the place to learn how to pray. The class may help you learn about a car, but there is no substitute for getting behind the wheel and feeling the clutch engage. And there is no way to learn prayer but in retreat, preferably under personal direction.

Thus, spiritual formation within the academic setting is most effective when the classroom is both affirmed *and* complemented, and where vital elements of the spiritual life are nurtured, taught, and encouraged in settings in addition to the classroom.

The ideal academic institution would have both classrooms and a retreat centre some distance from those classrooms. It would have what we normally associate with theological schools, but would also have a place of retreat where students could go individually or in groups. It is in retreat that we learn some things that are vital to the program of an academic institution. This would apply primarily to prayer, but it is also in retreat that root and heart aspects of our lives come to the surface and can be owned and resolved.

Further, there is nothing quite like service to test the inner person and potentially inform not only our spiritual growth but also the classroom. There is a strong awareness of the interconnection of field experience with classroom reflection, but we still need to find more ways that will enable students to take internship and student ministry experiences and use these as fodder for spiritual growth.

The main point here is that not all the essential elements or skills for life and ministry are learned in the classroom. The activities that encourage these other elements must intentionally complement rather than compete with the academic enterprise. Further, the experience in the chapel or the retreat centre, the experience in solitude and prayer, and the experience in the field all can and must inform the classroom. It is these activities that have the capacity to make the classroom experience most formative.

5.   It is also important to stress the central place of the liturgy. In speaking of the integration of learning with piety and the role of the academy in spiritual

formation, insufficient attention has been given to the subject of the liturgy and the role of public worship in both spiritual formation and the academic process. Can we not see the event of worship as the central and defining moment in the life of a learning community? Can the liturgy not enable us to study as worshippers and thus infuse the classroom with a dynamic that enables us to be transformed by truth?

Though a theological school is not a local congregation or church, worship can still be that which provides the integrating centre for learning. Worship can be the catalyst for the integration of classroom content with the heart. Further, in speaking above of the context in which effective learning takes place, it is in worship that these are nurtured.

The worship of the academy must be an event of substance. Further, the form needs to engage heart, mind, and body. So much worship is superficial or merely cerebral. Rarely do we find worship that engages the whole person. Also the content of the worship needs to be congruent with the content of the classroom. There needs to be sufficient continuity such that students in a Christology class, for example, can move from intellectual reflection to conscious worship in response to that reflection.

6.   In providing spiritual direction, there is no substitute for teaching and enabling people to learn the disciplines of the spiritual life. The disciplines enable people to establish patterns and habits that will foster a lifelong journey of knowing the grace of God.

But spiritual formation involves much more than instruction in the disciplines of the spiritual life. Many seem to view spiritual formation as little more than teaching certain techniques on the assumption that these techniques, usually approaches to the disciplines of the spiritual life, are themselves spiritual formation.

Many have mastered techniques but not necessarily experienced spiritual transformation. Techniques are helpful, if not essential, but they are not ends in themselves, only means to an end—the experience of divine grace. The focus in spiritual formation needs to be the grace sought rather than the technique. The disciplines of the spiritual life only have value as far as they foster communion with God and an appropriation of divine grace.

7.   The context most favourable to spiritual formation, within the academy, is one in which there is a clear sense of a spiritual heritage or tradition. In these situations, formation is an identification with that heritage. The institutions or schools that are most able to integrate spiritual formation and education are those with a clear sense of their history, their heritage, and their spiritual tradition.

Many schools are frustrated in their efforts to develop a plan of spiritual formation within their programs because there is a lack of consensus on the goal and means of this formation. There is not a common answer to two questions: What are we trying to accomplish and how will we do it?

Therefore, if a school has a clearly defined heritage, that tradition should be owned and embraced. While we need to respond critically to the forms and perspectives of the past, a spiritual heritage can be an invaluable source of strength, vitality, and direction to a new generation.

8. Finally, we must not overstate the role of the academy in spiritual formation. The theological school is not responsible for the whole of a student's formation. The local church has a vital part in this process, for example, but the student is ultimately responsible. The theological school can only provide the opportunities for spiritual growth; it is the responsibility of the student to respond to divine grace.

Character Formation and the Goal of Theological Education

The goal of theological education is to enable students to know God so they can help others to know and respond to the grace of God. In defining the objective of the theological school, we need a defining principle, a point of integration between the classroom itself and the co-curricular activities. If we do not have a clear sense of our objective, then we will inevitably see the various components of the academy as competing against one another.

Wisdom could serve us well as a unifying principle. The objective of the academy, then, would be to enable men and women to become wise. Wisdom is a helpful point of reference because it incorporates the development of knowledge and understanding as well as the formation of character. Wise people are mature in both their understanding and their behaviour. Further, wisdom assumes the integration and appropriation of truth—we both understand and live the truth.

But we need to be more specific. Character formation will be a many-sided commitment; we are seeking to form whole people. But there are three critical dimensions of character formation that we cannot neglect in the pursuit of wisdom.

The first is vocational development. Few things are so central as a growing clarity about one's vocation—one's strengths, passions, potential, and opportunities—in response to the enabling of God. Lifelong effective service for Christ, whatever one's vocation, is dependent on clarity regarding one's vocation, and this arises out of a maturing self-knowledge.

The second is emotional development and growth. Nothing is so critical to long-term vocational effectiveness as clarity, depth, and balance in our emotions. Many careers are sabotaged because of unresolved emotional baggage that comes to the surface in mid-life or mid-career. In this, it is essential that one learn how to deal with disappointment and failure. Further when we long for our graduates to develop interpersonal skills we are in many respects expressing a longing for mature emotional development.

Third, we surely need to give special attention to the matter of gender, sexuality, and marriage. Few things are so essential in spiritual formation as a clear understanding concerning gender and sexuality and the development of the essential disciplines that enable one to live in truth and freedom as male or female.

Therefore, the theological school provides a major and invaluable contribution to a student when it provides a setting or context in which to reflect on vocation, work through one's emotional response to God, to others and to the world, and come to terms with critical aspects of sexuality and gender.

This identification of three critical areas of spiritual development is not comprehensive, but it can give a school focus. Sometimes we do little or nothing because we are attempting to do everything. Further, affirmation and development in these three areas would provide the solid foundation for the growth of the whole person.

The only way in which this agenda of formation in wisdom can happen is if there is a complementary relationship between the classroom and its formal agenda and the program of spiritual formation that complements the classroom. Growth in wisdom, and in each dimension of character formation, comes through the development of knowledge and understanding—in the classroom and the library. But it also comes through the integration that one experiences in prayer, worship, spiritual direction, personal accountability, and service. It is not a matter of the one or the other. It is not a matter of character development in our spiritual formation programs and the development of the mind in the classroom. We must reject this kind of dichotomy. The objective is a complementary, intentional partnership between the two.

As a passing note, I wonder if we do not need to be more explicit with our students about our agenda in character formation. Do our students have a clear sense of what our objectives are beyond just completing the courses for a degree program? Do they know what we mean by maturity? Perhaps we need to have this outlined clearly for our incoming students, reviewed at least annually, and evaluated at the end of their program. We need to do this if we are going to be intentional and proactive and not just passive when it comes to character development.

The Means by Which the Objective Is Reached

There is an extensive body of literature delineating ways in which a school could achieve the objective of character formation. Some schools have chosen to require a course in spirituality, so that there is a theological and theoretical basis for the practice of the Christian life. Other schools choose to grant formal, academic credit for spiritual formation. The rationale is that students will take seriously only that for which the school grants credit. Other schools insist on community experience, insisting that we grow in wisdom as active members of a community, as we learn and grow together.

These are each noteworthy and commendable responses to the concern for spiritual formation, but I wish to emphasize two factors that are the most definitive and crucial means to realize character formation in an academic institution.

First, character formation is ultimately the fruit of the truth. It is truth that transforms; it is by the truth that minds are renewed and it is by the truth that we know wisdom. Central in this is the role of scripture. I have a growing unease with the development of all kinds of approaches to spiritual formation—small groups, psychological tests and counselling methods, instruction in the spiritual disciplines, and so on—when we view these as achieving an end that can only be accomplished by the Word. These are valuable and essential in a program of spiritual formation, but they are only valuable to the degree that they are informed by truth—a conscious and deliberate effort to know, understand, and obey the truth.

The question really becomes: Do we believe in the transforming power of scripture? Do we really believe that the Spirit changes lives through the medium of the truth? We urgently need a coherent vision for theological education that grants scripture a central and defining place. When this occurs, the scriptures are studied, the scriptures inform studies, but more, the scriptures are also central to the worship and devotion of the community.

Do we believe this? We don't when we fail to see that a classroom lecture and discussion on the Sermon on the Mount may be the most significant factor in the development of mature and wise interpersonal skills. When people note that individuals lack character or maturity, we tend to look to the course or technique. While the course or technique may help, it is ultimately the scriptures that the Spirit uses to accomplish the end of spiritual maturity and wisdom.

Further, we do not really believe in the transforming power of scripture when the worship of the academy is a time of song and celebration but not an event in which to preach the Word. I am not suggesting that every chapel event should include a sermon, but that the preaching of scripture is central in some

form to the chapel events of the community because of their transforming power.

Can truth, as embodied in the scriptures, become the central defining principle of our schools? If so, the truth itself will bring the integration between education and spirituality for which we long.

Finally, in speaking of the objective of character formation, I must stress a second element. The second definitive element in the formation of the student is the faculty member himself or herself—not the curriculum, not the academic program, not the co-curricular activities, and not even the chapel services. It is the faculty members who embody the ideals of the academy.

In faculty recruitment, we must evaluate and expect professional and instructional competence. But with similar rigor, we must also look for character—depth of piety, mature emotional well-being, and a vital commitment to Christ and his kingdom. We can evaluate professional credentials, but it is much more difficult to determine whether an individual has the emotional, spiritual, and relational integrity essential to be an adequate model within the theological school.

One good focus in recruitment is to decide whether the candidate shows evidence of gratitude and humility on the one hand, and resolved grievances on the other. Does the candidate have a pattern of resolving wrongs and forgiving? Further, does the candidate display an ability to seek and experience the means of grace to respond to the stress points of life? Finally, confirm one way or the other whether a candidate has a sense of humour!

The point is that if we are going to speak of the integration of faith and learning, of intellectual and spiritual development, it must be modeled in our faculty.

Theological education is an essential part of spiritual formation; spiritual formation is an essential part of theological education. They are each most effective when they complement each other in a way that is mutually reinforcing. Further, they are effective when our objective is clear—the pursuit of wisdom—and when our means are clear—through truth and through the example of our faculty.

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The Gifts of Urban Theological Education: A Personal and Professional Reflection

Efrain Agosto
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A Personal Journey

I am a product of the urban context, the urban church, and urban theological education. I was born in the South Bronx (or as Hal Recinos refers to it, "the Republic of the South"[1]). When I was nine years old, my family moved to another predominantly Puerto Rican neighborhood in New York City, in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. So I was raised in Brooklyn. I also studied in Manhattan, in a neighborhood called Morningside Heights; a park bearing the same name divided the university from Harlem. And I was married in Jamaica, Queens, in a multicultural neighborhood where my wife attended church. Thus I am a thorough New Yorker, a true product of the urban context.

I was also nurtured in the urban church, specifically the Hispanic Pentecostal church, two in particular: one in the Bronx, one in Brooklyn; one a storefront, the other a converted nightclub.[2] In these churches, where Spanish was the first language and English the third (speaking in tongues ranked second), I learned and practiced ministry even before I went to seminary. I learned by watching my pastor, Miguel Angel Rivera, a Puerto Rican immigrant who worked as a baker before he attended an evening Bible Institute of the Spanish Assemblies of God[3] and apprenticed with one of the pioneers of Hispanic Pentecostalism in New York, Manual T. Sanchez. For years, I watched my pastor drive the church bus to bring the people in, sing the pre-sermon solo to prepare them for his long and fiery sermon, which was followed by an almost equally long altar call.

While I attended college (Pastor Rivera urged me to stay home for school), I led the church youth, which for several years numbered in the forties. Pastor Rivera handed over Friday nights to us for youth meetings and rallies. During my four years in college, I learned to preach, teach, organize, administer, and minister. Thus before I even went to seminary, I already had a lot of experience in ministry. Seminary fine-tuned my skills, gave me some additional tools and language, but the urban church had already given me the opportunity and the heart for ministry.

Finally, I am a product of urban theological education. It did not start out that way. Besides being a time of academic preparation for ministry, I thought I could also use seminary as an "escape" from the city. For the first time in my life, at age 24, I lived in a bucolic, semi-rural setting. However, I soon learned, that while "you can take the city boy out of the city, you cannot take the city out of the city boy." I found myself in a fairly isolated campus without a car or a driver's license. (In New York, I lived half a block from a subway that could take me all over the city. Who needed a driver's license?) I needed to be somewhere where I could move around. So after a year "in the country," I enrolled in my seminary's urban ministry program in Boston.

Thus, I must confess that I did not set out to pursue urban theological education. It more or less found me. I learned quickly, however, that I sorely needed a theoretical understanding of my experience as an urban citizen. I needed to engage in readings, classes, reflection, and dialogue that could enhance my critical understanding of urban life and ministry. Therefore, urban theological education became an integral part of my overall theological education. Moreover, soon after I completed seminary, urban theological education became a professional pursuit, as I served on the staff of an urban theological education program for twelve years.

Thus I am a product of the urban context (New York and Boston), the urban church (Pentecostal and Hispanic), and urban theological education (as a student, professor, and administrator). This experience, both personal and professional, has led me to reflect on the gifts of urban theological education to the wider enterprise of theological education and to the work of the church as a whole.

The Gift of People: Giving Voices to the Urban Constituency

Historically, there have been only a handful of well-established, long-term urban theological education programs.[4] All of these have been characterized by their involvement with the people of the city. Indeed, it seems to me that the greatest gift of urban theological education to the wider church has been the gift of people. Urban theological education, by its presence in the context of the people of the city, has made available to traditional seminary communities and to the wider church the voices of those people who have not been at the table of theological education up to this time. Yet it is these very same folk who have been carrying on the torch light of the gospel witness in the city when the rest of the church, liberal or conservative, has, as we say in Spanish, "brillado por su ausencia" (roughly translated, "their physical absence has spoken louder than words").

Urban theological education, when it has been doing its job right, has not only provided the resources of a traditional seminary for a contextualized urban ministerial training to existing urban church leadership, it has also taken seriously the contributions of that community's experience for the formation of the urban theological education program *per se*. In other words, it has provided a voice to the voiceless. The wider church community and traditional seminaries should recognize this opportunity to hear from the urban church and its people in ways they have not heard before.

Justo González states the issue well in his work, *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective*.[5] Writing specifically with regard to the new theology emerging from Third World experiences, both in the U.S. and overseas, González argues:

> The new theology, being done by those who are aware of their traditional voicelessness, is acutely aware of the manner in which the dominant is confused with the universal. North Atlantic male theology is taken to be basic, normative, universal theology, to which then women, other minorities, and people from the younger churches may add their footnotes. What is said in Manila is very relevant for the Philippines. What is said in Tübingen, Oxford or Yale is relevant for the entire church. White theologians do general theology; black theologians do black theology. Male theologians do general theology; female theologians do theology determined by their sex. Such a notion of "universality" based on the present unjust distribution of power is unacceptable to the new theology.[6]

I would add to González's list our tendency to assume that urban theological education merely provides services to our urban constituencies, without getting anything in return. In reality, however, urban theological education has become a conduit for challenges to the traditional ways of doing theology and theological discourse. This is because the voices of the urban constituency, with their knowledge of the Bible, their notions of theology and doctrine, developed in the practice of ministry under the sometimes adverse conditions of the inner city realities, are now being heard in our classrooms, seminars, written projects, and they are being heard, in many cases, by the theologians of our seminaries. The latter return to their suburban campuses amazed, encouraged, perhaps sometimes scandalized, but often impacted with a "new word" from God. I suspect this impact and this "new word" are seeping into the classrooms and journal articles of our traditional seminaries, whether or not they are recognized as such. However, what is really needed is for these theological voices from the city to do their own writing and have their own exposure to the wider church. Their

presence and their voices as they are being felt and heard across the spectrum of churches and seminaries in North America are valuable contributions from urban theological education to the wider community. The gift needs to be expanded even further by means of telling the story in published form.

The lack of acclaim about the contributions of urban voices to theological education is illustrated by a story I like to tell. In a ministry colloquium of an urban theological education center, I once noticed a remarkable scene. During a small-group session, a Haitian M.A. student, who spoke Spanish as well as French and English, engaged in dialogue with a Panamanian student, who spoke Spanish and English. I also saw a second-career African-American computer scientist turned M.Div. student paired off in theological debate with an African-American female artist/musician who was pursuing M.A. studies to add theological content to her black church music ministry. As I viewed this scene, I said to myself: "There is some serious theologizing taking place in these buzz groups." Unfortunately, not enough people have an opportunity to see and hear what I saw and heard that day. Something profoundly theological happens when people of the city, from all different backgrounds, come together to participate in theological education. By their participation in the dialogue reflecting on the practice of ministry with theological categories, as this ministry colloquium did, urban theological education makes an important theological statement: We have some new players, some new languages, and some new experiences at the table of theological education. From this table an invitation goes out to the whole of the theological education enterprise: Will you listen and will you accept the gift of people that urban theological education provides for all of us in the wider church community? The voice of the people of the city is being heard and profound contributions are being made.

The Gift of Structure:
Challenges to How We Conduct Theological Education

In addition to the question of who participates in theological education, urban theological education has challenged the church and its schools to reconsider the question of how we do theological education *per se*. Urban theological educators resonate with our forefathers and mothers in the Latin American theological education by extension (TEE) movement when the latter challenged traditional methods of doing theological education and even such basic issues as our goals in theological education. Ross Kinsler and other founders of TEE asked: If theological education ultimately exists to train the leaders of local churches, why, then, have we established and perpetuated a theological education system in which we send young, inexperienced, recent

college graduates to seminary, train them in an isolated environment for three years, and then expect the church to ordain them and place them in its pulpits? Further, TEE founders asked, Why did we see fit to impose this system on the churches and cultures of our overseas mission fields?[7]

Urban theological education has followed the lead of TEE and rejected "business as usual" with regard to the goals and methods of traditional theological education. Urban theological educators have a North American version of what the Third World church overseas said to TEE administrators: "We do not want to have inexperienced, immature individuals in our pulpits, even if they are college-educated and seminary-trained." Rather, the urban church wants to identify and develop leadership within its own congregations, and it wants urban theological education programs to help them do so within its own context.

Thus urban theological education has been challenged to be contextual in its philosophy, methodology, and structure. Urban church leaders, who have demonstrated and matured in their own call to ministry by their service to their home churches in the city, do not have to leave their church or ministry in order to do formal theological education. Urban theological education has brought the classes, the class schedules, the professors, the readings, the administrators, the advisors, the accreditation mechanisms to the context where these women and men already exercise significant leadership. A gift of urban theological education to the wider church is the question of whether or not this might be the way to do *all* theological education.

I will illustrate why I think this is an important question to consider by returning to my own pilgrimage for a moment. As mentioned earlier, I left my home church in New York City to pursue theological education in a residential seminary. Even with a year of urban theological education among my three years of seminary, my return to Brooklyn was not easy. I had changed more quickly than my home church had in ways that it was not ready to understand or accept. Nor was I ready to continue in the same direction in which the church had been going for years (e.g., they were Pentecostal; I had become a little more "reserved"). I had been nurtured and matured as a leader in that church, but those three years away at seminary had socialized me away from my home church. Perhaps if my educational journey had taken a different turn, with my undergraduate study away from home and my graduate theological training while working with my church, things might have been different. At any rate, my work as an administrator in urban theological education years later sought to ensure that others received ministry training such that they are not lost to the urban church that nurtured them.

Whatever might be the implications of my own experience, it seems to me that what we have learned from urban theological education is applicable to the

entire enterprise of theological education: We should nurture individuals in the context of the church. We should require our seminary students, be they full-time or part-time, to stay with their "home-church" if they are going to seminary in their home town, or to declare a "home-church" if they come to us from out-of-town for the duration of their seminary studies, rather than just serve a church for field education credits. It is in the life of the church, we have learned from Theological Education by Extension and now from urban theological education, that the best training for ministry takes place.

We affirm, of course, that seminaries provide us what the church cannot: structured, prescribed opportunities to reflect rigorously on the practice of ministry, urban or otherwise, through dialogue with peers and the study of our shared traditions in scripture and history. Nonetheless, urban theological education has challenged the wider seminary community to consider how it structures seminary and ministerial training. Have we become out of touch with reality? Are we producing "scholars" in the narrowest definition of that term, i.e. good handlers of written texts, but not pastors, in the biblical notion of that term: shepherds of God's people, living texts, authentic servant-leaders? Ross Kinsler put it this way:

> Education does not consist of the quantity of information, books, lectures, and courses that a person can file away in his [or her] brain. And it has little to do with the "level" of schooling he or she can attain. Genuine education has to do with the understanding and ability to face one's world, deal with his problems, and meet his own and his group's needs. Theological education is growth in Christian living and ministry, and it is best achieved through action and reflection in church and society. Theological education by extension offers the possibility of educational renewal in this fundamental sense.[8]

So does urban theological education in North America. However, the Latin American Theological Fraternity has pointed out several shortcomings of TEE, including an inability to move the traditional seminary beyond its *own* way of doing ministry training. Traditional seminaries have allowed TEE to exist as "alternative" means, but only on the outskirts of its programming. TEE, argued the Fraternity, was content to extend the seminary's traditional programs in nontraditional places, but failed to change the seminary's own traditional ways.[9]

Thus, with regard to TEE, the traditional seminary celebrated its creativity in extending its services overseas, but did not always learn the lessons from theological education by extension for its own creative restructuring of North American seminary education. We cannot let that happen with urban theological education, which is closer to home and should thereby be able to challenge

increasingly obsolete seminary administrative and academic structures. Hopefully, urban theological educators still have a hearing among the traditional seminaries, both their administrations and faculties, with regard to their overall programming.

Moreover, denominational leaders, parachurch agency leaders, and others in the wider church community can help us in this challenge. These leaders ought to look closely at the products that seminaries are putting out. Are today's seminary graduates ready to confront the complex realities of the world, which is increasingly becoming an urban world? Are denominational and agency leaders willing to say to our seminaries that urban theological education should not be just an appendage to traditional programming, but that it should be at the core of what we do in all our ministerial training? Traditional seminaries should be challenged to take a hard look at who they are training and how they are training them. Is there not much we can learn from urban theological education with regard to these questions of who participates and how the experience is structured? Ecclesial leaders should challenge our theological institutions to study urban theological education, which trains mature leaders right in their own context, often with much better results and also usually with less overall costs.[10]

The Gift of Content: The Wedding of Theory and Practice

This brings me to one final gift from urban theological education to the wider church, the gift of content or curriculum, what I call the wedding of the theoretical and the practical. Not only has urban theological education contributed to the questions of who comes to the table of theological education and how theological education is done, but also what is taught—the curriculum—is challenged by the practice of urban theological education.

We all know the age-old battle in seminary faculties with regard to the dichotomy of the so-called "theoretical disciplines" and the so-called "practical disciplines." A gift of urban theological education is to shatter the myth of such a dichotomy. This dichotomy has been exacerbated over the years by the influence of academic guilds upon our theological faculties. Although we can all agree that guilds have an important role to play in the academic work of faculty, should they be allowed to define what we in theological education should be about predominantly, namely, professional training for ministry?

I agree with Eldin Villafañe when he calls for "excellence in the urban training program," but an excellence which "especially [in] its curricula is not defined by the university/seminary guild with its heavy emphasis on theoretical content mastery." "Rather", Villafañe adds, "excellence will be contextually

defined by the quality, yes, rigorous demand, of integrating theory and practice in courses—in the overall curriculum."[11] Thus Villafañe calls urban training programs to give "serious weight to the dialectic of practice." Moreover, this action-reflection model for curricular design of the urban theological education program also means that the so-called theoretical disciplines of the theological curriculum—church history, systematics, ethics, biblical studies, etc.—are "informed by the context of ministry."[12]

Villafañe cites Justo González, who also writes about this action-reflection approach to curriculum and the theological education models that utilized it:

> This is a model which believes that theological education must not only be grounded in the place where a Christian is already ministering, but should also make use of that ministry and that experience as part of the raw material for theological reflection. While it believes in academic rigor, it also believes that such rigor is not an end in itself, but is rather to be placed at the service of education, and that there are therefore other considerations that are just as important.[13]

Therefore, urban theological education has taught all of us the need to go beyond the divisions of the practical and the theoretical in our curriculum. For authentic, quality ministry training to take place, urban or otherwise, rigorous reflection on pastoral action must be at the core of the theological disciplines, whether we are studying church history, theology, preaching, counseling, or the Pauline letters.

The latter reflects my own field of study. Having taught the New Testament both in the setting of urban theological education and the traditional seminary classroom, I am convinced that there is no better way to teach biblical interpretation to future ministers—including the use of historical-grammatical Greek exegesis—than to reflect together on the impact of the New Testament documents in their original setting for our practice of ministry today. Moreover, it is not just that first we figure out what the texts meant back then and then make the hermeneutical leap to the present. Such hermeneutics falsifies reality, especially the reality of how we do biblical interpretation once we get out of our seminary classrooms and into our parishes. Rather, by placing our ministerial questions of today honestly in the forefront, we actually are helped to illuminate our questioning of the ancient texts and the lives and ministries of the people represented in those texts—without necessarily committing that fearful "sin" of eisegesis. What we can have, I believe, is an urban hermeneutics.[14]

Thus in biblical studies and other disciplines, urban theological education has given the wider church new ways of teaching and training for ministry, in

which the so-called academic and practical disciplines of our theological curriculum—content—are more integrated around the issue of the locus of ministry—context. Traditional seminaries and the wider church should study closely the curriculum work of urban theological education programs and accept this gift of content.

Future Gifts of Urban Theological Education

As I conclude this essay, let me summarize the gifts of urban theological education to the wider ecclesial and theological institutions, and then suggest some future gifts that need to be developed.

I have argued that the gifts of urban theological education to the wider church include a challenge as to who is included at the table of theological discourse. Urban theological education has made available voices that have not been heard before—black, Latino, urban constituents of the inner city church. Secondly, urban theological education has given us the challenge of how we are going to do theological education and ministry training as a whole. We should take seriously the successful models of urban theological education and what they might teach us about the process and structure for training leaders for the church. Perhaps in-service training models are not just for those who cannot get away to our more traditional, residential seminary campuses. Perhaps isolation and the university model for seminary training ill-equip the leaders of all our churches. Perhaps we should empower our churches to be more of a focal point and locus of our theological education.

Finally, I raised the issue of the content of our theological curriculum. Urban theological education's efforts to resolve the dichotomy of theory and practice by consciously promoting *praxis*—action-reflection models of teaching—across all of the theological disciplines is a gift for the wider church to demand of all its seminary curricular instruction.

This brings me to some suggestions of gifts to be developed. If, first of all, urban theological education practices and promotes the wedding of the classical traditions in theological education with the serious reflection on the practice of ministry, we ought also then to reconsider how we develop not only our ministers but also our scholars. Urban theological education should present a challenge to the graduate schools that provide our seminary faculty: What kind of teaching faculty and scholars do all seminaries want and need? We want, and the church needs, faculty who are trained with "the wedding" in tact, not with "divorce" in mind. The next generation of the church's teachers and leaders must assure that the "beast" of the dichotomy does not rear its head in urban theological education nor in any theological education enterprise.

Such a task, however, will entail joint efforts. Urban theological educators want to influence our seminaries with new ways for all of us to carry out our mission. We also want to influence graduate schools. However, the administrations and faculties of traditional seminaries, given their long-held influence, will have to help in this task. Indeed, in many ways faculty in particular will have to lead the way. For example, over the years I have met faculty in urban theological education programs who have explicitly stated their preference to teach not solely from the perspective of the academy, but to pastor, and to teach in a seminary from that perspective. One colleague pastors an inner city church, directs a Hispanic studies program for a major seminary, and teaches biblical studies for that seminary as well. He told me once, "I want to publish from the pulpit." The traditional expectation for faculty, including seminary faculty, has been "publish or perish." Urban theological education calls for seminary faculties that will include those who "publish from the parish." We need to lobby graduate schools that train seminary faculty to encourage taking the parish seriously as a context for good scholarly work.

Many leaders of urban theological education have taken this hard route in our graduate work. Many of us, for example, have done our course work and/or our exams while serving the urban church and urban theological education programs. At some point in our pilgrimage through doctoral programs, usually to write our dissertations, we have taken time off from our responsibilities to churches and programs. Nonetheless, we have carried with us to our study all of the experience and reflections of our ministry as we do our research and writing. Urban theological education, the church and all seminaries, from here on into the next century, should challenge graduate schools to legitimate these patterns of study, especially for those future faculty who will train the future ministers of our congregations.

If we are concerned about the future faculty for our seminaries, we must also be concerned for our future students. Particularly, we must be concerned about our younger generation growing up in our urban centers, even those growing up in our churches. We must have sober reflection on what is happening to the children, the youth, and the families of our cities—and our suburbs—with the increasing violence, drugs, domestic abuse, and troubled school systems. Urban theological education has been and must continue to be a part of God's saving action on behalf of the children of our cities, who represent our future.

Through our pastors and churches, we must identity those young people who can be the conduits of God's action on behalf of our future generations. These young people must not only be themselves protected from the drugs and the violence. That is the church's job and we must train our people to help congregations do that. We must also look for ways to encourage young people

to consider the ministry as a viable option for their life's work. They must be taught that they can reach out to others, and that they can do this well through the church. Moreover, these young people must begin to understand early that good church leadership for this daunting task deserves high-quality, contextualized theological education.

Thus I recommend a common effort among denominations, parachurch agencies, urban theological education programs, traditional seminaries, and the wider church to reach down into the younger generation and begin early the process of identifying, encouraging, nurturing, and training the next generation of church leaders, who, rather than be trained in such a way as to "escape" the city, will be primed to work on its behalf. Past efforts by the Fund for Theological Education in New York to introduce black college students to seminary training and Andover Newton Theological School's conferences on its campus to expose Hispanic high school youth to seminary life are two examples of the types of programs that are needed in a major way. The young people of our urban churches are the best candidates to minister to their peers mired in hopelessness. Seminaries must get involved early in preparing them.

Finally, urban theological educators, and their related institutions, must be more intentional in telling the story of the great gift to the wider church and seminary community that their programs represent. Many of these programs have been around for more than twenty years now. They are perhaps the best kept secrets in theological education, although some of their stories have been published.[15] However, beyond the stories, it is the concrete gifts of these programs—the challenges of their constituencies, the creativity of their structures, and the relevancy of their curricula—that need to be lifted up, written about, and disseminated so that the impact can be felt across the whole spectrum of theological education and the church community.

The constituencies of urban theological education—our churches and our cities—and all that has been learned over the years deserve no less, that we not only give gifts for others to celebrate, but that we leave a legacy for all to follow.

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ENDNOTES

1.   See Harold Recinos, *Hear the Cry! A Latino Pastor Challenges the Church* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989), especially 17-39, for further reflections on growing up in the South Bronx and New York City.

2.   For a thorough study of Hispanic Pentecostalism, see Eldin Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit: Toward An Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1993), especially 84-102.

3.   Hispanic Bible Institutes have been the major source for Hispanic ministry training in the U.S. for more than fifty years. See Justo González, *The Theological Education of Hispanics* (New York: The Fund for Theological Education, 1988).

4.   Among these have been programs started in the last twenty years or so, and still going strong, including the Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME) in Boston, a campus of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary; the Center for Urban Theological Studies (CUTS) in Philadelphia, an independent entity with ties to Geneva College and Westminster Seminary; and the Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE), an urban training program for students from a variety of seminaries in the Chicago area. The resurgence of New York Theological Seminary as a contextual theological institution, intentionally serving urban constituencies in the New York City area, has also taken place in the last twenty-five years.

5.   Justo González, *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990).

6.   Ibid., 52.

7.   For these and other fundamental challenges to traditional theological education from a pioneer of the TEE movement in Latin America, see F. Ross Kinsler, *The Extension Movement in Theological Education: A Call to the Renewal of the Ministry* (South Pasadena: The William Carey Library, 1981).

8.   Kinsler, *Extension Movement*, 18.

9.   See critique of the TEE movement by the Latin American Theological Fraternity, gathered in Quito, Ecuador in 1985, in its published concluding document, C. Rene Padilla, ed., *Nuevas Alternativas in Educacion Teologica* (Buenos Aires/Grand Rapids: Nueva Creacion/Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1986).

10.   For example, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, the parent institution of the Center for Urban Ministerial Education, started a Charlotte, North Carolina, campus several years ago, that while not necessarily geared for urban ministry training, nonetheless, projected many of the lessons learned from CUME, which Gordon-Conwell began in 1976. These included a varied menu of course scheduling, including weekend classes, a constituency intentionally identified as working adults, and a field education component called, like CUME's, "Mentored Ministry" because it identified an outside consultant, a "mentor," to work with ministry students already in place at their home churches.

11.   Eldin Villafañe, "Essential Elements for An Effective Seminary-Based Urban Ministry Program" in *Seek the Peace: Reflections on Urban Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1995), 86

12.   Ibid.

13.   Ibid. See González, *The Theological Education of Hispanics*, 102.

14. This reflects, of course, newer thinking on biblical hermeneutics represented in reader-oriented criticism and postmodernist approaches. Ironically, these have been influenced greatly by the biblical work of minority and third-world communities. See, for example, Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert, *Reading from this Place*, Volume I: *Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States* and Volume II: *Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in Global Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994 and 1995) and Justo L. González, *La Santa Biblia: The Bible through Hispanic Eyes* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995).

15. Notably, the story of New York Theological Seminary's reinvention into a consciously urban seminary can be found in Robert W. Pazmiño, *Seminary in the City: A Study of New York Theological Seminary* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1988) and George W. Webber, *Led by the Spirit: The Story of New York Theological Seminary* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1990). See also Villafañe, *Seek the Peace*, especially the essays on urban theological education by Villafañe, Doug Hall, Efrain Agosto, and Bruce Jackson, which reflect learnings from years of work together at the Center for Urban Ministerial Education in Boston.