Theological Education

ISSUE FOCUS: *Former ATS Presidents Reflect on
the Future of Theological Education in the New Millennium*

Theological Education

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Continuing the Conversation

Theological Education invites responses, of up to 1500 words, to articles published in the journal in order to foster conversation among its readers. Reader responses may be e-mailed to the Managing Editor at <merrill@ats.edu>. Responses may be edited for length.

Introduction

Daniel O. Aleshire

As the twenty-first century and the new millennium were approaching, the ATS Communications Advisory Committee suggested the focus of this issue of *Theological Education:* to invite past presidents of the Association to share their thoughts and observations on the state of graduate, professional theological education at this moment. The committee members proposed a range of questions that might prompt reflection and wise assessment: What have been some of the major accomplishments of the past, and what challenges endure? What gives you hope about our common enterprise? What gives you pause? What have been the elements of continuity or change within theological education or within the Association as a whole? How has theological education been influenced by the broader culture, and how has it responded?

Six of nine past presidents of ATS, who were invited to contribute to this volume, accepted the invitation, and within these pages they offer incisive comments with familiar themes. They also pose questions whose answers are critical for many future improvements in theological education.

The final article in this issue reports the findings of a survey of ATS member schools, conducted in the spring of 1998, on cross-cultural relationships of ATS institutions, one of the concluding activities of the ATS "Incarnating Globalization" project.

"Some Reflections on Institutional and Cultural Issues Facing Theological Education" offers a number of observations relevant to most ATS accredited institutions. Vincent Cushing's comments pose enduring challenges to theological education. How does one analyze the pastoral situation of the local and regional church, and describe the task of theological education for ministry? How is the action of the Spirit taking place through vocations, and what does such action demand of the format for delivering theological education? If significantly more lay people are preparing for professional ministry than men are studying for the ordained ministry in the Roman Catholic communion, how should theological education for ministry take place? Whom does the church call and the seminaries enroll for theological education? How will the churches' answers to the following questions influence theological education: What is the reasonable role of religion in human society? How will churches effectively pass on the Christian Tradition? What practices of evangelization do churches' respective missions mandate? *How* should the people of God go about reflecting critically on faith? Who does the thinking *for* the church?

"Theological Education Beyond 2000: A Canadian Perspective" observes that graduates of ATS institutions will practice ministry in religiously diverse contexts, and yet the basic curricula of many seminaries often do not explicitly

address many of the realities and challenges of religious pluralism. C. Douglas Jay suggests that recognizing such a deficiency is an opportunity for theological institutions to prepare more adequately their candidates for ministry. Jay maintains that adding courses to curricula is not the answer. Rather, each institution should create a dialogical ethos through the curriculum and educational practices.

"Reflections on My Twenty-Five Years in Theological Education" celebrates some of the accomplishments of the community of theological schools, namely, the ecumenical nature of ATS work, the successes and continuing efforts to educate women for Christian service and leadership, and the growing body of literature that addresses numerous facets of theological education. Barbara Brown Zikmund also shares her concerns about the rising costs of theological education for the students and the institutions, about what has become acceptable levels of intellectual, academic work for entry into positions of church leadership, about the potential of technology to transform theological education, and about the impact of religious pluralism and the lack of thoughtful, educative practices to prepare Christian leaders for the diverse contexts in which they will minister.

"Theological Education at the Edge of a New Century" reflects on the Association as an organization and addresses current Baptist graduate theological education, while suggesting future concerns. Russell H. Dilday maintains that theological education serving Southern Baptists has a particular opportunity to create fresh institutional patterns and to experiment with new forms of teaching and learning. By generalizing from the Southern Baptist context, Dilday speculates that effective theological education in the new millennium will be committed to first-rate scholarship, will address spiritual formation as well as faith and character development, will balance theoretical and practical educative concerns, will promote preaching as a major organizing principle in the curricula, while providing students with a strong grounding in biblical and theological studies, will use emerging technologies appropriately, and will value objective accreditation.

"Looking Forward, Looking Backward: A View of Theological Education at the Beginning of a New Millennium" begins by noting the progress theological education has made in recent decades in responding to internal institutional pressures and cultural shifts. James L. Waits then identifies six areas in which he believes the community of theological institutions can improve its effective role of enabling religious leadership and influencing the communities in which they reside and minister. Among the areas he discusses are the needs for progress in racial, ethnic, and gender diversity in theological education; for attracting academically talented students to theological study; for fully integrating globalization in teaching and research; for bridging the "interpretive gap" between theological schools and the churches; and for assessing the impact of technology on theological schools' programs and missions.

"Theological Education in the Twenty-First Century" identifies some of the opportunities and some of the "competitive" influences on theological institutions. Luder Whitlock suggests that reflections on North American's increased attention to spirituality and to Christian practices of faith in everyday life, and to technological innovations and applications, can help us gain insights into a few of the future opportunities for theological education. Large churches and megachurches now "compete," in his view, with traditional theological education by recruiting staff and establishing pastoral training programs to provide, in their opinion, more useful and realistic training for ministry. How can seminaries and megachurches find ways to share expertise, develop collaborative programs, and pool appropriate resources, while also nurturing their respective faculties, cooperating with other seminaries, and listening to diverse constituencies?

"Our Words Are Beginning to Make It So: ATS Schools on Cross-Cultural Relationships and Globalization" reports further findings of the Incarnating Globalization project of ATS, findings not addressed in previous volumes of this journal. The article discusses the purpose, history, content, and results of a survey sent to 235 ATS institutions in the spring of 1998. Judith Berling comments on the results in order "to raise questions for consideration by the schools, suggest multiple interpretations, and to stimulate further conversation within the ATS community." Since the initial focus on globalization in the early 1980s, has globalization reached far beyond peripheral concerns and focused programs, and approached the ethos of many ATS institutions?

Some Reflections on Institutional and Cultural Issues Facing Theological Education

Vincent Cushing, OFM

By the time you read this I will have been out of the presidency at the Washington Theological Union for more than a year. As the days grow into weeks and the weeks slip into months, a few basic observations are emerging and offer opportunity for review and comment. It is in that spirit of dialogue that I share these observations with the community of theological educators and, more especially, with those Protestant and Catholic colleagues who serve as presidents of theological schools. My overriding comments concern, understandably, the confession of which I am a member, the Roman Catholic, and the level of its potential and actual success in educating for ministry within the North American context. Here and there throughout this article I offer comments relevant to most accredited schools, since I have served on accrediting teams for numerous seminaries. I approach this reflection from my experience and what I offer is clearly opinion, material for conversation, challenge, and refinement. It is offered as much to stimulate as to inform, but always with the awareness that it is only my opinion. I will welcome any responses you offer.

First, I wish to offer one or the other general reflection on the cultural situation facing theological education today. Thoroughly aware that this may seem a truism, I suggest that the overriding context for theological education for ministry is the pastoral situation of the local and regional church. The difficult part of the question is this: How do you *analyze the pastoral situation* of the local or regional church? The best available tools from sociology, demographics, human organizational studies, and social analysis need to be brought to bear on the question. Other factors also need to be brought into the conversation: the history of that local or regional church, the rate of change going on in society, and ethnic and racial influences. Equally important, however, is the need for a contemporary ecclesiology that is energizing the church to be brought into the dialogue as a determining influence. Nevertheless, in the Roman Catholic communion this is not an easy task. The difficulty is not that we Catholics lack a sound, strong contemporary theology of the church—indeed that was perhaps the foundational contribution of Vatican Council II in the mid-1960s—but whether that theology is indeed operative within the church today, or whether the daily operations of the church from its central headquarters effectively negates the vibrant ecclesiology of communion and local church that is the theological heritage of Vatican II. One cannot

read ecclesiology solely from the wisdom of a Karl Rahner, Yves Congar, or Edward Schillebeeckx, or Leonardo Boff, Gustavo Gutiérrez, or Avery Dulles; one also needs to see which working policies are shaping the church. At this time in the American Catholic experience, there is a tendency to pay lip service to Vatican II, but to return to a pre-Vatican II working theology of the church. The upshot of this is both confusing and demoralizing. One needs to ask how far-reaching this experience of "restorationism" will go before local bishops assert their proper role of pastoral leadership.

When this task is done well, the material for pastoral planning on a large scale is then in place. Conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of environment: needs described, goals set, and plans implemented. This can then be communicated to all interested publics, and especially the seminary. From this web of material a church is in a sound position to describe what it sees as the task of theological education for ministry. In simple terms, this means that there must always be a serious and mutual conversation and pastoral analysis going on between church and seminary. While a school cannot reinvent itself, I suggest that planning cycles of about every ten to fifteen years will assist seminaries and schools for ministry in keeping up their service to the church and in addressing the contemporary pastoral situations from the strength of a strong theological tradition.

An effective joining of a robust ecclesiology with a sound analysis of the pastoral situation can serve both to keep the seminary at a level of pastoral relevance and keep the church at a level of theological literacy. Both are sometimes lacking today. In designing the school's curriculum, other templates are frequently offered: tradition, Bible, or systematic theology being the most common from a content side and a preoccupation with "relevance" offered from a process side. In the case of the latter, this is often reduced to blessing the most recent headlines or a rather naïve acceptance of the currently politically correct slate that is uncritically swallowed by otherwise critical scholars. We have seminaries that are occasionally irrelevant because of excessive concentration on one or the other side of this issue. On the one hand, we have fundamentalism, both old and new. Two examples of this are the biblical fundamentalism present in some Protestant schools and a magisterial/church authority fundamentalism present in some Catholic schools. In neither case is it a question of bad will or lack of care or intelligence. In both cases it is the emergence of an ideological attitude that fosters these extremes and adversely affects the educational climate of an institution or a confession.

Finally, if the correlation of pastoral planning and seminary curriculum development is maintained faithfully and kept fresh in terms of a shared community of conversation between church and seminary, then it is possible to distill from this conversation specialized forms of education to respond to the pastoral or cultural needs of specific groups. (We see a similar effort toward general *and* specialized education increasingly in other professions, such as

medicine and law.) This enables the church to decide how it relates to society and the public role that it will play within society. Otherwise, the church runs a risk of becoming a mere chaplain in the court, and the role of ministry is reduced to purely palliative functions of accompaniment and comforting words. Unfortunately, some of our students (and, I fear, our schools) will settle for this lowest common denominator as a sign of effectiveness in ministerial education.

A second general observation is directed mainly to the Roman Catholic communion, but also has ramifications for Protestant colleagues. I refer to the remarkable increase in the numbers of laity who are intent on preparing for the public, lay ministries of the churches. For example, in the Roman Catholic Church in 1998 there were approximately 3,000 men studying for the ordained ministry of the church, but there were approximately 25,000 persons studying in a host of programs that prepare, certify, and grant degrees or certificates to lay persons preparing for ministerial service and leadership. This rise in candidates for lay ministry needs to be factored into the planning and programs of theological educators. It also raises the question for us about where and how the action of the Spirit is taking place in the church. It will demand a variety of responses, the most demanding of which centers around the format for delivering theological education. Given that one cannot reasonably expect lay people to give up job and support while they study for ministry, the question becomes this: *Where* and *how* will theological education for ministry take place in the future church? What is crystal clear is that the issue of quality needs to be maintained, but it will have to be quality now understood in relation to a specific type of ministry, or a specific program, and the criteria that affirm quality in those particular efforts.

It is too easy to dismiss this in terms of distance education. Although distance education, whether by computer or interactive television, may well yield a positive contribution, serious questions surrounding it await careful thought, educational design, and evaluation. The central issue that awaits serious discussion is how community shapes and influences both the academic formation and the spiritual formation of candidates for ministry. It is not enough merely to convey theological information when discussing preparation for ministry. The entire range of human response must be involved both intellectually and spiritually. This is done best in a community of disciples. So, distance education is only part of the issue and refers mainly to a method of conveying needed theological information. Moreover, anything less than a human and communal assessment, both intellectually and personally, cannot handle the evaluation of suitability for ministry. The question, then, is this: How will schools of divinity and seminaries respond to this large concern?

My last general observation concerns a phenomenon in American Christianity that I believe merits serious consideration. I suggest that there are two or three interrelated issues that the churches of North America need to face and

that have an impact on education for ministry. I address the three aspects of the issue as questions:

• How will organized Christianity (the churches) relate effectively to the powerful North American culture? This raises again the church-world question, but now from the specific angle of the reasonable role of religion in any human society.
• How will the churches carry forward the Tradition of Christianity to current and future generations?
• What is the evangelizing task the churches need to take up to be faithful to their mission?

First, there is no denying the profound effect that North American culture has on the faithful Christian—in economics, media, entertainment, the arts, and education. At the same time the Catholic tradition affirms that grace is everywhere, and especially in the cultural achievements of races, nations, and human thought. So, how the question is posed is important; in the Catholic tradition it cannot be the church against the world. So, there is an inherent tension present in this equation in the best of times. It seems, today, that the values of Christianity are not taken into consideration in the give and take of everyday life in the prevailing culture, with its celebrity worship, consumerism, sports and fitness as religion, and the breakdown of marriage and family life. One asks, "Do we need to fashion a 'new apologetics' to address the reasonable value of religion in society and as a source of meaning in human life?" Ultimately, cultural advances are trying to nurture the human spirit to produce within it human understanding and paths to walk through life. We need sufficient perspective on organized religion to assess how it is or is not carrying out this role. We need to see if there are points of mutual interdependence and worthwhile intersection.

Secondly, I think it is accurate to say that in American Christianity (both Catholic and mainstream Protestant) the educational task of passing on the Tradition is no longer effectively carried out. Whether that is a failure of religious educators or the result of the juggernaut of an all-pervasive culture, or, indeed, whether it is partially both, the issue is a serious one. How will this pastoral and intellectual issue of education for life in the faith be addressed? Perhaps some departments or programs of religious education are taking it up, but it does not stand at the forefront of the churches' educational agenda. Normally, this issue has not stood as a concern of the seminary, at least in the Catholic tradition. Should it be a concern? If so, how does one maintain a graduate program of theology while addressing the catechetical imperative raised? Does this suggest a form of specialized education for ministry that needs to be implemented sooner rather than later?

Lastly, because evangelization differs from catechetics, how does one evangelize this mammoth culture and the numerous subcultures within it?

Where are the significant levers to admit contemporary Christianity as a conversation partner into higher education, the arts, media, and the corporate board room? Currently, religion exercises either a censorious voice or is blissfully ignorant of its exclusion. Where does the public service of religion in society achieve a place of critical respect as a partner in the intellectual and human dialogue about the shape of life?

I turn now to lesser, but nevertheless realistic, institutional issues that have engaged my thought over the past months. I do so aware of the observation of David Tracy that theology serves three publics: the church, the academy, and society. First, I believe the really creative educational thinking that energized the institution I served came mainly from events, persons, or organizations *external* to the school itself. Let me offer a few examples.

The decision to educate laity was prompted by gifted lay persons who insisted they had experienced a call to serve the church and now needed appropriate education. As one woman said, "We need good education and suitable spiritual formation—but not the *same* program that seminarians receive." The entrance of laity—married, single, women, men, blue collar and professional, all races—has immeasurably enriched the experience of educating for ministry. By definition and demography, they bring diversity, and often creativity, built on maturity and experience. They are also changing the face of ministry as we will experience it in this century. They ask different questions than clerical students ask and are usually most interested in how classroom material can be translated to pulpit and people.

A trustee, a person deeply enmeshed in the life of politics in this city, challenged the chair of our board this way: "If it's a question of educating candidates for ordination, that can be done almost anywhere in the U.S. I want to know what *this* divinity school brings to the conversations of Washington, D.C." He was asking whether we, precisely as a divinity school, brought any "value added" dimension to the national and international conversations that make up the community of conversation in this city that serves as the center of power nationally and internationally. He wanted to know what Christian thinkers have to say about key policies to other professionals who are working on them on a daily basis. When we as an institution tried to respond to that searching query, we found that the constraints of schedule, the demands of teaching and scholarship, and the ongoing narrowing of the academic enterprise made it very difficult for the institution to respond in ways that respected the seriousness of the issue. In retrospect, there is no doubt in my mind that our institution had a splendid opportunity to deepen and develop its mission in ways that would mark it as unique and engaged in history. I am not at all certain that we responded to that challenge. Our main problem was time and availability. I believe it remains an unaddressed need.

Educational challenges often came from the peoples of new immigration. Despite the strong demographic reality—that fifty percent of American Catholics are Hispanic and have a culture quite foreign to the dominant American-

Anglo culture, for example—we as an institution struggled endlessly, and, I fear, unsuccessfully, to address the issue within our educational program. True, we were able to accomplish a strong curriculum revision, one whose operative matrix afforded the key role to social analysis as the engine to produce a reflective pastoral practitioner, but that still did not adequately address, in my view, the cultural diversity sweeping through the Catholic population of the U.S. Of course, it might be that our teaching of social analysis was weak and presumed an operational role in the curriculum that was more fiction than fact. Or, it might be that social analysis is not the best way to address significant cultural upheaval. In any event, the school I served tried mightily to address the changing culture, but only time will tell if it did so effectively.

The quest for excellence—so often a hackneyed bromide among educators—was most encouraged by interested *lay* people—curiously, *not* by clergy—who had sought the very best education for their sons and daughters at America's prestigious universities. As one generous trustee challenged me: "Vincent, you talk a lot about excellence, but I don't see you or the faculty doing much to achieve it. It's more a public relations ploy. Why should I give to that institution to perpetuate mediocrity in ministerial education?" This painful query prompted me to meet with faculty to discuss these issues and subsequently they designed a reasonably good curriculum reform, not necessarily forward-looking in every aspect, but able to engage the present problematic better than what we had been doing.

The most serious internal problems were, unfailingly, finances and personnel. Try as they might, American seminaries, both Catholic and Protestant except for a fortunate few, always struggle mightily with financial stringency. I believe it was Robert Lynn, formerly of Lilly Endowment, who once advised incoming presidents, "Take care of the finances first and foremost, and then you can deal with academic quality." I think that's right. In more than twenty accrediting visits in which I participated, finances were almost always the neuralgic issue when there were serious problems. In those schools that were financially stable, other problems were solvable. How seminaries will deal with finances in the future is a complex and riveting issue, and one that the churches need to take up as well as the seminaries. We have a strange phenomenon at present of candidates picking and choosing their seminaries, and the churches maintaining a type of hands-off approach to the financing of schools. This is also true in the Catholic tradition, where some dioceses and religious institutes of sisters and priests merely pay the tuition of students, but play no role in ensuring the financial future of the seminary or school of divinity. In addition, in the Catholic communion, the changing composition of the student body with the influx of lay students is resulting in a cohort of students who need large amounts of scholarship assistance. Where will Catholic seminaries secure the kind of funding they need to educate the students, many now married with families, who are interested in serving the church?

The second internal problem area is a combination of finances and personnel. First, I believe I am accurate in saying that Roman Catholic seminary salary ranges and benefit packages are increasingly noncompetitive when compared to university and college salaries and benefits. So, the question arises: Are promising scholars, especially those keen on publishing, being drawn predominantly to colleges and universities that can offer better salaries and benefits? How will seminaries compete with this? Roman Catholic schools of theology and seminaries operate for the most part on a basis of "contributed services." This means that a salary may be listed at $50,000 per year for a particular post, but the professor receives only a percentage of that in real cash (perhaps fifty percent) or may receive what is termed a "clerical stipend," which is usually a good deal less than the going salary for that position and rank. Moreover, Roman Catholic seminary education is built on the assumption that faculty will be mainly priests or members of religious institutes, and thus, single persons with no family to support. But that is changing and will continue to change. Now, all sisters and many priests need a normal, competitive salary either to help support one's religious community or life as a priest and to ensure reasonable health care or retirement. So, the question emerges: Are Roman Catholic seminaries and schools of theology heading toward serious institutional and financial crisis, when education for ministry in seminaries will not be feasible given the salary and benefits structure, and as the professoriate becomes increasingly professional and lay?

In Catholic theological education, a second issue is influencing the number of available candidates for the professoriate: the way the Catholic Church in the U.S. monitors its seminaries and schools of theology and how this creates a negative atmosphere in building a quality faculty. Young, promising scholars of my acquaintance are fearful of being subjected to jarring doctrinal review by ecclesiastical monitors. This is becoming an increasingly discouraging factor in the hiring of promising and creative professors in the disciplines of sexual and medical ethics, and in systematic theology—Christology, ministry, sacraments, and the theological treatment of Mary. This touches on the whole issue of the staffing of seminary faculties and the quality of the scholars serving on them. Younger scholars need to be assured that there is a presumption of good will toward them, and, should difficulties arise, that existing due processes would be followed carefully.

This raises a major issue facing Catholic seminaries: the relationship between the church and seminary. It is clear that the seminary is a school of the church, that is its very *raison d'etre. But*, it is also clear that seminary is a school, and *not* church. The primary tasks of the theological school are to explore, teach, communicate, and yield understanding that will serve the church in its theological understanding, in its preparation of pastors, and in relation to the church's catechetical and evangelizing activity. Careful distinctions and appreciation of differing roles have to be made for the relationship of church and

seminary to be mutually enriching and educationally sound. The very fact that seminaries are schools of *theology* for ministry means that the business of *doing* theology is, in the first moment, the daily activity and ongoing task of the seminary. Theology is a second level, reflexive analysis of the Christian deposit of faith. If the professoriate is not thinking and discussing issues theologically, it is not faithful to its discipline and is not serving the church. By its nature, theological exploration is dialectical and inexact in its early, mid-term, and final expressions, and culture and the necessarily partial nature of every human expression always and everywhere condition all theology. Hence, review for soundness and service to the Gospel, when and if necessary, must take into account these aspects of the process both in regard to the nature of theology and the stage of maturity of its expression. Moreover, there needs to be agreement on the process and the justice by which review is carried out. If this is ignored, the proper autonomy of the seminary and its academic integrity are seriously compromised.

Sound theological thinking is best done within a community of thinkers, discussed critically and reflectively over a period of time. Its conclusions, framed tentatively, are then made available to a larger community of scholars who can critique and comment on them. This necessarily requires that freedom of inquiry and professional respect for competence be accorded to the exploring scholar. She or he needs a forum in which comfortably and freely to express ideas, test theories, frame initial conclusions, and do so with the presumption that her or his good will and professional competence is taken for granted. When that procedure is short-circuited, when anonymous allegations of heterodoxy are made, or when untimely review or clandestine reporting on scholarly work takes place, without the scholar even knowing that such a process is going on, then the academic enterprise is irretrievably compromised and the scholar grossly mistreated. So, the unresolved issue is to fashion a workable template to ensure that the relationship is mutually respectful of the legitimate concerns of both entities. Not enough thought and analysis have been given to this agendum and it cries out for attention.

A related question about personnel centers around students, especially qualification for admission and issues related to sexual orientation. Roman Catholicism needs to reflect carefully on the type of student presenting himself for consideration as a candidate for ordination. An unexpectedly high percentage, even though candidates are few in number, seem to be rigid persons with little interest in an informed, reflective life of the mind or the ability to live with balance and equanimity in a quickly changing world. This entire problem is further exacerbated by what seems to be a permanent drop in the number of candidates for ordained ministry. A second issue, one only barely voiced, concerns the sexual orientation of candidates for ministry in the Catholic Church of North America. The question is this: Are candidates for Catholic ordination disproportionately homosexual in relation to the American male

population? We are led to understand that approximately five to ten percent of North Americans have a homosexual orientation. Commentators on the Catholic situation indicate that the percentage may be as much as five times greater among priesthood candidates.[1] It would seem worthwhile that this be studied to understand whether it is so, and if it is, why it is so. How will this issue be dealt with on a policy basis? Is that policy best framed nationally or locally? Should the policy be that admission is permissible, but acting out one's orientation is not? Is that realistic? What would constitute a critical mass of such candidates? What do Catholic laity think about this issue? The bottom line is that this issue seems to be purposely ignored by church authorities and that it does not receive the attention it merits.

This leads to another question, one not unknown in seminary circles: Who thinks *for* the church? It is clear that departments of religion seldom take up church-related questions. They are most concerned about theology or religious studies in and for the academy. They are even more removed from issues of pastoral *praxis*. Yet Catholic people in the United States (with 45 of 62 million having some relationship to the church) bring hosts of pastoral queries and pastoral needs to the persons we educate in seminaries. I am fully aware that in the Catholic tradition bishops speak for the church, but that does not mean that they are the thinking community of the church, nor does it mean that they are excluded from that community. Rather, the development of thought and *praxis* is the result of the interaction of numerous communities in the church: bishop, faithful, seminaries, academics, and local pastors. Moreover, the "framing of the question" comes only after a time of study, discussion, and critique has taken place. It cannot be hurried and there is no advantage ever in reviewing an issue before it is mature.

I raise this question because it seems that "thinking for the church" is something now slipping into desuetude in the current climate of the local churches of Roman Catholicism. Numerous Catholic intellectuals give the church a wide berth indeed, some because they have been officially reprimanded or investigated by the church. Seldom does the church err on the side of gentleness or openness; to many it appears unduly harsh, defensive, and insecure. The tendency is for responsible scholars to step away from the church. But when this happens we lose a very important voice in the formulation of church thinking and pastoral *praxis*. There is not sufficient mining of the Catholic tradition nor is sufficient attention paid to a "pastoral solution" in which ameliorating circumstances permit a practice otherwise frowned upon. This is further exacerbated when officials in the Catholic communion look to the church's central government for definitive answers. In some cases, not all, that is a naïve and unproductive approach, as is evidenced by guidance on what are properly local church issues from a central authority an ocean and a continent away (e.g., the use of altar girls, who can participate in distributing communion, or the exercise of preaching in scholarly communities, for ex-

ample). The most recent egregious instance of this is a directive from Vatican bureaucrats, under the direction of a Spanish-speaking official, to exercise tighter control over translations into English in the liturgy. I suggest that *ordinarily* seminaries should exercise a central role of thinking through the pastoral issues both intellectually and for guidance in *praxis*. That does not mean they have the last word, far from it. But they should exercise a thoughtful, critical, reflective, and "framing" word and engage the large pastoral issues facing local or regional churches and areas. Then they should communicate that word to authorities and faithful for further consideration as responsible thought available in carrying out the pastoral ministry of the church.

What of the future? I am not comfortable about predicting future directions, and, indeed, would be quite satisfied if we dealt intelligently with the present. However, two issues stand on the horizon and command ongoing attention by seminaries as much as by church: the multiculturalism in American Catholicism and the emergence of laity into the ministry. Internally, I think the church would be well advised to commission a study on finances and seminary education. Lastly, and perhaps most sensitively, the relation of church and seminary needs to be worked at in a climate of mutual respect and presumption of good will.

Vincent Cushing, OFM, was president of ATS from 1982 to 1984. He retired from the presidency of the Washington Theological Union in Washington, DC, in 1999, having served as that institution's president for twenty-four years. He is currently director of Keystone Seminary Associates, a consulting service for American Roman Catholic seminaries.

ENDNOTE

1.   See Richard P. McBrien, "Homosexuality and the Priesthood: Questions We Can't Keep in the Closet," *Commonweal* (June 19, 1987); Andrew Greeley, "Bishops Paralyzed Over Heavily Gay Priesthood," *National Catholic Reporter,* November 10, 1989; P. Magnano, E. Schau, and S. Tokarski, *Assessment of Applicants for Priesthood* (Chicago: National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors, 1985); Timothy Unsworth, *The Last Priests in America* (New York: Crossroad, 1991); James G. Wolf, ed., *Gay Priests* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989); and Raymond Hedin, *Married to the Church* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995) as found in Donald B. Cozzens, *The Changing Face of the Priesthood* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2000) 98-99.

Theological Education Beyond 2000:
A Canadian Perspective

C. Douglas Jay

While the invitation to contribute to this issue of *Theological Education* is a distinct honor, it is somewhat daunting to try to respond to a request to offer a "wise assessment" of the major accomplishments of the past and the meaning of the changes that have occurred for the future of graduate, professional theological education at this moment in history.

I do welcome the opportunity, however, to affirm from a Canadian perspective the importance of the role AATS/ATS has played for more than six decades in providing a forum for brokering ideas and monitoring practices across a spectrum that is broader ecumenically and ideologically than any council of churches or other agency. It is also significant that it has been bi-national from the outset. At the meeting in 1934 of the predecessor "Conference of Theological Seminaries and Colleges in the United States and Canada," when it was decided to develop standards for accrediting institutions and to adopt a formal constitution, Principal Richard Davidson of Emmanuel College, Toronto, was elected president, and so a Canadian presided at the first meeting of the new "American Association of Theological Schools" in 1936. While Canadian membership has always been numerically small, ATS has provided a context for dialogue across not only denominational and other lines of division but also across the national line between a world power and a relatively powerless nation. The significance of this for the public role of theological education is an issue to which I shall return later.

It has always been important for theological educators to reflect critically on the historical context of theological education, and never more so than at this historical moment, generally designated as the beginning of a new century or millennium. We should be aware, however, that many of the world's billion or so Muslims count time from A.D. 622, Jews from 3761 B.C., and more than a billion Chinese from 2637 B.C., an aspect of our context that should have given pause to those making doomsday predictions at the close of the century. But of greater relevance for our readership is the fact that this symbolizes the rapidly increasing religious pluralism even in traditionally, though nominally, Christian Western countries like Canada and the U.S., together with the fact that in the global context, Christianity is no longer a dominantly Western religion. While there is increasing awareness of the religious pluralism in our home contexts, there is little recognition that in the global context, already more than half the world's Christians live in Africa, Asia, Latin and Caribbean America, or the Pacific. If present trends continue, the figure could be two-thirds at some

point in the twenty-first century. This is one of the contextual changes that should be seen to have an important bearing on the mission of theological schools in the way ahead. In the first two millennia, we have been accustomed to forms of Christian theology shaped by the interaction of Christian faith with Greek philosophy and Roman law, so that we generally assume that these are the normal and characteristic forms of Christianity. But in this new century, we can expect an accelerated process of new theological development arising from Christian interaction with the ancient cultures of Africa and Asia. This transition from Western dominance is not new except for its suddenness and rapidity, but it represents an enormous challenge to theologians both at home and abroad.

While the extent of the religious diversity of local contexts varies, the overall trends are clear. According to a United Nations survey, my local context of Toronto is the most religiously pluralistic in the world. While this may be to some degree atypical, if it was ever justifiable to ignore religious diversity in theological education, that time is past. Even a superficial look at the cities in which most of our theological schools are located would make it obvious that the implicit view of reality reflected in seminary curricula is seriously deficient in this respect. If religious pluralism is not explicitly addressed in the basic curriculum, an implicit and usually negative view of religious diversity is communicated, and thus the student is miseducated for ministry in contemporary society. While it is not possible to predict the precise nature of the interfaith challenge every graduate will face in the twenty-first century, theological educators must assume that a curriculum that does not explicitly address religious pluralism can no longer be presumed to be an adequate preparation for ministry in Canada or the United States.

This is no simple task, for the curriculum is already crowded, and the expectations of churches and the financial constraints of students militate against lengthening the program beyond three years. Another problem is that most faculty are not themselves the product of a theological education that seriously addressed religious pluralism. Yet this is a dimension of a changing context that must be seriously addressed, and it will require more than the provision of additional courses to give basic knowledge of other traditions. More fundamental is the need to create an ethos in which students become aware of the importance of religious diversity in society and are taught to relate to that diversity in a dialogical way. If a dialogical ethos is nurtured, students will be motivated to try to understand the faith traditions of their neighbors; if such an ethos is not fostered, courses in world religions will likely be treated as irrelevant to their ministry.

Faculty commitment to developing such an ethos can and should be reflected in the way most, if not all, existing disciplines are taught. Biblical studies can illustrate how religious diversity was addressed in the relation of Israel to Canaan, for example. Of contemporary significance is the critique of

the New Testament in relation to anti-Semitism. Church historians must examine not only the impact of the West on the rest of the world, but the increasing impact of the non-Western world on the West, and the interaction between a Christianity formulated in relation to Western needs and cultures and a whole series of other cultures with histories of their own. Systematic theologians should respond to these contextual changes by learning how to teach and think theologically in a dialogical way. This will, of course, prompt warnings about the danger of syncretism. Such a danger must not be minimized lest, for example, we forget the dilemma the European churches faced with the struggle to ensure that the Gospel was not compromised by an indiscriminate mixing of cultural symbols exploited by the Nazis. An indiscriminate syncretism fails to respect the integrity of Christian theology as well as the integrity of the tradition from which something may be borrowed. So a dialogical theology should not be syncretistic, but neither need it be adversarial. In a dialogical theology, concepts from other religious traditions may be introduced into theological reflection, at the very least in order to stimulate deeper reflection on the Judeo-Christian tradition. But ideas from other traditions should not be treated automatically as alternatives to Christian belief; concepts from other traditions have been used to express Christian truths from the first encounter with the Greeks. In authentic dialogue, what neighbors of other faiths have to say should be received as a gift that helps us to understand ourselves more fully and to interpret ourselves to them, as well as to understand our neighbors as they *define themselves,* rather than through our stereotypes of them.

Such a dialogical approach to theology is not new; it has always been an option. What is new as we reflect on the twenty-first century context of the church's mission and ministry is the necessity of an explicit recognition of the importance of religious pluralism, not only in the Canadian and U.S. contexts, but in the contemporary emergence of a globalized culture. My contention is that it is best addressed by fostering a dialogical attitude toward the world in which theological graduates minister, and that this is not achieved simply by adding courses but by fostering an ethos that is the product of the curriculum as a whole and the attitudes of those who teach it.

For the last decade and a half, ATS, to its credit, has intentionally promoted a heightened awareness of the relevance for theological education of the increasing globalization of many aspects of our common life. The globalization of theological education was the theme of the ATS Biennial Meeting in 1986. The failure of Christendom's original efforts at globalization is a matter of record. My sense is that it is still not generally recognized that one major reason for its failure was the lack of respect for the religious and cultural diversity of the "mission field" until well into the twentieth century, as well as the failure to recognize that if the mission of the church is seen as "from the West to the rest," it is a tribal mission rather than the mission of God. Globalization in

theological education as we enter the twenty-first century must take this reality seriously and respectfully, and our contention is that dialogue, as both a theological principle and an educational methodology, will be an important key.

The point may be amplified by examining other salient aspects of globalization that offer serious moral, spiritual, and intellectual challenges as we look ahead. The protest against the World Trade Organization at its meeting in Seattle on the eve of the new millennium is a case in point. The media's preoccupation with the violent and destructive methods used by a radical few to attract attention diverted attention from the serious ethical questions raised by many from a wide range of national, cultural, and ideological backgrounds. Churches and theologians were among those represented, though the press paid scant attention to them. But the issues raised concerning the environment, the protection of cultural diversity, worker's rights and minimum labor standards, including protection for children and the exclusion of poorer countries are all examples of current issues in the public domain that churches and their theologians should be addressing as partners in dialogue with others sharing a social conscience on behalf of the global family.

An issue of particular concern to Canadians toward the end of the twentieth century has been our vulnerability with respect to the threat to our cultural distinctives from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which has ruled out as a violation of free trade virtually every federal effort to assist some of our cultural agencies to survive. This may pale in comparison to other trends on a global scale that contribute to the unprecedented commodification of cultural values on behalf of the bottom line. In the first few days of this new century, the largest megamerger in history of America Online and Time Warner, followed by a further merger with the British EMI group, is more than the joining of giant media companies. It is a dramatic further transformation of the nature of capitalism. After hundreds of years of converting physical resources into propertied goods, the primary means of generating wealth now involves transforming cultural resources into paid-for cultural experiences. This symbolizes the extent to which a capitalist system based on manufacturing goods, performing services, and even generating information is evolving into a new form of hypercapitalism based on the commodifying of human time. Transnational media companies with communications networks that span the globe are mining local cultural resources in every part of the world and repackaging them as cultural commodities. There is no precedent in history for this kind of overarching control of human communications. Giant media conglomerates and their content providers become the gatekeepers that determine the conditions and terms upon which hundreds of millions of human beings secure access to one another and share meanings and values. Theologians should be among the social critics who question publicly what will happen to the rich cultural diversity that makes up the ecology of human

existence when a handful of information, entertainment, and telecommunications companies control much of the cultural content that enriches our daily lives. If not tempered, the new forces of cultural capitalism could end up devouring our remaining cultural resources, including our most cherished religious and spiritual practices, by repackaging them into purchased spectacles.

As noted, Canadians have already been frustrated by the inability of a national government to try to safeguard cultural distinctives by virtue of North American trade agreements, but a global economy magnifies the difficulty, and when and if culture itself is absorbed into the economy without any safeguards, only commercial bonds will be left to hold society together.

The protests at Seattle highlighted the growing gap between those who possess and the dispossessed, but another dimension of the commodification of culture in the global economy is that there is an even wider gap in cyberspace between the connected and the disconnected. The world is fast developing into two distinct civilizations: those living inside the electronic gates of cyberspace and those on the outside. This schism, implicit in these economic developments at the beginning of the new century, is surely a moral issue in comparison with which the sexual immorality of some public officials, which seemed all important to so many a few months ago, is relatively insignificant.

The seriousness of such challenges is compounded by the fact that in both our countries, as we begin the new century, the so-called "mainline" churches have been sidelined with respect to the effective and respected public voice they enjoyed earlier in the previous century. As for the public perception of theological schools, they are justly characterized in the recent Auburn Center study, *Missing Connections,* as "invisible."[1]

It is a radically different context from the one that prevailed when my own denomination, the United Church of Canada, was formed three-quarters of a century ago, with the expectation that public witness would be seen as a key factor in the church's destiny. As Principal E.H. Oliver of St. Andrew's College in Saskatoon said at the time, "It is the vision of Dominion-wide service that inspires the new Union. . . this does not mean that it will engage in political and partisan contests. It does mean that men [sic] who will give the country its economic, political and social salvation will be the products of Church life." It is a matter of record that in the decades that followed the public advocacy of church leaders and theologians was a major factor in establishing the Canadian social safety net including unemployment insurance, the national health system, old-age pensions and the like, as well as revision of legislation relating to family life issues such as marriage, divorce, and children's rights. Theologians played a prominent role in providing a theological rationale for the church's obligation in the public arena in their published works and in their participation in national church commissions, with titles such as "Church, Nation and World Order," "Christianizing the Social Order," and "The Church

and the Secular World." Even in the early twentieth century, mainstream churches in Canada and the United States were aware that it was not possible to be *the* church in a pluralistic society that does not permit an established church. By cooperating with one another, however, mainstream denominations sought ecumenically to have a public voice, and they were accorded an opportunity to sit at the table where public issues of social policy were hammered out. Historian Robert Handy of Union Theological Seminary in New York has shown in a comparative study of the social agenda of The United Church of Canada and the Federal Council of Churches (FCC) that there are striking parallels between mainstream churches in both countries. This is not coincidental because, in the l930s, the United Church became an associate member of the FCC, a relationship that continued until the World Council of Churches was formed and ecumenism was reorganized along national lines with separate councils of churches in each country.

My one regret with respect to the Auburn Center study, referenced above, is that no interviews were conducted in a Canadian city. Nevertheless, most of what that study documents about the current disengagement of religious leaders and institutions, and the invisibility of theological schools, applies to Canada as well as the United States. Barbara Wheeler's affirmation that there is no turning back to an earlier set of arrangements, which some would see as a golden age, is beyond question. The degree of religious pluralism, together with an increased secularism in contemporary society today, has resulted in a more level playing field, which in many ways is a good thing as a partial defense against those on the far right who feel justified in using means that border on spiritual tyranny, blackmail, and other forms of intimidation to impose their convictions on the public as a whole. Examples of this can be found on both sides of the border on issues ranging from abortion to homosexuality to gun control to the teaching of evolution/creationism in public schools. The politics of divisiveness, fear, and intimidation can only weaken rather than strengthen civil society, and theologians can play an important role by demonstrating that the means used to express a social conscience must be consistent with the ends.

With some exceptions, the Auburn Center's report that religious leaders and institutions are victims of a social climate that is largely indifferent to religion applies to Canada as well as the U.S. Very few church leaders or theologians, even among mainline Protestants, are on the list of those whose public voices make a difference beyond their own denominations. We have to agree with the faculty member who said, "The outreach we (theologians) do involves people coming here, rather than us going to them." In this climate, it seems clear that if we want to engage public decision-makers in a conversation about religion and public life, we will have to invite ourselves to the table.

I am, of course, presuming a conviction that prophetic witness is an integral part of the mission of the church and the theological school. This runs counter

to many trends in contemporary culture in both our countries, which celebrate individual rights often at the expense of the community and the common good. As well, the fastest growing religious body in both our countries at the turn of the century seems to be the unchurched or the "unhappily churched." Many seek spiritual nurture from sources outside the institutional church, but many within the church also seek a privatized religion, lacking theological discipline and a sense of corporate responsibility for issues such as justice, peace, or ecology insofar as they do not immediately affect them. My contention is that in the present pluralistic context, we have an obligation to offer the treasury of wisdom about what matters from our own tradition in dialogue with that of other traditions, asking how we can best live together under God. Theological and ecclesiastical leaders should also recognize that partnerships in this dialogue should include professionals from other research and learning institutions who have expertise on issues of public policy. Some of these partnerships already exist, of course, but more are needed if faith-based institutions are to reverse the trend toward the marginalization of religious voices as respected participants in the marketplace of ideas.

Partnerships always entail the risk of external pressures to compromise the integrity of one's faith tradition. Historically, a higher percentage of Canadian schools within ATS have been related to universities than was the case with U.S. member schools. This is a rich source of partnerships with colleagues with expertise in public policy that theologians cannot be presumed to have in their own right, though these partnerships are rarely exploited to the full. On a personal note, I first undertook to make the case for this at the (then) AATS Biennial Meeting in Richmond, Virginia, forty years ago and was sharply challenged by heads of freestanding seminaries on the ground that the university connection would lead to an overly abstract theology and undermine the seminary's ability to serve the mission of the church. A unilateral relationship between a seminary and a community of faith, however, can have its own dangers of external control that can compromise intellectual freedom and integrity. Historian Robert Handy, in another comparative survey of theological education in Canada and the United States in 1980, noted that Canadian theological schools were closer to both church and university than their U.S. counterparts, depending on each for certain services, finding autonomy in faithfulness to both relationships, and occasionally resisting one by appealing to the other in tight situations.[2] In the past two decades, a number of Canadian theological schools that are unrelated to universities have become members of ATS, so that in terms of university relationships, the Canadian profile is now more akin to that in the U.S. As I look ahead, I see no less need to emphasize the importance of a critical engagement between theologians and other scholars, whether or not there are formal institutional connections with universities, while at the same time maintaining strong connections with their communities of faith, without being finally controlled by either university or church. The

Canadian experience is by no means exemplary in all respects, but we have been less subject to the assaults on intellectual freedom that some of our U.S. counterparts have suffered, and the pattern noted by Handy may be worth considering.

With regard to the public role of North American theological schools in the global context, it is possible that the Canadian minority membership may help provide a salutary perspective in another respect. Clearly we have much to learn through participation in the more inclusive forum that ATS provides, but as our immediate context is within a relatively powerless nation, rather than the world's only superpower, we are less likely to be tempted to triumphalism or imperialism, not through any superior moral insight but simply because we lack the opportunity. Although the U.S., like Canada, is increasingly pluralistic religiously, my experience with third world nations and churches suggests that rightly or wrongly Christian churches are widely perceived to be closely linked with the first world's superpower. Theologians have a responsibility to help the churches critically to dissociate themselves from any tendency to a quest for world power. As Shakespeare in *Julius Caesar* has classically illustrated, empires normally contain critical minorities who help to provide perspective on the temptation to abuse power. In any case it is important that theologians contribute to a sense of critical distance from the seat of power and challenge any attempt to identify imperial political structures with imperial forms of the Christian religion—or, to put it more positively, to repudiate the affirmation of empire in favor of the constructive theological task of relating the Gospel to *oikumene,* the whole earth, all its peoples, all its creatures.

For such a public role, theologians and church leaders will have to be seen to be intellectually as well as morally and spiritually credible. One of the casualties of the marginalization of churches and theological schools is the loss of respect for a "learned ministry." The communications revolution has contributed to this, and this is not all bad, for in the field of theology, as in other important fields, the general public now has increasing access to unprecedented banks of information and can use them to draw their own conclusions. It will be at least another two decades before we can fully gauge the total impact of this cumulative literacy on religious beliefs, spirituality, and theology. But it has already empowered uncounted numbers of people with unprecedented access to information from which to draw their own conclusions about what to believe, and whom. And it is more than just the availability of increased information; equally important is that this increased literacy has become a kind of imperative toward personal responsibility that is changing the roles of credentialed professionals, as laity in almost every domain of life become better informed. This revolution is just beginning, but the use of this technology will explode in the new millennium.

So what does this mean for Christians and their churches? With such a wealth of new information, the lay man or woman will increasingly feel

compelled to re-credential the professionals in the field as clergy and theologians will increasingly share responsibility with the laity for determining what is sound theology and faithful religion. While there will always be a good many who will follow in an unquestioning way a charismatic preacher or priest or rabbi or ayatollah who claims to know it all, there will be an increasing number who take advantage of this new literacy, so that the professional and the lay person will become co-determiners of conduct and creeds. The result will be that these lay persons will make the final decisions, and for them at least the role of the professional will become more like the worker bee who affects them.

This may be called the democratization of theology, and it constitutes a new challenge to all religious leaders, and not least to the theological schools to prepare them for ministry in such a context. Rather than abandon the concept of learned ministry, it should be renewed with an expanded understanding of the term. Intellectual credibility remains an important challenge to religious leaders when, with all the sophistication of modern science and technology at this point in time, the teaching of so basic a scientific concept as evolution has recently been required to give way to so intellectually incredible a concept as creationism, under pressure from ultra-conservative religious groups in some jurisdictions.

As well as renewing the intellectual credibility of church leaders, theological schools must address the need to equip clergy to exercise their ministry as authentic spiritual leaders. Many persons have left the institutional church in recent years, not because they abandoned spirituality, but because other sources of spiritual nurture seemed more effective in meeting their needs. With some notable exceptions, theological schools (especially those associated with mainline Protestant churches) have not accepted much responsibility for the spiritual formation of the church's clergy. This issue has occasionally been on the ATS agenda in the past. The summer 1975 issue of *Theological Education* included an article on "Spirituality and the Director of Field Education." In the 1980s, I was involved in an attempt by the World Council of Churches' Program on Theological Education to assist theological seminaries to make spiritual formation an integral part of the curriculum, especially in those schools that had traditionally assumed that this was solely the church's responsibility. My own attempts to persuade Canadian and other colleagues in ATS of the importance of this were mostly resisted on the ground that such an emphasis would compromise academic freedom. But in the face of so much evidence that churches and their leaders lack spiritual as well as intellectual credibility at this point in time, I believe that this issue needs to be addressed again. It is gratifying that ATS has recognized its importance in the 1996 redeveloped standards. My sense is that not only should our theological schools share responsibility with the churches for the spiritual formation of the church's ministry, but that it needs to be coupled with curricular attention to the loss of a sense of mystery in worship. In an attempt to halt the decline in church

membership, much contemporary worship, in this age when so many are addicted to television entertainment, focuses so exclusively on the experience of the worshiper that God is moved to the sidelines. Worship that is centered on upbeat music can be destructive to thoughtful worshipers who are trying in a secular age to cope with the reality of doubts related to the hiddenness of God, the sense of abandonment by God that clouds believers who are facing the inevitable threat to traditional beliefs and values in a time of rapid social change.

Some think the solution is technology-supported worship. Computer stations at tables or seats in the congregation, under the supervision of trained volunteer technological support teams, will directly link participants with worship leaders, documents, or other media material. But others see a parallel between the technology of modern weaponry and the technology of words. Just as weapons have evolved from hand-to-hand combat to guided missiles that can be fired at faceless targets from great distances, so words have gone from face-to-face communication to pre-recorded statements delivered through a camera or computer to an unknown and invisible audience. Excessive use of technology in worship can make the people in the pews into targets rather than worshipers. Whether or not this is an exaggerated fear, the focus of worship must be on God, not ourselves. In a secularized, pluralistic, post-Christendom age, the church in its worship should manifest its openness to the transcendence that can nurture the spirituality many still seek. Therein lies the mystery, which theater in worship can enhance, but worship is not theater.

Finally, a brief response to a question issued with the invitation to contribute to this volume: "What gives you hope about our common enterprise?" It is evident that there is much to give us pause at the edge of this new decade, century, millennium. Aside from a few megachurches, the post-Christendom church may be more like the church of the first century than the church we have known in much of the twentieth century, in that contemporary Christians live in a pluralistic society, cannot count on external backing for their belief, whether legal or cultural, and in an increasing number of situations are a minority. There are parallels with the situation of the church addressed by Peter with the salutation, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the exiles of the Diaspora." Exile may be the most appropriate defining metaphor for the church in the foreseeable future. And Peter advises the church in such a context to "be prepared to give a reason for the hope that is in you" (I Peter 1:1; 3:15).

Peter's admonition is particularly pertinent to the ongoing role of theological schools. As with Judaism in the time of the Diaspora, when the role of the rabbi increasingly emphasized his teaching function as the theologian of the congregation, so in the post-Christendom church this dimension of ministry may assume increasing importance. The Christendom church could survive, if not thrive, with a perfunctory education, but the church of the Diaspora will be increasingly dependent on an ability to "give a reason for the hope" of

Christians. That will require an informed as well as a committed leadership. Without a teaching ministry that not only lives its hope but is able to articulate it credibly, the church will founder as it moves from the protective walls of Christendom into the rapidly changing pluralistic world of the new century. The educational challenge to the member schools of ATS has never been greater. But we should not lose hope, for as Sam Kobia of the National Council of Churches of Kenya has said, speaking of the church's role in his troubled, debt-ridden country, "We are Christians. We are called to have hope rather than despair."

C. Douglas Jay was president of the Association from 1984 to 1986. He also served as chair of the Committee on ATS Location and Facilities that resulted in the relocation of the ATS offices from Vandalia, Ohio, to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1991. He was principal of Emmanuel College of Victoria University in Toronto, Ontario, from 1981 to 1990.

ENDNOTES

1.　"Missing Connections: Public Perceptions of Theological Education and Religious Leadership," (Auburn Theological Seminary: Auburn Studies, No. 6, September 1999).

2.　Robert T. Handy, "Trends in Canadian and American Theological Education, 1880-1980: Some Comparisons," quoted in Phyllis D. Airhart, "Ecumenical Theological Education and Denominational Relationships" in *Theological Education in Canada,* 1998, Ed. Graham.

Reflections on My Twenty-Five Years in Theological Education

Barbara Brown Zikmund

In the 1950s when my church youth fellowship took a trip to Chicago, we packed our sleeping bags and spent two nights at a place called Chicago Theological Seminary (CTS). Before that trip, although my family was active in a local Congregational Church in Detroit, Michigan, I knew nothing about seminaries. Our youth pastor had graduated from CTS and his seminary provided great weekend hospitality for a group of impressionable teenagers. After that visit, I was convinced that I wanted to "go to seminary." I did not know what I would *do* with my theological education, but I was confident that some way would open so that I could work for the church. Church was the place where I flourished. As I grew older I came to believe that I had a call to ordained ministry, and when I met and married a man preparing to be a college professor, it seemed that I was destined for campus ministry. I got a doctorate, not because I wanted to be a professor, but because I believed that if I had that credential I could serve the church more effectively in higher education settings. Little did I imagine that I would become a faculty member, a dean, and eventually the president of a seminary. I had no way of knowing that for twenty-five years I would be deeply involved with The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS), serving on many committees, attending more than a dozen Biennial Meetings, and becoming the first academic dean and the first woman to serve as its president. God works in mysterious ways.

When people ask me what has happened in theological education during my involvement in ATS I answer, "a lot." There are three things that I want to celebrate and three areas where I have concerns.

First, it must be pointed out that although it began as an association of mainstream Protestant schools, ATS is now the most inclusive Christian organization in North America. There is no other place, civic or ecclesial, where representatives from Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Mainline, and Evangelical schools even come together to talk, let alone to work for some common cause. It is remarkable. I have been active in the ecumenical movement and I know how difficult it is to overcome historical denominational divisions and current animosities. Yet ATS does exactly that. The leaders of ATS member schools do not agree theologically, they do not agree educationally (as to content and constituents)—but they do agree that excellence in theological education will be upheld when we all hold each other accountable to our self-definitions of excellence. Peer assessment at its best is what makes ATS work. And although

ATS is not perfect, its capacity to enable people from radically different traditions and convictions to work together to strengthen theological education is impressive. I have been personally enriched by deep friendships with people I would never have met any other way. I have been repeatedly challenged theologically and educationally in my work with ATS colleagues. People who tolerate ATS as a necessary evil to meet government regulations or to satisfy accreditation requirements do not understand what an extraordinary coalition it is. Not only is my school a better institution because of ATS, I am a better and more effective leader because of ATS. I am clearer about my style of leadership and about my Christian convictions due to my participation in the Association's work.

Second, when I went to seminary in the early 1960s there were very few women students or faculty. Today, although ATS member schools differ in their understandings of women's leadership in the churches, all of us applaud and benefit from the increasing numbers of women in theological education. Setting aside the ordination question, we agree that educating women for Christian service, variously defined, is worthy. We know that God is pleased and our schools are stronger and more faithful when they, and the churches, benefit from the gifts and talents of women—in governance, in administration, as part of our faculties, and (in most of our schools) as our students. I have lived through much of this change and I celebrate how far we have come.

Third, I want to point out that a significant body of literature and scholarly reflection has been produced about theological education in the past two decades. There was a time when theological education was not clear about its identity and the kinds of decisions it needed to make to shape its faculties and institutions. We were not sure what we wanted to be when we grew up. We worried about organizational matters that threatened the institutional survival of our schools, but we did not ask "Why are we doing this?" In recent years, thanks to grants from generous foundations, and ATS conferences and publications, there is now a significant body of literature on theological education. Given the diversity of our membership we do not agree on everything, but we have done some important intellectual work needed to sustain quality education for our various communities of faith. This is a major accomplishment.

Even as I celebrate these accomplishments, I have some deep concerns.

First, I am worried about money. I know that most presidents are and should be worried about money. We are paid to find it and manage it. The competition for money is fierce and even though there are more and more people with money, many of whom can and are being convinced to support theological education, I am concerned that institutional, educational, and ecclesiastical decisions are being unduly shaped by issues related to money.

There are several ways in which money bothers me. On the one hand it takes more and more money to get a theological degree. When a student has gone through four years of college and three or more years of seminary, he or

she has made a big investment of time and money. Student indebtedness among some of our graduates is a serious problem. Even more serious, however, is the fact that most church vocations do not pay salaries at the level that someone in this society with seven or more years of post-secondary education might expect. This disconnect between the money required for theological education and the return on that investment is a recipe for trouble. It breeds discontent in clergy, distorts the power of denominations, and undermines the morale of congregations.

Then there is the problem of donor-driven decision-making. Please understand, I have nothing against committed donors who want to give to theological education (some of them are my best friends). I seek them, I cultivate them, I solicit them, and I thank them. I want them to give to support things that they care about and I understand their desire to direct the use of their gifts. However, not surprisingly, donors are often most interested in funding *new* programmatic initiatives related to their special interests. Most of these are worthy, and when faculties and boards evaluate such proposals, they usually have no problem adding this or that specific thing—particularly when the president or the development officer of the school has guided the giver into areas that are consistent with the mission of the institution. Even when handled well, however, I worry about this pattern of educational and institutional decision-making for long-term institutional integrity. It is too easy for fundraisers, faculty, and administrators to become preoccupied with what the foundation "Requests for Proposals" or the next donor or bequest *wants*, and to lose sight of the big questions. What *should* our institutions be doing to carry out their missions? What is God calling each one of our institutions to do to prepare religious leaders for the future?

In my experience at Hartford Seminary, we have been very fortunate. In most cases we have found external funding to do what we wanted to do and what we had already planned to do; yet I feel the danger. How do schools protect themselves from being "bought" by well-meaning funders with lots of money? How do we keep from being buffeted about by the interests of the latest foundation program or major donor? We cannot ignore them, because our very existence often depends on their money, but there is real danger that we might end up selling our souls in the process. One or two gifts or grants is not the problem. The problem is an erratic pattern of institutional growth driven by external resources, rather than by an internal discernment process grounded in clarity about God's vocation for the institution. Survival is not the highest value. After all, most of our schools were founded by Christians who believed that the one who loses his or her life will find it, and the crucified one leads humanity to eternal life.

Another problem related to money surrounds hiring the professional staff to find it and manage it. Fundraising in this society is a growth industry and competition is intense. Organizations and institutions that never had a devel-

opment department or an institutional advancement program are now hiring professionals. There are major "financial campaigns" at every turn. Public institutions that used to rely exclusively on tax dollars are hustling for private money. In this environment theological schools cannot afford to ignore fundraising.

But have you ever tried to hire top staff for development work for a theological seminary? It is extremely difficult. The salary levels needed to get an experienced professional in this field are often much higher than our salary scales. In fact one president told me that his development officer was being paid more than he was, but he was convinced that it was a good investment. Even if you can find the money, many experienced fundraising professionals do not understand theological education or the church. As a consequence theological schools end up hiring someone who knows them and the church, but who needs extensive training related to professional fundraising. Fortunately, this tactic often works very well, but the fact remains that the capacity of most institutions in theological education to find needed staff to raise and manage money is at a disadvantage.

And then, of course, there is the relationship of money to academic freedom. We all can imagine situations, and know of situations, where those who control the sources of money for a school's budget require narrow intellectual or theological adherence to a particular position. ATS supports the freedom of each member school to set its mission and develop criteria for excellence. At the same time, ATS also upholds general principles of intellectual and academic freedom of inquiry and due process for faculty, administrators, and students at member schools. When those who control the financial resources of a school violate its governance procedures, fire faculty, undermine presidents or rectors, and expel students, money has become a weapon rather than a resource. I worry about the power of money to erode academic excellence.

Most of us have a love/hate relationship to money. We remember those biblical texts that charge us to serve God and not mammon. When I reflect about the wages our graduates can expect, the ways in which money can distort our decision-making, the difficulties we have finding the right staff to raise money, and the fact that those who hold the purse strings can seriously violate freedom of inquiry and due process, I am worried about money.

Second, I am concerned about our intellectual work. I am an educator. I believe that God works in many ways to empower the leadership of the church. Sometimes formal education seems unnecessary and the Holy Spirit blesses a leader with charismatic gifts that are perfect for the moment. At other times, however, the church is called to "test the Spirits" and to "educate" unlikely members for leadership roles. At its best, theological education nurtures the body, mind, and spirit of those whom God has chosen to make them even more effective agents for Christian service in diverse settings.

Yet, there is ongoing pressure within our society, upon the churches, and from individuals who feel certain that God has tapped them for ministry, to compromise educational excellence and "dumb down" the intellectual work required for a theological degree. I appreciate the capacity of the Holy Spirit to bless leaders when our human judgments falter. At the same time, I believe that education for church leadership requires basic exposure to biblical, historical, theological, ethical, liturgical, and pastoral disciplines. In a society where more and more people have basic college and graduate degrees, quality church leadership education should involve the most demanding academic work, as well as rigorous vocational formation experiences.

Theological education has a long history. In certain eras there has been an anti-intellectual critique of formal education and "book learning," but eventually all our churches have founded "schools" and made the education of clergy and other church leaders a high priority. The monastery, the university, the cathedral school, the parsonage, and the graduate theological school have been centers of learning and intellectual rigor. At its core, theological education is not just "training" for organizational tasks; it is exposing and exercising the mind and spirit. It is intellectual work, centered on biblical, historical, and theological studies.

Today, however, many of the students enrolling in our schools are relatively unfamiliar with the Bible and have little experience with the history of the church, or the theological legacies of their communities of faith. They often fail to see why they need to do this intellectual work. They argue eloquently that theological education must serve the immediate and pressing needs of parishioners and train seminary graduates to grow ecclesiastical organizations. Their rhetoric is impressive. Furthermore, the churches are ready to hire these students and most of our seminaries need them and want to please them in order to keep enrollments up and tuition income steady. Yet, there is danger here. I am concerned that the intellectual work of theological education may be eroded in our efforts to find shortcuts to serve the needs of local congregations and/or give students what they want. Those of us in education need to remember that what is wanted is not always what is needed.

And finally, my third concern: I am concerned about the explosion of technology in higher education. Please understand, I am not a reactionary sitting at my IBM typewriter. I have had a computer on my desk since the early eighties and one in my briefcase for the last decade. I own a digital camera. I download information from the Web. I check my e-mail all the time. I am the editor of a series of volumes where the editorial team scans and exchanges documents as attachments daily. I encourage our faculty to imagine new ways to use technology. I am comfortable with most popular software programs and over the past ten years I am proud that my institution has become more and more "connected" electronically. Over all, I am very optimistic about the impact of technology on theological education. Technology is a friend, not the enemy.

Nevertheless, I am concerned. I believe that we are in the midst of one of the greatest changes in human history. How we think and how we learn are changing dramatically. Not only can seminaries manage business office operations and organize development prospect lists and mailings more efficiently, we can literally *become* new kinds of institutions because of technology. This is exciting, but also a bit scary. How do we claim the possibilities offered by technology and remain faithful servants of God in this wired age?

My concern here is not very focused, because I am not sure how things might unfold. Two or three examples suggest some of the reasons for my concerns.

In Christian history we have a text that says, "where two or three gather" God is "in the midst of us." We remember that faithful people have gathered for prayer, for praise, and for instruction for centuries. Not surprisingly, our schools have been organized and physically built to facilitate "gathering," because we have believed that coming together in God's presence is good for us, and furthermore that it pleases God.

Now, however, we have been challenged to imagine on-line theological education. Even before the recent explosion of technology, theological education had become increasingly individualistic. On many of our campuses commuter students can earn the required credits for their degree by appearing only for classes. We know that this pattern of study has some limitations, and so we have sought to devise creative ways to offer some of the contextual and co-curricular aspects of theological education historically associated with residential life. The new ATS standards acknowledge this concern and hold us accountable. Yet as we look to the future, the challenges become more basic. How do we preserve our "coming together" and its spiritual benefits in an environment when publics expect that individuals ought to be able to have access to complete programs of theological education in the privacy of their homes on their computer screens? Does "coming together" in a "chat room," or a virtual video classroom accomplish the same goal? I do not know the answers, but I believe that these are theological as well as pedagogical questions.

Or consider the matter of faculty resources and institutional identity. Jesus was a Rabbi, a teacher. Some people followed him immediately, others came to appreciate his message more indirectly. Those of us in theological education understand that good teaching is personal; it builds loyalties and involves mentoring. Good teachers teach students, not just subjects. And sometimes those faculty who are less effective in the classroom, or on a computer screen, turn out to be the most influential in shaping the lives of graduates. It is clear that technology (in an actual or virtual classroom) limits certain forms of teaching. In an on-line course certain things are lost, even as other things are gained. So there are new questions related to teaching emerging in this technological environment.

I predict that in the future certain faculty, who are extremely good at delivering courses on-line, are likely to become instructional "entrepreneurs" and sell their "teaching" on the market—just as gifted faculty already sell their textbooks. This is not all bad. In fact, some of us will want to download or link into the courses of these "star" faculty to enrich our curricula. Yet, whose faculty are they? How do we calculate the compensation of such persons? Who offers the credit for the courses they teach? And more importantly, what does this do to the collective ideal of a "faculty" at a school? Generally speaking our accrediting standards are based on an assumption that the core faculty of our institutions have a collective responsibility to oversee the quality of our educational programs. What happens to institutional identity and integrity when it cannot be built around a "faculty"? I do not know the answers to these questions, but I believe that how we choose to answer these questions will have theological as well as institutional ramifications.

The potential of technology to shape and reshape theological education is almost overwhelming. Indeed, because of technology the very existence of our "schools" as schools may be in jeopardy. It is important, therefore, for us to think theologically about the various ways in which we can remain faithful to God in a technologically expanding world.

Building on these accomplishments and sensitive to these concerns, there is one other challenge that I want to highlight for my colleagues in theological education. This is the impact of religious pluralism on our work and on our very understanding of Christianity.

In the history of American society, the nineteenth century was preoccupied with the issue of race and slavery. Eventually the Civil War was fought to end the practice of slavery, and in that process many Christians were forced to rethink their understanding of the Gospel. For centuries slavery had been accepted and condoned. In the Bible there are specific directions for slave holders. The Bible makes no specific judgment against slavery. Yet, by the mid-nineteenth century attitudes about slavery changed. Christians began to see that the Gospel message could not be reconciled with racial bigotry and treating human beings as property. The abolitionists in the antislavery movement were inspired by the Gospel to risk their lives and fortunes to abolish slavery. The Civil War was fought and won by those who condemned slavery, but more importantly, Christian ministry and theology changed and the Christian Gospel was reinterpreted to condemn slavery. Since that time Christians have understood Christianity as a force for liberation and freedom—and Christian leaders around the world have worked to end racial bigotry and racism. Racism and bigotry still exist, but today it is unacceptable for Christian leadership and Christian theology to justify slavery and racial injustice.

In the twentieth century, American society has been deeply (is still deeply) challenged by issues of sexuality. From the debates about birth control, to abortion, to homosexuality, many Christians have been challenged to rethink

their understandings of sexuality. For centuries choices related to sexual activity were limited, and the Bible and Christian theology supported prohibitions against all efforts to manage or control fertility. For centuries biblical texts were used to condemn same-sex relationships as unnatural and even demonic. Yet, during the past 100 years, knowledge and attitudes about sexuality have begun to change, just as attitudes about slavery changed. Many leading Christian theologians have focused on the quality of human relationships as inspired by the teachings of Jesus and revised their thinking about reproductive choice and homosexuality. Not all Christians embrace these understandings of reproduction and sexuality, because they raise fundamental questions about the authority of the Bible. However, many Christians have changed their views about women and sexuality.

The recent debates about sexuality in many of our denominations, as painful as they are, highlight the fact that we are living with much more diversity. Some Christians have come to believe that the message of love and liberation in the Gospel of Jesus Christ justifies and affirms fertility planning, abortion, and stable loving homosexual relationships. They are reading Scripture in new ways and changing longstanding assumptions about faithfulness. This change is fully as significant as the change that occurred in Christian history around the issue of slavery. Others, however, do not see that such a change is warranted and continue to affirm that the authority of Scripture requires continued condemnation of various sexual practices and relationships.

My point here is that there have been times in Christian history when Christian interpretations of Scripture and Christian convictions about the message of Christianity have changed. History can document how large numbers of Christians have radically revised their values and thinking about many things in the past— about the end of the world, about whether God created everything in seven days, about whether the earth is flat or round, about whether Christians should own property, about whether Christians ought to lend money and charge interest, about whether priests need to be celibate or male, about the legitimacy of slavery, about Christian reproductive choice, about assisted suicide, and about the sinfulness of homosexuality. These are difficult issues, and passions about these issues continue to divide Christians. But it is clear that Christian thinking (Christian theology) changes. It has changed in the past, and it is still changing. Christians in all eras look to the same Bible, but in different settings and times, they read Scripture quite differently.

In the Congregational tradition that I am part of, we like to quote a sentence from the farewell sermon of John Robinson to the Pilgrims as they sailed for the New World on the Mayflower in 1620. Robinson was their pastor. He did not come to Massachusetts with the Pilgrims, but he left them with words that Congregationalists have quoted for almost 400 years. He charged them to be

faithful servants of God and of one another and to be open to new things, saying, "God has yet more light to break forth from God's holy word." With these words he reminded them (and all of us) that Scripture is organic. In different settings, under different pressures, with different knowledge, we will hear and see new revelations. Furthermore, Robinson wanted the Pilgrims to understand that this process was not something to be feared, but part of the Divine plan. God did not set things up long ago and leave the room. God continues to bless us and guide us in ever new ways, inspiring, enlightening, challenging, and inviting. Faithfulness is not clinging to the old, it requires change. And only when we remain open to new insights about God's message of salvation in Jesus Christ will we be true to our calling as Christians.

With this understanding of Scripture I want to lift up what I believe is the most challenging matter facing the Christian community and theological education in the coming century—religious pluralism.

Dealing with religious pluralism for most Christians is difficult. As we find ourselves living side by side with persons of other faith traditions; Christians are humane and tolerant. We know from first-hand experience that many friends and relatives who are not Christians are good people. And although we don't think about it a lot, few of us really believe that everyone who is not a Christian is doomed for eternity.

However, when we go to church, or read the Bible, or listen to ninety percent of the preaching on radio or television and in our local churches, we begin to feel uneasy. We are reminded by texts and preachers that every Christian is called to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all those who are not Christians. We read and hear that anyone who does not become a Christian is lost. As a consequence many of us are of two minds—on Sunday we pray in the name of Jesus, we give to Christian missions, and we listen to words that insist that Christianity is the only way to salvation; then Monday through Friday we live in a religiously pluralistic society, refusing to believe that a good God does not love and save persons who are not Christians.

If race and slavery were the burning issues of the nineteenth century, and gender equality and sexuality (especially homosexuality) were the burning issues of the twentieth century—I believe that religious pluralism is *the* emerging issue for Christians in the twenty-first century. Observers of North America note that Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Native or indigenous religious traditions, Baha'i, and other new religions are an increasingly visible part of the North American landscape. In the United States, the Immigration Act of 1965 and subsequent U.S. immigration policies have opened the country to many new groups of immigrants. Furthermore, the increasing willingness of Americans to make new religious commitments has added to the diversity.

In the face of these changes many Christians, whether they are Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Mainline or "oldline" Protestant, or participants in vari-

ous Evangelical groups do not have an adequate theology to deal with religious diversity. And unfortunately, most programs in theological education have thus far not helped many religious leaders think through this situation or develop an adequate theology. In fact, aside from those enrolled in missionary training programs, most graduates of theological schools remain woefully uneducated about other religions and theologically naive about the ways in which issues of religious pluralism will affect every aspect of their Christian ministry.

This is why I am increasingly convinced that the biggest challenge facing theological education in the twenty-first century is theological and ecclesiastical. How can we enable Christian leaders to rethink their understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and acknowledge that we are not going to (and maybe we do not even want to) convert everyone to Jesus? Unless Christian leaders are able to articulate new ways of thinking about the Lordship of Jesus Christ, which will support the reality that most Christians are going to live out their lives among faithful people who will never become Christian, their ministries will falter. What is needed is an expansion of the meaning of salvation that can allow Christians to be open to the truths enshrined in non-Christian religions and explore ways to embrace Christianity's traditional claims about the importance and centrality of Jesus Christ to their faith. Just as recognition of the human injustice of slavery has led all Christians to condemn slavery, and knowledge about gender and sexuality are leading some Christians to see women and homosexual persons in new ways, the reality of religious pluralism calls for major changes in Christian thinking about salvation. I hope that theological education can become a resource to help leaders and Christian institutions rise to this challenge.

At present there are a few Christian theologians who have developed exclusivist, inclusivist, and pluralistic "theologies" to deal with religious pluralism. I appreciate their efforts, but unfortunately most of their theologies are very theoretical and intellectual. They fail to begin with the lived interfaith experience of Christian believers. Perhaps theological education, which prides itself on its ability to integrate theology and practice to prepare leaders for the real world, has a contribution to make in this situation.

Theologians wrestling with religious pluralism argue that Christians must learn to think about the world and God in totally new ways—very much like residents of the fifteenth century had to learn to think about the universe differently after Galileo. Instead of Christ at the center of salvation, they suggest that we need to think about God at the center of salvation. We need a Copernican revolution of thought in order to move into a religiously pluralistic future—fully as dramatic as seeing the sun, rather than the earth, at the center of the solar system. That is all well and good, however, it may be that only when local religious leaders find concrete ways to support grass roots Christian faithfulness in the face of religious pluralism will a useable new theology

emerge. Perhaps theological education is called to a role like Christopher Columbus, sailing boldly West to find the East long before most people are able to absorb the idea that the sun is at the center of the universe. I believe that theological education may be called to support new forms of Christian faithfulness in the midst of religious pluralism, thereby offering a useable framework that will eventually support new Christian theologies for the twenty-first century.

Barbara Brown Zikmund was president of the Association from 1986 to 1988. She recently completed ten years as president of Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut (1990 to 2000), and before that, from 1980 to 1990 she was dean of the faculty at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. She has represented ATS on the Executive Committee of WOCATI (World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions), serving as secretary-treasurer from 1992 to 1996 and as president of WOCATI from 1996 to 2000. She is presently chair of the Interfaith Relations Commission of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. She maintains a permanent legal residence in the Washington, DC area. Beginning in April 2001 she will join the faculty of the Graduate School of American Studies at Doshisha University in Kyoto, Japan, where she will teach courses on religion in America and women's history during the next several years.

Theological Education
at the Edge of a New Century

Russell H. Dilday

The request for this essay from the editors of *Theological Education* provided a wide range of options. After offering a list of nine possible approaches to dealing with the state of the enterprise at this moment in history, there followed the comment, "Or you may wish to pursue another direction altogether. . . ." So, I am grateful, not only to be included with these other former presidents of ATS, but also grateful to be given such a flexible format with which to express my views.

It seems to me useful to divide the topic into two parts: first, my reflections on the organization (The Association of Theological Schools) and, second, my reflections on the enterprise (graduate, professional theological education) from a Southern Baptist perspective.

My Reflections on the Organization:
The Association of Theological Schools

Looking back on the years of my tenure as a member of the ATS Executive Committee, as president of the association, and later, serving on committees as immediate past president, I am astonished at the enormous changes the Association has undergone. First, there was the relocation to temporary headquarters in Pittsburgh and the planning, financing, and construction of a new building that made memories of the old facilities in Vandalia seem Paleolithic. As a matter of fact, those facilities *were* Paleolithic. It was also a significant time of Executive Director transition, from the long tenure of Leon Pacala to James Waits to Daniel Aleshire.

In addition to these changes, the period during which I served will be remembered also for a strategic shift in ATS membership and elected leadership. Evangelical, Baptist, and other "non-mainline" members became more visibly involved, and their official positions and influence more proportionate to their large seminary enrollments. This rise of evangelical presence helped calm unfounded fears among some schools that membership in ATS would require them to minimize or even abandon their distinctive theological convictions.

In the case of Southern Baptists, for example, some were convinced that joining ATS meant surrendering a school's autonomy to unsympathetic (read "liberal") outsiders. They believed that in order to earn the imprimatur of full accreditation, a seminary would have to compromise its specific faith claims.

While pockets of these suspicions still persist, the emergence of a more visible evangelical presence in ATS has largely allayed such concerns.

Along with apprehensions that ATS membership would necessitate doctrinal compromise, some seminary leaders in both evangelical and, in some cases, Roman Catholic communities expressed fears that ATS was gradually redirecting its emphasis away from academic and educational assessment to focus instead on contemporary social issues, particularly those related to underrepresented constituencies. While acknowledging the urgent need to address such inequities, some felt the Association should aim exclusively at identifying and encouraging standards of quality education.

Most theological educators would agree that any commitment to raise institutional standards would of necessity address issues of underrepresented constituents, but they would also likely agree that the chief advocacy for which ATS was chartered is quality education. Maintaining a proper balance between these two legitimate and complementary fields that would satisfy the diverse Association membership is both a gratifying accomplishment of these past twenty years and at the same time a continuing challenge for the future.

One other concern that I believe will have to be addressed in the first decade of the "twenty hundreds" (whatever the decade will be called) is enforcement. In 1994, a disruptive incident occurred at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, involving, among other things, actions by a majority on the Board of Trustees that violated the standards of accreditation of ATS and The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Both accrediting agencies issued a variety of reprimands, warnings, and eventually temporary probation, but there seemed to be a cautious reluctance to take more serious steps. The violators, therefore, came to regard the Association as a "toothless tiger" and half-heartedly responded with only minimum corrections.

How far the ATS should go in enforcing its standards on autonomous schools is, of course, a sensitive question, but unless the Association finds ways to compel compliance, faculty and administrators threatened by inappropriate governance may feel they can expect little protection from the Association. The high standards developed by years of collegial efforts are noble, but their significance is diminished without stronger forms of meaningful regulation.

These and other concerns give me pause, but they do not diminish the high regard I have for ATS. I have spent the last twenty-two years serving in the context of Southern Baptist theological education, most of that time in a large, freestanding institution that was often referred to as a "Semiversity." Now I am associated with George W. Truett Theological Seminary, a new school at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. While my work these last six years has been focused on the birth and early development of our school, and while my recent experience with ATS has been limited, my perception is that the status of the Association is healthy, mature, and poised to meet effectively the crucial tests of the new century.

Russell H. Dilday

My Reflections on the Enterprise:
Southern Baptist Theological Education
at the Edge of the New Century

Recently, my wife and I organized and hosted an informal reunion of former presidents of Southern Baptist Convention seminaries with whom we had worked so closely during the troubled years of our denomination's political battles. The Milton Fergusons of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, the Roy Honeycutts of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, the Landrum Leavells of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and the Randal Lolleys of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary spent three refreshing days with us remembering, laughing, and at times crying. We also discussed some of the questions the editors had proposed for this series of articles for *Theological Education.*

While our conversation was carried on in the context of Southern Baptist seminaries, I imagine most of the issues we raised would apply to other denominations as well. So, out of our conversations, and out of my own denominational perspective, this second section will address the current situation of graduate, professional theological education among Southern Baptists and suggest some essential concerns for the future.

Walking through a grove of brilliant golden aspens above Angel Fire, New Mexico, last fall, I saw mingled with the aspens, remnants of what was once a forest of stately pines, spruce, and fir trees. Decades ago, the old forest had been decimated by a fire. Scattered on the ground were the blackened stumps and fallen trunks of the huge trees, while a few massive conifer trunks still stood, towering above the aspen, leafless, devoid of branches, charred reminders of the mighty forest of an earlier day.

Woodsmen say there would be no shimmering aspen trees in the mountains if the older conifers had not perished to form a clearing in which the new trees could flourish.

The largest Protestant denomination in the ATS had been served by only six seminaries, each considerably larger than the average ATS institution. Those six seminaries are still standing, unlike the older conifers in New Mexico, but the forest is being reshaped radically.

But already, in the clearing left by the denominational firestorm, there are springing up new forms of theological education. These new schools—the golden aspen of Southern Baptist ministry training—demonstrate again the power of God to bring new life and hope out of defeat and discouragement.

The list is impressive and growing: George W. Truett Theological Seminary at Baylor University in Waco, Texas; The Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond in Virginia; The Logsdon School of Theology at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas; M. Christopher White School of Divinity of Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, North Carolina; the McAfee

School of Theology of Mercer University in Atlanta, Georgia; along with Baptist programs at Brite Divinity School of Texas Christian University, Candler School of Theology of Emory University, and Duke University Divinity School. In addition, Central Baptist Theological Seminary, affiliated with the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., has also formally affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a moderate Southern Baptist Convention group. Like the aspen groves, these new initiatives are reseeding the charred soil and bringing new life and color to the landscape. Even though the future is uncertain, we take hope in this lively renaissance of Baptist theological education at the edge of a new millennium.

In a sense, this upheaval in Southern Baptist theological education offers a providential opportunity to reshape ministry training for the future of our denomination. It is difficult and often impossible to make substantive changes in older, established institutions where curricula are subject to doctrinal and political special interests and turf protection among faculty. But new schools, operating from *tabula rasa,* are freer to experiment with new forms of learning and, in a zero-based environment, freer to create fresh institutional archetypes for the twenty-first century.

What should these new models look like? How should we Baptists proceed in shaping theological education at the edge of the new century? I offer nine modest proposals in the form of nine theses. They are not exhaustive, not listed in priority, and they come not from an expert, but from the personal musings of a practitioner.

1. **Effective theological education at the edge of the new century will be committed unapologetically to serious, first-rate scholarship**.

According to Mark Noll, the failure of American evangelicals to sustain a serious intellectual life is a scandal. He's right. Baptists must admit that our theological education at times has lacked intellectual muscle. To impact modern culture with the Gospel, seminary faculties and students should increase their efforts at critical thinking within a specifically Christian framework. They need to apply that thought to economics, political science, literary criticism, historical inquiry, philosophical studies, linguistics, and the arts. Paul may have had this kind of scholarship in mind when he said in Philippians 4:8, "Think on these things."

Acknowledging that there is no inherent contradiction between rigorous reason and fervent faith, our schools should continue to foster evangelical commitment and robust scholarship. We can maintain our doctrinal ideals, without being obscurantist, reactionary, or cranky.

This calls for twenty-first century seminary students to be seriously immersed in biblical languages and texts. They need to develop a theological framework, to cultivate the life of the mind so that (in the words of Robert

Sloan, president of Baylor University) future generations who follow us in both pulpit and pew will have a vigorous, lively, and intellectually credible faith to proclaim and to believe.

The mission statement of George W. Truett Theological Seminary, where I now serve, promises to equip students with an informed, coherent theology. It is our purpose to help them develop an intellectual and spiritual framework so they can live and articulate their faith within a global society and apply that faith to complex contemporary problems.

2. Effective theological education at the edge of the new century will address the heart as well as the head by emphasizing spiritual formation.

Moral stumbling among pastors and other church leaders is becoming epidemic. Add to that a cavalier neglect of basic professional ethics, and ministerial credibility has all but disappeared.

On October 6, 1995, Pope John Paul II spoke to seminarians gathered at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, New York. Congratulating the rector for recently incorporating into their curriculum a full year devoted exclusively to spiritual formation, he said,

> Why are you here as seminarians? Why are you here, members of the faculty and others who help to prepare seminarians for the priesthood? Is it not to know the mind of the Lord—to know the mind of the Lord? A seminarian must ask himself: is Christ calling me? Does He wish me to be His priest? If you answer yes, then the great work of the seminary is to help you to put off the natural man, to leave behind the old man, that is, the unspiritual man who you used to be, in order to experience the action of the Holy Spirit and to understand the things of the Spirit of God. You must enter into an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit and with all your gifts in order that the Lord's intention for you may become clear.

What better expression could there be for our purposes in theological education—particularly Baptist theological education—at the edge of a new century? Admittedly, a seminary is not a church; it is a school. Nevertheless, faith development, character development, and spiritual formation are essential. Effective ministry training, therefore, will seek to blend the university divinity school model with its focus on the classroom and the library, with the monastic model with its focus on the chapel and prayerful meditation (the wedding of German science—*Wissenschaft* with Greek nurture—*Paideia*). In Southern Baptist circles, we call this harmonizing the best of the "Charleston Tradition" (intellectualism) with the best of the "Sandy Creek Tradition" (pietism).

George W. Truett Theological Seminary is investing significant effort in a spiritual formation program of covenant groups for students and faculty, believing that in a materialistic culture, thoughtful Christians must be tough-minded, yet spiritually alive and compassionate.

3. **Effective theological education at the edge of the new century will resolve the tension between theory and practice.**

The traditional paradigm of contemporary American education holds that students are first taught the basic principles of a discipline and then, and only then, they are taught skills of applying that discipline to such practical fields as citizenship, career, and personal development. But, under the influence of post-modernism, where the quest for knowledge is merely a manifestation of the will to power, the traditional paradigm of "knowledge before theory" is often rejected. Theory no longer has to precede practice; knowledge does not necessarily come before action. Echoing this sentiment, some professional schools have adopted the position, "Skip the theory, and get down to brass tacks."

On the other hand, reacting to this growing sentiment, some liberal arts proponents have adopted the opposite, an anti-application snobbery that rejects the practical altogether. Both are wrong. Happily, a growing number of schools are trying to integrate professional school competencies and liberal arts. Science, engineering, and business school students now study foreign languages, arts, and religion; while liberal arts students are given basic business literacy. It seems obvious that effective theological education at the edge of the new century must find a balance between theory and practice.

The ideal, it seems to me, is a balance, a golden mean between theory and practice (Greek *theoria* and *phronesis*). No patient in the operating room wants a surgeon who has read all the anatomy books but has no first-hand experience in an operating room. Nor is it any better to have a surgeon who has performed numerous operations but has never read an anatomy book. A well-prepared minister in the twenty-first century must have an education with a healthy balance between both theoretical knowledge and hands-on skills.

Admittedly, because the professional guilds are important to the frontiers of Christian thinking, seminaries will give attention to equipping young, gifted Baptist intellectuals to become teachers and researchers. But the seminary's basic purpose is not to train professional academics. That is to say, it is not to develop theoretical philosophers. Rather, it is to show how philosophy can help ministers address questions such as evil and suffering arising out of their congregations. The seminary's educational goal is not to produce theoretical historians, but ministers who learn from history to avoid repeating the same errors today.

That is one reason ATS standards are emphasizing congregational-based curricula. The ideal is contextualized training where church leaders help define educational outcomes, shape the curriculum, and measure readiness for ministry. Acknowledging this need, seminaries like ours at Baylor are attempting to integrate theory and practice by requiring residency in a mentored, hands-on immersion in the day-to-day functions of ministry. Under the trained and supervisory eyes of a trusted mentor, the student will get a feel for the actual tasks and functions of ministry. Additionally, ministry practitioners are regularly invited to serve as guest professors, bringing current experience into dialogue with theory.

Churches rightly are holding seminaries accountable for graduates who not only can think critically, but who can function in the complex environment of the new millennium.

4. **Effective theological education at the edge of the new century will emphasize biblical preaching as a curricular priority in equipping pastors.**

During the '60s and '70s, preaching suffered a decline in popularity not only among some ministers and churches but also among architects of seminary curricula. According to Karl Rahner, some rejected preaching because the language flowing from the pulpit had no meaning for them; it had no connection with their own lives and glibly bypassed many threatening and seemingly unavoidable issues. Others saw preaching as outmoded, an echo from an abandoned past. Even sermon tasting, what Sydney Smith calls a reprehensible kind of ecclesiastical bar-hopping (erratic church-going with a view to sampling and comparing eminent preachers) went out of vogue. Still other preachers, he says, failed because the ground of conviction had slipped from under their feet.

Whatever the cause, as a result of this decline, pastoral training in many seminaries minimized preaching and focused instead on administration, management, counseling, pastoral care, organizational systems, and even on evangelism and church growth. But biblical preaching is making a welcome comeback as a priority in the courses of pastoral training. In his book, *The Primacy of Preaching*, John Killinger calls preaching the supreme task of the pastor. The minister *may* do many things, but the minister *must* do one thing: preach.

Believing that the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with a view toward conversion is the basis of evangelism and missions, the founders of George W. Truett Seminary have expressed this primacy of preaching in the first sentence of its mission statement: "The purpose of George W. Truett Theological Seminary is to prepare ministers to live and proclaim the Word of God for the sake of the church and world." They underscored this conviction

in the last sentence of the mission statement: "We will equip preachers/communicators who, with power and persuasion, will humbly but forcefully articulate the Word of God so that it may be heard and understood within both the church and the world."

5. **Effective theological education at the edge of the new century will ensure that students preparing for specialized vocations other than the pastorate (e.g., religious education, church music, social work, counseling) receive a broad grounding in biblical and theological studies.**

Instead of separate schools of theology, education, and music, insulated from one another in remote buildings, with discrete faculties and curricula, as it is in some large seminaries, ministry students are better served with a more integrated model. Truett Seminary's proposal is to offer for all students the Master of Divinity degree with a required core of biblical and theological studies. Specialized cognates in varied vocational ministries are available in addition to the core. One advantage of our close relationship with the other schools of Baylor is that these concentrations in such fields as religious education, church music, social work, and counseling are offered in cooperation with university faculties in these areas.

6. **Effective theological education at the edge of the new century will expand its range to include academic programs for lay leaders.**

It is ironic that Southern Baptists, with their emphasis on the priesthood of all believers and their stand on equal roles for lay and clergy in the church, have historically restricted enrollment in their seminaries to so-called "full-time vocational ministers." One would think lay theological studies would be a natural option in our denomination's educational systems. Research has shown that lay leaders in Baptist churches want to have study opportunities with more depth than those offered by typical denominational training programs. They want to do more than audit courses; they want the discipline of study in an accredited master's degree environment. George W. Truett Seminary is developing a two-year degree, Master of Arts in Christian Service, for lay church leaders.

7. **Effective theological education at the edge of the new century will embrace the task of "denominationalizing" seminary students.**

Several years ago in New York, I addressed American Baptist ministers on the topic of "Baptist Heritage." I chose for my title, "*Authenticus Baptistus:* An Endangered Species." It is my view that the perpetuation of the historic Baptist vision is being threatened not from outside enemies who impose limits on free

exercise of our ideals, but from within, from pseudo-Baptists who never knew or have forgotten what our true identity is and are distorting it.

One of the pressing needs of our denomination as we approach the twenty-first century is for ministers with an accurate understanding of and firm commitment to authentic Baptist principles. The burden for meeting this need rests on the shoulders of theological educators.

Granted, good theological education is not merely denominational indoctrination to produce cookie-cutter graduates who can mouth the sacred shibboleths. But neither does good theological education shy away from its task of providing essential orientation in the rich heritage, the distinctive doctrines, and the Free Church ecclesiology of our Baptist way.

Faculties rightly value the privilege of pursuing critical studies with academic freedom. At the same time, it is rightly expected that they remain faithful to the confessional affiliation of the seminary. Their academic freedom is a freedom within the broad parameters of the denomination's statements of faith. Denominational seminaries differ in this regard from the university. Theological schools, then, should have faculty who are comfortable with the main tenets of the denomination. The classroom and the church should be held in equal importance; scholarship and denominational conviction should be seen in partnership within the seminarian's pilgrimage to be a learned spiritual leader.

I like the statement in the George W. Truett Seminary catalogue:

> We will equip ministers with shepherding and leadership skills which are consistent with historic Baptist commitments to a truly congregational life as reflected in church polity, the freedom of conscience, the priesthood of believers, and the spiritual giftedness of all members. These historic Baptist commitments are, we believe, consistent with the New Testament emphases on the church as the body of Christ.

8. Effective theological education at the edge of the new century will harness for God the power of technology.

Bruce Chaloux, graduate dean at Virginia Tech, led a conference at Baylor recently on distance learning. He showed how emerging technologies such as fiber optics, interactive classrooms, CD-ROM, compressed video, and e-mail actually enhance faculty productivity, provide more responsive learning settings, and increase faculty/student connectivity.

Distance learning is the cutting edge in current pedagogical theory. The focus is on taking learning where the students are. This may be distance learning from the main campus to another city or state, but it can also mean connections from the classroom to the dorm room or the apartment.

Recent seminary advertisements in *Christianity Today* and *Christian Century* show the extent to which theological schools are buying into the possibilities of distance learning and technology. There are pitfalls, but effective theological education at the edge of the new century will be unafraid to harness the potential of technology, redeeming the time for the Lord.

9. Effective theological education at the edge of the new century will value objective accreditation from peers in seminary education.

Many of us Baptists are aware of and justly disturbed by the occasional rhetoric of some leaders in the Southern Baptist Convention to withdraw their schools from ATS and develop a denominational accrediting agency so that Southern Baptists would accredit the schools they own and fund. To promote their cause, they denounce regional accrediting agencies and especially ATS as secular, liberal scholars who punish any school that has conservative theological convictions. These anti-accreditation heralds refuse to believe that there is no contradiction between an institution's doctrinal confessions and standards of academic quality.

The fact is that objective professional evaluation by peers in graduate education provides not only valuable benchmarks for measuring academic quality, but compelling motivation to maintain that quality as well. This in no way tampers with a school's faith claims. Who could argue that accreditation measurements would be anything but helpful in pursuing the objectives of a good theological school?

Conclusion

In autumn a few years ago, we traveled to New England to see the colorful foliage. In Freeport, Maine, we turned our attention away from nature's display to that remarkable array of commercialism—the outlet mall. The whole town is given over to this recent icon of materialistic excess. One shop specialized in hand-carved decoys of geese and ducks shaped into works of art. These treasures were very expensive, but I was drawn to a bargain table in the back bearing the sign, "1/2 Price Sale: Seconds."

I picked out a bargain whose flaw qualifying it as "a second" was indistinguishable and moved to the work table where three of the wood carvers were at work. I asked them, "What are you carving today?" Thinking they would answer, "Wood Duck or Mallard or Canadian Honker," I was surprised when one of the carvers smiled and said, "Actually, today we're making seconds. They're selling so well, we're carving seconds!"

That may be acceptable behavior in the commercial world of marketing, but not in the world of theological education. No school should intentionally strive to be second-rate. Understanding the urgency of our task as theological educators, we should strive at least to be effective, maybe even the best.

My contention is that the quest for excellence will include among other factors the nine theses of this presentation:

1. An unapologetic commitment to serious, first-rate scholarship.
2. An inclusive focus on the heart as well as the head.
3. A balance between theory and practice.
4. An emphasis on biblical preaching.
5. A biblical/theological core for all vocational ministers.
6. An academic program for lay leaders.
7. A willingness to "denominationalize."
8. An enthusiastic employment of technology.
9. An appreciation for professional accreditation.

The joy of serving in the field of ministry training at the edge of the new century is born of the awareness that properly educating the future leaders of our churches and our denominations is one of the only, and perhaps the most promising, way forward—especially out of denominational turmoil such as Baptists have endured these last twenty years.

Someone has said, "If you think education is expensive, you ought to try ignorance."

Russell H. Dilday retired this year as Distinguished Professor of Homiletics at George W. Truett Theological Seminary of Baylor University in Waco, Texas. He served as president of ATS from 1988 to 1990. He was president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, from 1978 to 1994.

Looking Forward, Looking Backward: A View of Theological Education at the Beginning of a New Millennium

James L. Waits

Tempting as it is, at the beginning of a new millennium, to speculate about the future, we would also be well advised from that vantage point to reflect about the past—to measure how far we've come, to claim who we are, to assess what we're about. Theological education in our time has "come of age." It has become more self-assured, more professionally and pedagogically seasoned. Its leadership is better-trained; its faculties are more astute about the world and the students they are called to serve. In the past forty years our enterprise has encountered enormous change. Theological schools have been challenged both by internal institutional pressures and by cultural and technological shifts unlike any before.

For the most part, theological education has confronted these challenges and absorbed their impact with genuine enlightenment. The momentous changes wrought in the society over the struggle for civil rights, the war in Viet Nam, and the movement for women's equality have all had their influence on the hiring practices, curricula, even the habits of community life in theological schools, and what our institutions have learned from these wider public influences is a new understanding of the need for diversity, accessibility, and inclusiveness already proclaimed in the Gospel. The schools recognized this, and though we have far to go, there are few theological institutions today that do not share that dedication to diversity and broader inclusiveness.

Similarly, the impact of globalization has stimulated awareness of the need for a new comprehensiveness on the part of theological education in North America. Given the challenges of a global community, neither theological understanding nor the curricula of theological education can operate any longer from its accustomed Western European perspective. We have learned that the world is larger and that indigenous theologies and forms of church life, as well as non-Christian religions, must be taken into account as we make our theological judgments. Initiatives by the ATS and by the increasing interchange of seminaries with other parts of the world have resulted in a global consciousness that promises to affect many of our traditional assumptions about how theology is to be formulated and how theological education is to be conducted in North America today.

The revolution in technology, especially telecommunications and the Internet, has challenged theological education in ways that were unforeseen

even a decade ago. Some theological schools are experimenting with new ways these media can be put to the service of their programs. Despite skepticism in some sectors, distance education, remote classrooms, and teaching on the Internet are welcomed by many as new resources for extending theological education and the influence of religious values into the contemporary society.

Theological educators have also become more sophisticated in the management of their institutions. Leadership education for the administrators of these schools, their trustees, and faculties is abundant and well-resourced. Opportunities for peer learning offered by ATS, *In Trust*, the Association of Governing Boards, and other agencies are available for leaders of theological education at every level. The ATS has also become a remarkable source of solidarity and support for officers and other personnel of these institutions. As Leon Pacala pointed out in his book, *The Role of ATS in Theological Education 1980-1990*, ATS has long since ceased to be a mere agent of the institutions' will; through its accrediting and other associational functions it now serves as a stimulus and guide to the schools about the future direction of theological education.

Even the economy is helping. Endowments are growing, and donors with more discretionary income than ever before seek opportunities for investment in institutions with authentic and well-conceived missions. In such an environment, theological education has an unprecedented opportunity to secure its financial base. Among the factors that have made theological education precarious in the past is the uncertainty of its funding. Judicious planning and investment in the present economic climate can reduce that uncertainty and lead to a strong financial future for these institutions.

A distinctive, if not unique, resource of theological education in our time is the sense of community that exists among the schools and their chief administrators. Given the disparate traditions, ideologies, and institutional structures that characterize our enterprise, this commitment to collegiality in our work is nothing less than extraordinary. The ATS, its governance and style of operation, is due major credit for the constructive interaction of its members. And the citizenship of evangelical and Roman Catholic schools, more recent members of this community, has brought refreshing diversity and energy to the work of ATS. I cannot document this observation, but I know of no other professional association in North America that exemplifies such a thoroughgoing sense of community about its common task.

This spirit of collegiality is doubtlessly undergirded and shaped by the religious claims that motivate our work. David Kelsey's question, "what is theological about a theological school?" is evocative for both institutional and professional practice. I have always believed that the organization and administration of a theological school—the selection of faculty, its curriculum, the habits and activities of community life—ought to be shaped and measured by rich commitments of faith, informed by the best critical research available to us.

It seems to me that theological education in our recent past has, for the most part, defined itself by this principle. The emerging issues conveyed to us by the culture, by the new global context in which we live, and by justice issues related to race, class, and gender have been an important stimulus to that theological interpretation of our mission. Change is inevitable in the work of all institutions, and the best of our schools are those that have embraced these changing conditions with deliberate theological intent. For the theological school, our convictions about God, Jesus, salvation, and the church simply cannot be divorced from practical administrative and institutional matters; such perspective contributes a profound richness and energy to our efforts.

Our convictions about theology are important measures of our practice, and they inform our priorities for the future. If we remain faithful to this theological instrumentation of our work, theological education can well play a distinctive role in our society. If not, it runs the risk of replicating an array of organizations with altruistic purpose, but without, as we believe about our work, "saving power."

In a sense, theological schools have an evangelical mission in contemporary society: to call the communities of North America to a more ultimate purpose, to proclaim the rule of the love of God and neighbor in the midst of diversity, pluralism, and the economic values that dominate contemporary culture. It is a vocation that theological schools share with the church, and one that distinguishes them from all other institutions in modern society.

So what may we hope for and expect of theological education in this new era? If these institutions and their leadership possess such strength and prospect, can they have true effect in the proclamation of the Gospel? Can theological education mobilize itself and enable a religious leadership that will have influence in the world and on the conditions of life of the world's people? As institutional citizens, can theological schools have real effect on conditions in the communities in which they reside?

Such expectations are not without their limitations. For despite its strengths as a professional enterprise, the relative incapacity of theological education in a number of areas is apparent. The following is not a comprehensive list, but it might serve to focus our future priorities.

1. Theological schools are not "public" institutions, and they exercise little public influence, power, or moral suasion in their communities.
2. The priority of racial, ethnic, and gender diversity is not well-established within theological education in North America.
3. Globalization, despite intensive efforts over almost two decades, has not been intrinsically integrated into the teaching, research, and theological understanding of faculty and institutional decision-makers.
4. Theological education is not attracting its share of academically gifted students for leadership in the profession of ministry.

5. A persistent interpretive gap remains between most theological schools and the ordinary life of the churches, particularly in the area of ministry practice within congregations.
6. Theological schools have yet to assess in a thoroughgoing way the impact of the technological revolution on crucial elements of their programs and mission.

It is not impossible for the theological community to confront these critical issues, and I, for one, am optimistic about the will and capacity of the schools to address them. These issues constitute something of an agenda for theological education at the outset of this new millennium. Let us hope it will not take a millennium to resolve them!

How might some 200-plus theological institutions, collegially dedicated to the formation of an intelligent and committed ministry of the churches, with the resources they do have, begin to address these issues and exercise more authentic witness and influence in North American society? Even an attempt faithfully to address these issues will result in better equipped institutions to fulfill that role.

The Public Voice of Theological Education

Recent research by the Auburn Center for the Study of Theological Education suggests that "Seminaries are virtually invisible to leaders of secular organizations and institutions, even those in the seminary's own city and region." (*Auburn Studies,* Bulletin 6—"Missing Connections: Public Perceptions of Theological Education and Religious Leadership," page 4.) If this conclusion accurately characterizes most theological institutions, we are missing a challenging opportunity to shape the values of local communities and public policy decisions that may have important implications for justice and the common good. The ATS is currently engaged in a major initiative on The Public Character of Theological Education that should offer guidance to the schools regarding their public stance and ways particular religious traditions authorize and inform civic involvement. If theological education is to be a vital influence in contemporary society, however, each school must assess just what that public role might be and its religious responsibility for the care and well-being of the citizenry of its community.

Moreover, theological education has a responsibility to give voice to the importance of religious and human values in North America and in the world at large. While religious communities may disagree on some important public policy issues, they have a prophetic role to call leaders to more ultimate principles in the formulation of their decisions. Issues of human justice, of equal opportunity, and of the common good are all occasions in which the theological community can speak and act within the public sphere. The effect

of such testimony and witness will strengthen, not weaken, theological education as a visible influence in this society.

Diversity and Theological Education

We simply must make a more diligent effort to diversify our theological communities. The inclusiveness of the Gospel mandates it; the multiracial character of contemporary society demands it. While some schools have made progress in increased numbers of racial/ethnic and women students, theological faculties and administrations remain dominantly white and male. The ATS *Fact Book* for the academic year 1998-99 reported 68,875 students enrolled in all programs, with 66.4% male and 33.6% female. Of those numbers, 9.2% (6,328) are African American, 7.2% (4,992) are Asian American, 3.2% (2,175) are Hispanic, and less than 1% (191) are Native American. In 1998-99, the total number of faculty was 3,108. Of that number, 2,181 were white males and 550 were white females. Only 11.35% (353) were racial/ethnic persons. In the past five years we have made virtually no progress in the increase of numbers of racial/ethnic faculty teaching in theological schools, and the number of women faculty has actually declined.

The Fund for Theological Education and the Hispanic Theological Initiative are two agencies making diligent efforts to increase the pool of potential racial/ethnic faculty, but an intense priority on the part of the entire theological education community, as well as the graduate departments and the learned societies (American Academy of Religion and Society of Biblical Literature), will be necessary if we are to make substantial progress in this area.

As we attempt to address this critical shortage, our efforts are motivated both by the claims of the Gospel and by the increasing multicultural character of this society. The problems are complex and systemic, but if theological education in North America is to be relevant to these growing constituencies and to the culture at large, the mandate of inclusivity must guide and energize us.

The Global Character of Theological Education

The discussion of globalization in theological education was begun almost two decades ago. Yet faculty teaching and research, curricula, and student populations seldom reflect a thoroughgoing acknowledgment of the impact of the global community on fundamental elements of theological understanding and the practices of institutional life. To that extent, our teaching and research, and indeed our entire religious experience, is limited by a Western, affluent mindset that fails to probe the deeper and more inclusive intentions of God for all God's people.

Faculty would do well to mine the traditions of their disciplines and this broader worldview for the implications of a global perspective. The work of scholars from developing nations should be welcomed by the learned societies and guilds. Opportunities for international exchange of faculty and students should be initiated. Administrators and other leaders of theological education should promote a global consciousness in the formulation of curricula and in the establishment of institutional priorities. For a global world is the kind of world in which we now live. Already manifest in the daily exchanges of secular life, it is the new context in which the best and most imaginative programs of theological education will be conducted.

The ATS Task Force on Globalization has produced a multitude of resources concerning the relevance of global perspectives on our common work. If theological faculties and other leaders study and seriously reflect upon these publications and their implications, both the conduct of theological research and the teaching of the schools will be challenged to a more profoundly inclusive and global perspective.

Quality and the Leadership of the Churches

Every recent profile of students in theological education reports a decline in the academic level and capacities of ministerial candidates. A recent Auburn Center study, commissioned by the Fund for Theological Education, asserts that "ministerial programs have not maintained their market share in the competition for the best college graduates." If the church is to be well-served in the preparation of its future leadership, theological schools and church judicatories must exercise more discipline in candidacy standards, and all must become more energetic and imaginative in the recruitment of gifted prospects for the ministry.

Statistics show that enrollment practice in theological education is one of virtual open admission. Even the most academically rigorous schools admit students at a rate approaching 85% of applicants, and the argument that selections are made on the basis of other ministry criteria are no more impressive. Theological administrators are naturally motivated by the desire to maintain established enrollments, but they need to be aware, in the process, of the effect their decisions have on the quality of church leadership and deployment.

Among other priorities in theological education, we need a new commitment to excellence in the recruitment and education of candidates for the ministry. If theological education is to be a distinctive influence in this society, it will be through generations of gifted, imaginative, and well-informed graduates of these institutions. No compromise should be made by admissions offices or theological administrators in seeking out truly outstanding candidates for admission to our schools.

The Fund for Theological Education, Lilly Endowment, and the Henry Luce Foundation, among others, have recently inaugurated programs to underscore the importance of quality in religious leadership. A number of initiatives are underway that emphasize excellence in ministerial qualifications and practice. The schools are indispensable allies in this quest, and their response to this new priority for theological education will, in large measure, determine its outcome.

Theological Education and the Practices of the Church

Congregations and theological schools remain distant partners. Church hierarchies are persistently skeptical of theological curricula and their capacity to form students for the essential elements of practical ministry. Theological faculties contend for the intellectual traditions of the faith and for the theoretical underpinnings of that ministry. So an inescapable division between the expectations of the church and the theoretical and theological rationale of the theology school occurs. This longstanding dilemma begs for resolution, and it is one that theological educators of our day surely have the capacity to address.

In the last decade, a number of schools have attempted to focus on the teaching of practice under the nomenclature of the arts of ministry, or supervised ministry, or contextual education. The effort has been to understand ministry practice in a theological context, an inductive method designed to elicit from the elements of practice their theological import, and to signify the applicability and instructiveness of theology to actual situations of ministry. It is in that common construction that the theological school and the church can find purposeful meeting.

It must be said, in defense of the church, that theological faculties have often interpreted this criticism as anti-intellectual, when such commentary should have been seen as a plea for utility in behalf of church mission. In truth, theological schools, in recent days, have been relatively ineffective in their teaching of practice, particularly in comparison to their peer professions of medicine, law, education, and business.

Major attention to this division between church and seminary would be a highly constructive initiative on the part of theological education at the beginning of this new millennium. Theological seminaries must work closely in concert with the churches if religious leadership is to be effective in its mission.

The Technological Revolution and Theological Education

Many theological educators have been slow to embrace the revolution in technology because of the inevitable hype that has accompanied this development. The understandable tendency has been to insist that—for reasons of

community, quality, peer learning, and tradition—the new electronic media are inappropriate instruments for ministry formation. The ATS has been rightly cautious in sanctioning programs that rely too heavily on distance learning, remote classrooms, and teaching on the Internet.

But the new technology is with us—and it offers a dramatically efficient means of communication and teaching. The new accessibility to information, even within the confines of religion and theology, is enormous, and holds great potential for entire new categories of learning and awareness. The effect on pedagogy, on faculty research, on library and information resources is immense. New elements of interdisciplinary and interprofessional conversation are possible with the new technology that were inconceivable before.

A number of schools have begun to explore uses of these new media for their programs, some for internal pedagogical purposes, others for more expansive experiments with distance education and the Internet. Careful evaluation and further experimentation will doubtless overcome some of the initial problems, and we may expect that the new technology will eventually have a crucial impact on all the ways we teach, learn, and communicate the missions of our institutions. It is vital that the schools, and theological education as a whole, thoughtfully assess this new reality, both for its prospect and for the critical questions it raises about the form and style of education to which we have grown accustomed.

None of the issues that confront theological education today can, of course, be constructively addressed without the resources to undergird and give confidence to our work. For many schools, it is the struggle to find and secure financial resources. For others, it is the search for quality faculty or administrative leadership, or student admissions, or the need for classrooms or library or dormitory space. For some, it is the maintenance of a constituency, for others the creation of a constituency. But the quest for resources today is carried out in a more productive context than ever before. With strategic purpose, discipline, and smart institutional leadership, it is possible to envision a broad new strengthening of resources throughout the institutions of theological education in North America.

At the threshold of this new millennium, I believe that theological education is well-equipped for its task—possessive of a remarkable leadership, clear about its mission, and favored with a collegial spirit that is cause for an abundance of hope.

James L. Waits was dean of the Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, Georgia, for fourteen years from 1978 to 1991. He was elected president of ATS for the 1990-92 biennium, during which time, in 1991, he was elected executive director of the Association. In 1998, he left ATS to become president of The Fund for Theological Education in Atlanta, Georgia.

Theological Education in the Twenty-First Century

Luder G. Whitlock, Jr.

After experiencing many of the changes that occurred during the twentieth century and reflecting on the kaleidoscopic nature of those changes during the closing decade of 1999, I have become keenly aware of how difficult, yet necessary, it is to attempt to understand the changes and challenges that the new century brings. This article is an attempt to do that based on my experiences in theological education and pastoral ministry during the last third of the twentieth century.

Typically, when we attempt to anticipate the shape of the future, we employ past experiences and the pattern of emerging trends to help us do so. Yet, that approach has its limitations because entirely unexpected events may occur. New inventions or discoveries are made and applied that radically change the way we live. Those changes, in time, reconfigure our culture. The twentieth century was an apt demonstration of that. Who knows what our countries or the world or the church may be like in fifty years or a hundred years? Yet we must continually anticipate and adapt if theological education is to have a significant role.

Right now times are good. Churches are thriving; enrollment in Christian colleges and evangelical theological seminaries have grown significantly. Most of the new seminaries established in the U.S. since 1965 have been evangelical. Funds have been reasonably plentiful. Of course we can always use more, but the stock market has been kind to endowment funds, donors have been generous, and we are looking at an unprecedented transfer of wealth to the next generation that may create the greatest financial development opportunity we have ever seen. At the beginning of the twentieth century, who would have guessed all of this would happen?

In thinking about theological education in the twenty-first century, there are several questions that I wish to ask:

1. How can we gain insight into tomorrow's opportunities?
2. What will be the nature of our competition and how may it be different?
3. How can we energize our institutions to fulfill their mission in challenging times of change such as these?

Tomorrow's Opportunities

In order to understand tomorrow's opportunities, we need to anticipate how our world will be different. What are the changes that will be occurring insofar as we can ascertain them and what will they mean? For example, we know that there are significant spiritual stirrings that are occurring in this country. George Gallup, Jr. has said that the level of interest in spiritual matters, which he has detected in recent research, is beyond anything he can remember during all of his years of researching religion in America. The special issue of the *Wall Street Journal* on January 1, 2000, included a section on spirituality and, if you peruse the articles in major magazines and note the books stocked in bookstores on various aspects of spirituality, you realize something is happening. There is a spiritual stirring.

Not all of this spiritual interest and activity is being directed toward Christianity and the church. A significant amount of it is directed toward other religious groups and toward new individualized, personal expressions of religion. But if the church were able to adjust and capitalize on this unusual level of spiritual interest and activity, what an opportunity that would create for the growth of congregations and ministries early in this century and with it an opportunity to provide theological education for emerging leaders from this group. The heightened interest in spirituality also creates an opportunity to offer training in spiritual formation and be a resource to the church for the spiritual development of its members. Some seminaries have been doing this, others are moving in this direction but, in general, much more is needed by way of curricular attention to spiritual and moral formation.

On the other hand, the increasing interest shifting away from Christianity should be taken as a warning, for if the Christian community is not able to capitalize on this current opportunity, in a few years we may find ourselves increasingly marginalized in society. Given these circumstances, it is worth asking what our seminaries are doing to provide research and writing that may be beneficial to churches and ministries that wish to tap this interest in spiritual matters as a focus for ministry.

Then there is the matter of the relevance of Christianity to life. Accompanying the struggles of the past century has been the steady decline of Christian influence in the public sector. While in recent years there has been a new call for public religion and public virtue to be championed from the religious sector, numerous experiences have been more counterproductive than productive. ATS has endeavored to address this matter through its initiative on the public character of theological education and will continue this emphasis over the next several years.

It has not been unusual to discover a disconnect between what people say they believe and how they live. Chuck Colson's recent *How Now Shall We Live* has called attention to the need for developing and applying a Christian

worldview. Colson's book may do enough consciousness raising to create a real opportunity for Christians to capitalize on this need. But unless different strategies and applications are developed, another opportunity will fade into oblivion and the church will grow less and less relevant to what happens in the world and the daily lives of its people. If the church can regain a sense of relevance for daily life and influence in society, the benefits could be enormous. To what extent can theological education play a role in this? And perhaps we might ask to what degree does the typical seminary curriculum contribute to the integration and application of theological understanding for a coherent Christian worldview. For the most part our curricula have been far too atomistic. Our seminaries now have an opportunity to address this matter forcefully. How should our time and resources be utilized for satisfactory results?

Another factor of which we are quite aware is the way in which technology has been reshaping our world. Technological innovations have been changing the world for a long time, but we are acutely aware that technology is driving the economy rapidly down the highway of the information age accompanied by certain inevitable consequences including a radical reshaping of our culture. As Neil Postman observed in *Technopoly* some years ago, new technologies implemented widely in society inevitably bring the culture into crisis. We are living in a time when there is tremendous ferment, rapid change, constant reinvention and accommodation. All of that affects what happens in our lives individually, in the churches we attend, and in the educational institutions of our country.

It does not take long to see how this is happening. For example, visit several different worship services in local congregations and you may be surprised to observe words and video clips appearing on a screen at the front of the "worship center." Videos and similar materials are used for instruction in adult and children's classes in many churches. Education in general is experiencing the same pressure from technological development and innovation. Professors now not only need computers for research, writing, and communications but they are becoming aware that they need to be trained to use technological innovation for instructional purposes in the classroom. Power Point presentations are becoming more common. Student expectations regarding the use of technology will only increase. With each new wave of technological innovation there is a reciprocal demand from students and faculty for access, but considerable improvement will be required to make good on the enormous investment in equipment, software, and service that the new technologies demand.

You can see it happening with distance education. There is no doubt that distance education is gaining momentum. The university and college world has embraced it. A recent study indicated that eighty-five percent of colleges and universities will offer distance education courses by 2002. Thirty-three states have already created or now participate in statewide virtual universities.

The seminary world has been lagging in this area but it cannot do so for an extended period of time without loss. Video conferencing, Internet classes, and interactive multimedia materials are needed as well as training for personnel to know how to use these well and wisely for the educational mission of their institutions.

The fluid nature of our New World with the rapid flow of information and quick response to changing circumstances has also fostered decentralization. The political and economic fruits of that decentralization are apparent. In education, more and more students are not only opting for but expecting educational opportunities to be made available to them regionally and locally at convenient places and times. Asynchronous learning and virtual campuses fuel that flame all the more.

This decentralization has provided an opportunity to train more students than ever. People who have not been able to uproot and leave their communities in order to attend seminaries at a distance are finding they are now able to do so in their local context. They may now continue their same work or ministry while pursuing a theological education. So those for whom residential relocation was an impossibility are finding a new and unexpected accessibility to theological education. One of the greatest opportunities provided by such decentralization and technological advance is the possibility of training laity who are highly motivated, value education, and desire more biblical theological education than their local churches can offer. Basic M.A. programs have been extremely attractive to lay students and are much more accessible through extensions and distance education. Other specific areas of interest may be addressed and appropriate courses and programs developed with enormous benefit. If there is a willingness to rethink who should be considered a potential student, this opportunity with laity could fuel explosive enrollment growth.

Future Competition

During the rapid proliferation of megachurches in recent years an interesting phenomenon has occurred. There has been a shift of power from denominational hierarchies to the large church which has, as a consequence, developed a new sense of independence and influence. Denominational agencies and officials, as well as seminaries, have discovered their influence lessened as compared with historic standards. One of the interesting facets of this development is that the large church has become a fountainhead of innovation and influence for ministry. Successful models have been established in megachurches like Saddle Back and Willow Creek that other pastors and smaller churches emulate, hoping to obtain a similar measure of success. Whether that is most desirable in terms of ministry is a moot question for it has become a pronounced pattern.

A corollary to this burgeoning of large churches and their influence is a question, especially by their senior pastors, regarding the value of traditional theological education as experienced in seminaries and divinity schools. Some megachurch pastors have, with increasing frequency, expressed their dissatisfaction with the typical seminary experience, finding both the pace of change and the nature of change in seminaries to be inadequate in relation to their expectations. Although seminaries may prove useful for some biblical and theological research, in their opinion they do not appear to be useful insofar as realistic training for ministry. Much of what is taught appears to them to be irrelevant to the concerns and practice of ministry.

As a result, many of the larger churches are now recruiting staff from their own membership or establishing their own pastoral training programs or both. The rapid proliferation of contemporary worship services raises the question as to whether there may be a similar shift in the selection and training of ministry personnel in the future. Just as there was a rapid adoption of contemporary worship by many kinds of churches, there could be a rapid and broad shift to a new approach to training pastors. Given the fact that in three major denominations, United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and Episcopal Church, one-half of the total membership is found within thirteen to fifteen percent of the churches, this is a factor not to be disregarded by seminaries. The large church, in addition to its own substantial membership, influences a huge percentage of church membership from other congregations, and the trend currently favors the continued growth and influence of large churches. Will seminaries find a way to cooperate and collaborate with the large church or will they compete?

Another source of competition is the model of the graduate school of religion as an appealing and attractive alternative for seminary education. It tends to an adulation of the academy and the academic experience rather than the church and the ministry. Unfortunately, it often tends to generate research, writing, and teaching that are not of immediate, direct benefit to ministry. The result can be seminaries that are more and more out of touch with churches and ministry, more and more oriented to the model of the academy or the graduate school, less connected to the lives of ordinary Christian people. If this pattern prevails and seminaries become more isolated and perhaps insulated from their constituent churches, this will ultimately create a greater tension between the seminaries and the church.

Recently, I was approached by a new denomination with approximately 1,000 pastors. Earlier they were somewhat anti-educational but they have changed. They have become convinced that they need to pursue additional education for their ministers. As they entered into dialogue with various seminaries, one of their concerns became the experience of an educational model that does not bridge to reality. That is, it does not help the student understand how to apply what is being learned to the world in which people

live and minister. After extended discussion and some sampling of educational alternatives, they decided to pursue educational opportunities that help their students move toward a discerning application of that education into their ministries. This has occurred because these ministers who would be students are motivated when they perceive the relevance of their studies to their ministries. Another facet of this issue is that those seminaries that actually succeed in helping students bridge to reality through their education will likely become major competitors to those that do not. They may, in time, become the driving force in the renewal and redirection of the church in this century.

A major concern for almost every seminary is adequate funding. The recent decade of wealth generation has not diminished that reality. Seminary presidents, more than ever, feel the need to raise money for their institutions. Trustees count it a priority in presidential searches to hire someone who will be a successful fundraiser. One of the principal reasons for this change is the hard reality of needing to generate revenue. It is not uncommon for tuition and fees to provide only about thirty percent of the cost of educating a student. While some additional revenue is provided by endowment income, the rest usually must be generated through gifts and grants. The support for theological education by most churches and denominations has dropped dramatically so that a very small percentage of the operating costs are now provided by denominational and congregational support.

When individuals, congregations, and foundations begin to determine how their funds should be contributed or invested, many ministries can appeal more to them than theological educational institutions. The average church member can be more readily caught up in the local congregation and its local ministry needs. Then there is always the exotic, romantic call of missions. There is also the ubiquitous presence and appeal of various parachurch ministries and secular charities that represent many worthwhile endeavors. Couple these with the fact that many people do not understand what happens at a seminary, nor the direct correlation between its effort and what happens in the local church or community, and their motivation for support of theological education drops significantly. As various ministries become more sophisticated in their fundraising and their immediate ministry efforts, especially in the local community, become more appealing to the average donor, this will undoubtedly become a major competitive factor in the funding of theological education for the future. Most seminaries, with less endowment or denominational support, must begin to consider other creative alternatives that will produce the revenue needed to operate.

Finally, we must acknowledge that the presence and growth of other religious groups in a genuinely pluralistic society, where Christianity is more and more only one among many, enhance the appeal of these other groups, especially to those who have no connection to a Christian church or no background in the Christian faith. There was a day when Christian churches

could count on their strong identity, history, and pervasive influence as a major factor in attracting those with spiritual stirrings. That is no longer the case, and churches are going to have to rethink this whole matter. What role will seminaries play in this? How can we become, through research and writing, such a resource to the church that we are a part of the solution? It is apparent that the uniqueness and attractiveness of Christianity must be established in a secular world. It cannot be taken for granted. The emerging presence of the variety of belief systems in our culture presents new challenges to the Christian church and to our schools.

Motivating and Energizing Our Institutions to Fulfill Their Missions

Strong, competent faculties are essential to the health of theological education and because this is so, institutions that do not seek or cannot retain the very best faculty will find themselves to that degree deficient. On the other hand, new and younger faculty need time to develop and mature as teachers and scholars. In many instances this requires nurture from the institutions in which they work. A commitment to the care and nurture of faculty so that they grow personally and professionally is essential to the development of theological education. Faculty need a supportive context that encourages and, when needed, directs their development. Because many professors are still teaching exactly as they were taught, primarily by lecture, more attention needs to be directed toward teaching faculty how to teach more effectively, including how to adopt technology into their instructional methodology. As faculty become more skilled in helping students learn, everyone benefits, and faculty should be more highly motivated.

Somewhat related to the nurture of faculty is the selection of the right people for faculty appointments initially. That selection process should probably consider, in addition to scholarship, the overall suitability of the person for theological education so that appointments result in faculty who fit and contribute significantly. One factor that may not be disregarded without negative consequences, in my view, is the need to seek faculty with good ministry experience. If there is to be a good working relationship between the church and the seminary, then having faculty with ministry experience is an asset because they bring practical and ministerial perspectives to their work as theological educators. In addition, their pastoral networks stimulate the circulation of new information pertinent to ministry and contribute to ongoing faculty development. Those faculty who, though extremely bright and well educated, have never been immersed in the rigors of ministry can fail to understand the true purpose of theological education.

Another way in which institutions may find fresh motivation is through cooperation and collaboration with other seminaries, other ministries, and the

church. Working together and helping one another often creates synergistic serendipities. New ways of looking at issues, new ways of solving problems, new ways of applying theological concepts emerge from such collaboration. If an institution tracks along for several years without ever breaking out of its own circle of influence, it may find itself more resistant to new ideas and new ways of thinking than it imagines. Collaborative and strategic alliances not only can be beneficial in stimulating creativity and innovation, they can also serve to strengthen institutions by creating a greater platform for ministry, new constituent support, and new enrollment opportunities.

A third step that can be taken to motivate and energize our institutions is to invite external appraisal from various sources. We are accustomed to involving related clergy and denominational officials as well as peers within the academy, as with accrediting associations. But a good case can be made for inviting external appraisals from laity and from denominational or other Christian organizations not related to our institutions. Often those external groups will see our seminary very differently from those who are immediately related to it. If we are able to specify the kind of information we wish to have and ask for honesty in providing it, we may receive information that will be extremely beneficial for the improvement of our schools. Along this line, it is also possible for seminaries and divinity schools to be more intentional about commissioning the kind of research that will address critical needs and opportunities that are important to the schools and their constituencies. Too often other external pressures determine the kind of research that is conducted.

There is also every reason to foster a planning process and an institutional culture that is successful in securing enthusiastic ownership of that vision of the future. When institutions are able to do this effectively they discover the excitement, not only of ownership of the vision, but the realization that everyone working together in unison can make a difference. Sometimes when there is an institutional sharing of vision that leads to risk-taking and path-breaking, it can be somewhat intimidating, if not on occasion downright scary. But it is immensely rewarding when it works. The achievement of even a portion of an aspiring plan can become a tonic leading to further steps to accomplish even more.

Although there are undoubtedly some formidable challenges awaiting theological education in the twenty-first century, it is encouraging to remember how much has been accomplished in the past, to consider how much progress has been made, and to contemplate the exciting possibilities that lie ahead as we endeavor to develop institutions that are successfully engaging their students in the exciting process of learning so that their lives will make a tremendous difference for good.

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Our Words Are Beginning to Make It So: ATS Schools on Cross-Cultural Relationships and Globalization

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ABSTRACT: This article summarizes the 1998 ATS all-member-school survey on cross-cultural relationships, which was part of the Incarnating Globalization project, funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts. The survey was developed inductively and sought to "capture" the understandings, terminology, programs, and evaluative principles concerning cross-cultural relationships in ATS schools. The survey offers a "snapshot" of where ATS schools were on this issue as of spring 1998. It demonstrates that schools are actively working to integrate global and cross-cultural perspectives into courses, curricular requirements, worship, and community life, as well as adapting their teaching to make it more cross-culturally effective. The schools want their students to be aware of the global nature of the church and seek to provide cross-cultural experiences on and off campus, in classes, field education, and campus life. Schools have come a long way, but they are still struggling to be even more effective in globalizing theological education.

Introduction: The Incarnating Globalization Project of ATS

Since the early 1980s, theological schools have responded to the ATS focus on globalization in a variety of imaginative ways. Today the wealth of experience in globalization at ATS schools can greatly benefit the broad spectrum of theological institutions. To facilitate the sharing of such experiences, the ATS Task Force on Globalization undertook a project entitled "Incarnating Globalization," funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts. This project was intended to be the capstone of nearly two decades of the Association's focus on globalization.

"Incarnating Globalization" focused on two major concerns. The first was to help ATS schools address the general theme of globalization in the redeveloped ATS Standards of Accreditation adopted at the 1996 Biennial Meeting. Moving from one separate ill-defined standard on globalization in the previous standards to having globalization serve as one of four general themes that cut across all the standards entailed a major shift in how schools address their responses to globalization in the self-studies they prepare for accrediting visits.

In one track of the "Incarnating Globalization" project, eight Pilot Schools were each assigned a "theological consultant" with a special expertise in

globalization issues. The theological consultants, along with "educational consultants," helped the schools to address issues of effectiveness and evaluation. The Pilot Schools' experiences were published as a set of cases in *Theological Education* (35:1, Autumn 1998).

The second track of "Incarnating Globalization" addressed the issues of the "cross-cultural relationships" of ATS schools. The original grant proposal for this project presumed that "cross-cultural" relationships would be international (exchanges, joint programs, visiting professorships, immersion experiences, etc.). The ATS Task Force on Globalization, however, suggested that the definition of "cross-cultural" be expanded to include domestic relationships or programs of a school that were centrally cross-cultural in nature: field placements, institutes, and programs that intentionally served diverse communities or that sent students to communities of a cultural background other than their own. This understanding of "cross-cultural" as both "international" and "domestic" parallels the understanding of "globalization" in ATS schools that grows out of Don Browning's influential fourfold definition of "globalization." Browning has suggested that "the word globalization has at least four rather distinct meanings": (1) "the universal mission to evangelize the world", (2) "globalization as ecumenical cooperation between the various manifestations of the Christian church throughout the world", (3) "the dialog between Christianity and other religions", and (4) "the mission of the church in the world . . . to improve and develop the lives of the millions of poor, starving, and disadvantaged people."[1] As the socioeconomic, communications, and demographic forces for "globalization" have evolved, it has become clear that not only do "global forces" interconnect peoples across the globe, creating the now familiar "global village," but the movement of peoples also has brought "global diversity" into our local communities and churches. The "global" is now local. The "cross-cultural" is no longer just "overseas," but also in our own backyards. The realization of the dual international and local impact of "globalization" has made a significant impact on theological schools. The Task Force accordingly expanded its understandings of the "cross-cultural relationships" of ATS schools to include these two dimensions.

The "cross-cultural" track of the "Incarnating Globalization" project had several goals: (a) to ascertain the current state and understanding of "cross-cultural relationships" at ATS schools, (b) to assist schools in their efforts to improve their cross-cultural relationships, (c) to assist ATS schools in understanding ways to evaluate the effectiveness of their cross-cultural relationships, and (d) to share resources and wisdom in support of establishing, maintaining, and evaluating effective cross-cultural relationships at ATS schools.

Direct assistance (goal b, above) was offered to schools in the form of cross-cultural consultants. An ATS school could apply for such a consultant to help establish, deepen, or evaluate one or all of its cross-cultural relationships and programs. The project engaged and trained five cross-cultural consultants,

developing with them the parameters of the program. The consultants visited fourteen schools to assist with a variety of cross-cultural initiatives.

The cross-cultural consultants recommended that ATS commission an article introducing the social scientific literature on "globalization." They argued that this article would both assist them in their work as consultants and serve as a resource for ATS schools seeking to expand their understanding of the forces for globalization. While many in ATS are familiar with the theological literature in response to globalization, few ATS faculty are adequately grounded in the burgeoning social scientific literature. This commissioned essay was included in a special issue of *Theological Education* (35:2, Spring 1999).

The remaining goals (a, c, and d—ascertaining the current state of relationships, the promotion of development of evaluation methods, and the sharing of resources and wisdom) were pursued by means of a number of grant initiatives.

Survey on Cross-Cultural Relationships: Background and Development

The grant proposal had initially scheduled an all-member-school survey in the first year of the grant. The Task Force and the project's advisors counseled a careful process for developing and reviewing an all-member survey to ensure that the survey would be designed to facilitate the project's goals.

Because the first goal (a) was to determine the current state of cross-cultural relationships in member schools, the Task Force suggested that we proceed inductively to develop the survey. Most surveys proceed deductively, eliciting responses to a clearly defined set of alternatives. A standard deductive approach would have required ATS, through the Task Force, to define exactly the nature, purposes, and standards of "cross-cultural relationships." The survey would then determine how many ATS schools met or agreed with the Association's definitions. Such an approach would run counter to the way in which ATS has encouraged schools to address globalization in light of the distinctive missions, denominational and ecclesial links, understandings of global mission, and ministerial responses to cultural diversity within their churches or school. The Association has always acknowledged that it must, because of the diversity of its membership, embrace a range of understandings of and responses to "globalization." This was the genius of Don Browning's now classic fourfold definition; many have acknowledged that while any one of these four aspects of globalization individually could serve perfectly well as the focus of globalization at particular ATS schools, only the full fourfold definition would suffice to cover the needs of the broad diversity of schools that comprise the whole ATS constituency. The fourfold definition was intended both to be a broad umbrella to include diverse understandings and a heuristic device to encourage schools to consider broadening their theological responses

to "globalization." Because the goal of the project was to determine the current state of cross-cultural relationships in ATS schools, testing agreement with definitions generated centrally at ATS, assuming we could generate them, would not achieve the objective.

An inductive survey, however, posed significant challenges. How were we to generate the questions, the terminology, and the range of options for the survey? The Task Force chose to do this by developing and implementing an open-ended telephone survey administered to a select but diverse group of ATS schools. The telephone survey was designed to let schools describe the nature, strengths, and weaknesses of cross-cultural relationships in their own distinctive terms. Twenty-seven ATS schools were chosen to represent a diversity of denominations, regions, demographic settings, size, and experience in cross-cultural relationships. A letter was sent to the presidents of the designated institutions explaining the purpose of the survey and requesting the names of one or more individuals at the school who would be best informed about the school's cross-cultural relationships and programs. Project staff conducted the interviews, each of which lasted forty-five to ninety minutes. The results of these interviews were published as "Collective Wisdom: What ATS Schools Have Learned about Establishing, Sustaining, and Evaluating Good Cross-Cultural Relationships" in the special issue of *Theological Education* (35:2, Spring 1999).

In the telephone interviews, discussions of cross-cultural relationships and programs always led back to issues of the globalization of theological education. This confirmed that the "Incarnating Globalization" project's emphasis on "cross-cultural relations" was indeed a fitting extension of previous initiatives on globalization. The interview results were used to draft the all-member-school survey, using the language, the range of understandings, and the issues raised in the interviews. The draft survey was reviewed by the Task Force members, advisors, cross-cultural consultants, participants at a Consultation on Cross-Cultural Relationships held in Montreal in October 1997, as well as by three colleagues with expertise in survey design.

The all-member-school survey was sent out in the fall of 1997 to 235 ATS institutions. By May of 1998 ATS had received 129 responses, or 55% of the pool. Survey results were tabulated by ATS staff, and then reviewed by project staff, by a consultant with expertise in analyzing survey results, and by the Task Force on Globalization.

The Nature of the Survey Results

Having opted for an inductive survey to learn from the cross-cultural concerns of the ATS schools, the Task Force chose to share the findings in three separate forms, hoping that the three together would achieve the objectives of the project. The three articles together represent the significant learnings achieved by this track of "Incarnating Globalization."

1.   The summary of the telephone surveys ("Collective Wisdom," included in *Theological Education* 35:2, Spring 1999) captures and presents a loose consensus on cross-cultural concerns among twenty-seven diverse ATS schools.

2.   The all-member-school survey tests not only that consensus but the range of distinctive terminology and understandings behind it within the broader community of ATS schools. The summary in this article serves to raise questions for further conversation and intends to stimulate precisely that conversation both within the member schools and in the broader forums of the ATS.

3.   "Getting Down to Cases: Responses to Globalization in ATS Schools" (included in *Theological Education* 35:2, Spring 1999) provides examples or cases from twenty-one different schools illustrating major themes that arose from the telephone and all-member survey. The twenty-one cases were chosen to represent both the diversity of schools and a number of thoughtful initiatives devised by those schools for developing effective cross-cultural relationships and globalizing theological education.

The purpose of the 1998 all-member-school survey was to measure the current understanding and evaluation of cross-cultural relationships in ATS schools, and thus it necessarily had a significantly different focus from the ATS surveys on globalization conducted in 1983 and 1989.[2] Prior surveys tested the schools' commitment to "globalization" in one or more of Browning's four-fold aspects, their level of commitment to globalizing theological education, and the impact of ATS globalization programs. The survey explored the distinctive understandings and evaluations of "cross-cultural relationships" in the schools' educational and programmatic responses to "globalization." This difference in focus mitigated against any longitudinal analysis in relation to the earlier surveys. The 1998 survey sought to gather and capture the schools' range of thinking, terminology, and issues, to help ATS understand the breadth and diversity of responses to globalization emanating from the member schools.

Because the survey had been developed inductively, based on the telephone survey, it included a broad range of terminologies and options. In addition to the multiple options printed in the survey questions, all questions allowed for "other" written-in responses. Every effort was made to invite schools to share their distinctive understandings and experiences. No school was expected to embrace all of the terminology and options offered by the questions. The broad range of possible responses dramatically extended and nuanced Browning's four-fold definition by picking up language from a diverse range of ATS schools.

Because the terminology and options were derived from the telephone interviews with the schools, they were not precisely defined. That is to say, if several of the schools used the same term or described a similar strategy or option, that did not imply that the language in common had a precise common meaning. The survey "captured" the telephone responses without attempting to define them precisely. Survey respondents in turn read their own distinctive meanings into the wording of the questions.

Thus the survey provides at best a snapshot of where the thinking and conversation was as of spring 1998. The survey results do not constitute "hard data," but rather a number of nuanced impressions or snapshots of the thinking, the struggles, and the strategies of ATS member schools as they seek to respond ever more effectively to the unfolding forces of globalization. Its strength is in the breadth of options, the attempt to portray the diversity of understandings and strategies within ATS. It is correspondingly weak in that it does not clarify terminology or specify definitions.

The survey results provide a snapshot of the current understandings of ATS schools; the numerical analysis of results provides something like a rough "picture" of schools' views. However, numerical analysis does not necessarily indicate future vectors and development. As became clear in the telephone interviews and at the 1997 Montreal Consultation, schools at all points on the ATS theological spectrum that are "well experienced" in globalization and cross-cultural relationships were articulate advocates of strategies and understandings of cross-cultural relationships, based on their distinctive and hard-won experience. It was striking that in the all-member survey some of the understandings and/or strategies most passionately advocated by experienced schools were the items that received the lowest numerical responses from the broader community. There is a gap between schools with long experience and schools who are not as far down the road. It is impossible to predict how many schools in the ATS community will come to share the views of the "experienced" schools over time, although many of the "less experienced" schools have to this point followed the "learning curve" reported by their more experienced sister institutions. In this sense, "numerical" analysis of survey responses may be misleading, freezing attitudes and understandings that are still in the process of development.

Taking into consideration the distinctive nature of these survey results, this essay comments on those results below in order to raise questions for consideration by the schools, suggest multiple interpretations, and stimulate further conversation within the ATS community. A numerical and percentile tabulation of responses to each question of the survey is available, upon request, from the ATS office.

Part A: Defining the Survey Context

The first part of the survey attempted to measure the ATS schools' perceptions and understandings of the forces and realities of globalization in the world, as opposed to their theological responses to it.

1. *How does the global reality manifest itself on your campus?*
The pattern of responses pointed to the importance of human presence, particularly of international students, and to some extent of multiracial stu-

dents, as the most evident manifestation of global realities on campus. Several schools also noted that the presence of missionaries on their campus was important.

The least important manifestation was "organizations dedicated to cross-cultural awareness." This is consistent with responses throughout the survey indicating that very few schools have institutionalized organizations or offices to represent, call attention to, and address global issues. "Globalization" is part of the "mix" of persons at the schools, and it is represented in the schools' educational and worship activities.

Although the human presence of international and multiethnic students was very important, few schools could claim that globalization was also manifested on their campuses through a multiracial or international faculty. Such faculty diversification is a goal for many schools.

It is perhaps representative of the context of theological education that it is the human beings in the campus community, and not abstract global forces or economic issues, that "manifest" the realities of globalization on campus after campus. One question this raises is to what extent schools have intentionally cultivated the "global mix" on their campuses, and how they have done so, and to what extent the awareness of global realities on campus has depended or followed upon the changing student population. In other words, how proactive are schools in seeking to have globalization (as they understand it) suitably represented in their educational environment?

2. *How does your institution most typically think of the global realities of the church and the world?*

Ninety percent of respondents favored "school belongs to a world church/international community." This seems to demonstrate a well-established sense that ATS schools exist in a global (church) context.

The other three responses were about the "global" training of students, and roughly half of the respondents said that this approach was "somewhat evident." This may suggest that the sense of the school's global location has not centrally shaped the understanding of its educational mission, or it could equally mean that while schools aspire to globalize theological education, they recognize that their efforts have succeeded only "somewhat."

The lowest response was to "students educated in the economic/social factors of ministry in a globalized world." Slightly more than 23% of schools said this was "not typical" of the way they "think of the global realities of the church and world." This is striking, because the globalization of theological education is presumably a theological and pastoral response to the economic, social, and communications factors that are changing the world. Does this response mean that schools believe that students can be educated for ministry in a global world without understanding the social and economic aspects of that world? Does it mean that some ATS schools see "globalization" simply as

a sense of world mission and of compassion for disadvantaged groups? Have ATS schools developed a sound sense of the global forces shaping the world to which Christians bring the Gospel witness?

3. ***When people in your school think of global realities and the economic, communicative, and cultural processes of globalization in relation to your school, what issues are they most typically thinking about?***

The questionnaire listed thirteen possible issues. The option with the fewest responses was "expansion of Western culture throughout the globe." This could indicate that ATS schools distance themselves from the Western capitalistic juggernaut sometimes identified with globalization (as in the charge from some Third World countries that globalization is just another form of Westernization), or it might suggest that ATS schools use the term "globalization" to represent something other than the economic, communicative, and political forces of Western culture (see the discussion of question two, above).

The option with the most "very typical" responses (from 68.2% of the schools) was "cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity." This may represent what "globalization" means in ATS schools, or it could represent ATS schools' understanding of what an appropriate theological and pastoral response to the forces of globalization would entail. The next highest number of responses were for: world-wide mission (62%), international students (51.9%), inclusivity (51.2%), and multiculturality (48.1%). Of the four highest responses, only "multiculturality" seems to fit the narrow definition of an economic, communicative, or cultural issue of globalization. The others are either demographic realities of a school (international students), aspects of a school's response (cross-cultural awareness, inclusivity), or aspects of the church's response (world-wide mission).

Responding schools were fairly equally divided on whether the following were typical or not typical of the "issues" associated with the forces of globalization: interfaith issues, socio-political/economic issues, changing demography.

"Other" responses offered by the schools as forces for globalization were: the mass media and Internet, the U.S. exchange rate, worldwide evangelism, and leadership development.

Part B: Responding to the Context

The questions in this section of the survey first asked schools to rate the importance of various factors or strategies for helping various of the school's constituencies address global issues effectively, and also to rate how well they were accomplishing their aspirations.

4. *Faculty*

All of the respondents (100%) agreed that grounding in the social context in which they were teaching, and openness to learning from the context and from students were at least "important." The highest response of "very important" (76.3%) went to openness to learning from context and students. Only 49.6% claimed to have "strongly succeeded" in this aspiration, though nearly all claim at least some success in this area. This appears to be an issue on which schools are working hard.

Faculty exchanges were rated at least "important" (79.1%), but this also had the highest responses of "succeeded not at all" (34.9%). This seems to be an area in which schools would like to do better. In the "other" category, several schools stressed the importance of faculty international immersion experiences.

The highest "unimportant" rating concerned faculty training in cultural anthropology (34.1%), although several of the written comments pertained to this question. One noted that it was not feasible to train all of the faculty in this, but it was important to have at least one faculty member so trained. Another noted that they drew on the resources of an adjacent college. Several cited the limitations of a small faculty.

Other narrative comments illustrated the differences among schools in the extent of faculty engagement on "globalization" issues. One reported having an ongoing cultural sensitivity program, and another noted that cross-cultural learning had been part of the institution's life for many years. On the other hand, one commented that he or she objected to "training" in cross-cultural sensitivity, because it was felt that such sensitivity most effectively grows out of the increasing faculty awareness of the cultural variety in their disciplines and in relationship to students. Some schools noted that "this area has been largely left to the initiative and interest of individual faculty," while one noted that "responses on these issues are difficult to characterize for the faculty as a whole; it differs widely among individuals."

5. *Students*

The responses to this question were both complex and diverse. All of the options were rated "unimportant" for at least some schools, in contrast to other questions where there was some consensus of the importance of at least most of the options.

The greatest success reported by the schools was in exposing their students on campus to students from other cultures (50.4% were "very successful"). Narrative comments noted that commuter students may be exposed by living in multiethnic communities off campus, and that they were more "spotty" in their participation in campus diversity, because they were not regularly on campus. They also noted that on-campus activities (meals, worship, classes) all expose students to diverse cultural perspectives.

While 91.5% of schools reported that it was important for students to be trained in cultural sensitivity and communication, and 86.8% reported it was important for students to have a cross-cultural immersion experience, the narrative comments gave some sense of the diversity among schools. For some, a cross-cultural experience is a requirement of the curriculum (or the curriculum for some degrees), while others stressed the enormous diversity in terms of whether the students took advantage of these experiences. Some reported that commuter students were "already formed in their attitudes" and thus less likely to be open to such experiences. Several schools noted regular course offerings and attempts to develop more immersion experiences, but noted that "money is a factor."

One rather striking response is that "cross-cultural immersion experiences" ranked sixth in importance out of the eight options offered by the question. This might suggest that there is some skepticism among schools about whether cross-cultural immersion experiences are the best means to either incorporate or inculcate global perspectives (as opposed, for example, to cross-cultural field placements or coursework). It might also represent the difficulties some schools find in developing, staffing, and funding such immersions.

The item that had the most "very important" responses (79.1%) was that schools want their students to see themselves as participants in a global church. Whether or not schools believe it important to address economic, political, and communications aspects of globalization, they give attention to the global nature of the church and its implications for ministry.

6. *Institutional leaders*

Slightly more than 91% of schools found it "important" or "very important" that institutional leaders have the support of the denomination or church in addressing global issues. This was confirmed in narrative comments that many schools use church networks or judicatory agencies to help plan or sponsor their international or domestic globalization efforts. More than 90% of schools reported having "succeeded" or "strongly succeeded" in this area. The rootedness of ATS schools' globalization in denominational, movement, or order networks is one of the many reasons for the broad range of understandings and initiatives across the schools.

While 82.9% said it was important that institutional leaders be representative of a multiethnic or global reality, only 17.8% have strongly succeeded in this aspiration. This reflects the aspirations of the schools to have school (and church) leadership more closely reflect and represent the diversity of the global church.

Appointing a committee or director for globalization efforts had the highest number of "unimportant" responses (27.1%). This is another example of a trend against "institutionalization" of globalization. Narrative comments

on this question cited the following reasons: (a) too many faculty committees exist already so that faculty are stretched thin, (b) globalization is overseen by already existing committees, and (c) in a school that had appointed a special globalization committee, that committee had gone out of existence after three years for lack of a mandate or authority from the school. The use of already existing committees seems to be quite prevalent: the question is, how much attention can and do these committees give to the globalization of theological education?

7. ***Responses demonstrated in the curriculum***

Of the schools responding to the survey, 94.6% reported that it was "important" or "very important" to provide field education sites that place students in a cross-cultural situation, and the same percentage reported success in this area. Field education seems to represent the educational "cutting edge" for globalizing theological education. However, while 74.4% claimed it was at least important to offer cross-cultural immersion experiences for students as part of the curriculum, 41.9% reported that they have not achieved this at all.

Slightly more than 92% of schools say it is "important" or "very important" that the curriculum be grounded in and responsive to the community in which the school is located. Almost half (48.1%) felt that they had "strongly succeeded" in this, and another 43.4% felt they were somewhat successful. This response represents a recognition that the "global" is also local and that schools are attending carefully to the demographic make-up of their communities and denominations.

Bilingual instruction received the most negative rating; 48.1% of schools felt it was unimportant. Yet several schools (particularly on the West Coast) are highly committed to bilingual instruction. Among the ATS member schools, 57.3% offer ESL (English as a Second Language), and the narrative comments suggest that many schools rely on adjacent colleges and universities to offer ESL and other educational supports for students from other cultural backgrounds.

One comment from a school noted that its tiny faculty was already tightly stretched in simply providing traditional theological education. However important they felt cross-cultural and globalization issues to be, they simply did not have the resources. It would seem that ATS schools with some relationship to a college or university, and having the advantage of being able to call on the resources of these larger institutions, are much better able to address certain cross-cultural curricular issues than schools without these outside resources.

While 84.5% of the schools reported that it was "important" or "very important" to provide courses in other religions, only 77% claimed to have succeeded in this at all. Once again, schools related to a college or university

had more resources to draw upon. Some schools felt that the appropriate courses for a theological school would always relate other religions to Christianity. Still other schools reported "significant emphasis" on other religions in several core sources, with pressures rising for more attention to this issue.

8. *Community or international networks*

There was strong consensus among schools (93.1%) for involving the community in the establishment of field education sites and developing projects and ideas. The one less-than-enthusiastic response to the question of community involvement was in relation to the issue of "planning financial allocations," and only 60.4% of schools felt it was important to involve the community in this. Yet in the telephone interviews some very experienced schools reported that community involvement in financial allocation planning was very important. This question may have been particularly hard to respond to. Do the communities/international networks have funds to contribute? Is it appropriate for a school to commit to a project on which it is unclear about the costs and financial burdens for the school? Does the question of community participation in financial planning simply refer to consultation and sharing of information about the program budget, or is a more substantive involvement either necessary or implied? Some of the narrative comments expressed growing faculty skepticism about developing yet more partnerships, because of the immense financial and human commitments involved.

Part C: Terminology

This section was a major representation of the "data gathering" activities concerning terminology and understanding in use at ATS schools. The options presented were expressed in the telephone interviews, but schools were also invited to offer additional terms.

9. *The terms related to cross-cultural and global activities most commonly used on your campus:*

cross-cultural (83.7%)   ethnicity (41.8%)
multicultural (79.8%)   multiethnic (48.8%)
ecumenical (56.5%)   interfaith (38.7%)
global (58.9%)   immersion (37.9%)
globalization (52.7%)   multifaith (13.1%)
international (71.3%)   internationalization (12.4%)
multiracial (53.4%)

Added by respondents as "other" terms in common use were: missions (2), mission (2), diversity, ethnocentricity, ethnocentric, inculturation, black, cultural awareness, cross-sub-cultural, contextualization, and anti-racist.

Part D: Cross-Cultural Activities

Because the stated purpose of this survey was to "catalog the range of cross-cultural relationships in ATS schools," this question was explicitly designed to gather information on this issue.

10. *Check any of the following activities that characterize your institution's current cross-cultural involvements.*
Building on the information collected from the telephone interviews, the survey question listed twenty-seven different options for cross-cultural activities. This rather extensive list was intended to stimulate schools completing the survey to reflect broadly on the full range of their cross-cultural activities, not simply listing the most obvious ones. This strategy was successful, as respondents listed fifty-four activities beyond the options in the original list, yielding a total of eighty-one cross-cultural activities reported in this survey.

Responses to activities listed in the survey can be grouped into five categories.

Highest number of responses
> cross-cultural worship (80%)
> cross-cultural field education (77%)

Second highest
> missiology courses (71%)
> multicultural courses (70%)

Middle group
> cross-cultural continuing education (62%)
> international student services (62%)
> faculty immersion experiences (62%)
> international events (61%)
> multiracial faculty (57%)
> courses on globalization (53%)

Below middle group
> courses on cross-cultural communication (46%)
> invite international faculty (46%)
> international field education (41%)

Lowest group
> student immersion experiences (30%)
> interfaith courses (30%)
> extension degree programs (28%)

The schools were also asked about the existence of any programs for special groups or cross-cultural constituencies. Because responses were tabulated by specific groupings, there is no way to compare this category as a whole against

other activities. The responses to special programs for groups named in the questionnaire are ranked as follows: Hispanic (35%), African American (31%), international Asian (20%), domestic Asian (16%), international African (10%), and Native American (8.5%). Respondents reported programs for other groups as well: Eastern Orthodox, Filipino, Indonesian, Israeli, Jewish, minority students, Muslim studies, Peruvian, Polish, Taiwanese, and urban core residents.

Other activities, listed in no particular order, are reflected below. These appear in the exact wording of the narrative comments, and so may not be entirely clear or easily comprehensible to the general reader. This impressive list includes programs, courses, events, exchanges for faculty and students, relationships with other institutions, cross-cultural pedagogical supports, committees, and ministry activities.

anti-racism work
M.Div. requires cross-cultural immersion
one-third curriculum cross-cultural
contextual evangelism
course in world religions
international student activities
Polish Apostolate course
bilingual M.Div. program
language classes
history of mission course
Standing Committee on Institutional and Systematic Racism
cultural anthropology course
faculty dialogues with Mexican seminary leadership
community kitchen
faculty teach in other countries
global/ecumenical studies
Internet programming
formal agreements with 11 theological schools for cooperation and exchange
seminars on acculturation
faculty workshops
urban ministry courses
alternative routes to ordained service
semester program in Israel
sell two-thirds world handicrafts
theology of mission course
international travel to other cultures
models of cross-cultural education
D.Min. track for cross-cultural ministry
support for Hispanic Institute

institute for transformative theology
international student exchanges
semester program in Peru
cross-cultural lecture series
allow for culturally diverse learning styles
occasional lecture series
required cross-cultural colloquy for first-year international students
student forums
cultural activities
working with God in the city
rural Appalachian
cross-cultural committee
cultural-specific education for congregational leaders
Gospel Culture and Ministry (organization)

E. Evaluation

A second major purpose of the survey was to gather information on evaluation of cross-cultural activities, with the intent of sharing evaluative models and procedures so that all schools could strengthen their evaluative efforts. The telephone interviews demonstrated that even experienced schools felt they were just beginning to develop effective models and procedures for evaluating cross-cultural activities. Although evaluative models were in the early stages of development, there was considerable wisdom about the practical and attitudinal requirements for an effective cross-cultural relationship. The survey asked about the wisdom developed by the schools on the "virtues" of effective cross-cultural relationships, as well as about evaluative procedures.

11. *How effective would the following procedures be? Are any in place at your school?*

Confirming an impression from the telephone interviews, a relatively high number of respondents either chose "not applicable" or failed to respond to options offered under this question. About one-quarter of the schools chose "not applicable" for grant evaluation process, procedural accountability to funding body, or procedural accountability to denomination/church/order. Lack of response to the first two options seems to suggest that these schools have not found external funding for these activities. This observation is noteworthy, since over 90% of the schools responded in Section B that institutional leaders need to "have the support of the denomination or church" for cross-cultural activities. One possible way of reconciling these answers is that schools see the support of denomination or church as being based on a generally good relationship, or on consultation, rather than procedural ac-

countability, as suggested in this question. Do these responses suggest that schools and church bodies could work more closely in evaluating cross-cultural initiatives?

At least 80% of the responding schools thought the following four procedures would be "effective" or "very effective": curriculum committee (90%), student evaluations of programs or experiences (90%), self-study process for ATS (86.1%), and regular course evaluation (84.5%). Schools reported that student evaluations of programs and ATS self-study preparation are already functioning well in this regard, but only 66% reported that the curriculum committee was involved, and only 41% reported regular course evaluations rating cross-cultural learning. Both the telephone interviews and the survey showed strong interest within the schools in evaluating cross-cultural activities as an integral part of education (hence relying on the curriculum committees and course evaluations), but many schools report that they need to improve their attention to cross-cultural issues in these evaluations. One narrative comment said that effective evaluation would include ongoing internal processes and regular "outside" evaluation. Another noted that there are advantages both to evaluations "integrated" into regular evaluative processes, and to separate evaluations attending to cross-cultural and global concerns.

The highest ratings went to ad hoc evaluation involving those responsible for the program (78%) and faculty council or equivalent (74%). It would seem that faculty and/or staff are exercising evaluative oversight of these programs or initiatives, and this oversight has proved useful.

Narrative comments on this question also noted:
• the importance of feedback from cross-cultural partners in education,
• a need for evaluators with cross-cultural expertise, as well as a combination of "insiders" and "outsiders," and
• that evaluation would be enhanced by including members of communities for which the seminary trains leaders.

12. *Practical characteristics of an effective cross-cultural program*
Respondents generally found the options listed under this question to be "important" or "very important." At least 90% of the schools found the following practical characteristics to be "important" or "very important": administrative support (98%), faculty leadership (98%), faculty support (98%), administrative leadership (97%), faculty expertise and diversity (95%), strong individual leadership (95%), grounding in the seminary's mission (95%), integration into the fabric of the curriculum (92%), and hospitality and orientation of participants (91%). The two items most often rated "very important" were faculty support (79%) and faculty leadership (77.5%). The latter may be a function of the fact that most respondents were faculty, but it also reflects other responses from the schools that cross-cultural programs need to be

integrated into the educational life and curriculum of the school, and thus require faculty leadership and support.

Narrative comments raised three other practical characteristics: coordinating with students' time demands, funding, and providing for culturally diverse learning styles.

13. *Attitudinal or dispositional characteristics*

The following were listed as "important" by 98% of the schools: awareness of one's own cultural perspectives and biases, cultural sensitivity, openness to learning from others, and respect for others. The two most frequently rated "unimportant" were commitment to evangelism (22.5%) and accommodating to a new sense of time (14%). The former may well reflect schools' sensitivity to avoiding historical patterns of culturally insensitive forms of evangelism; it almost certainly does not mean that "witness" or "mission" are not a factor in these relationships, given responses to other questions in the survey.

The "unimportant" rating on "accommodating to a new sense of time" was an example of a gap between experienced schools and others. Several experienced schools stressed this attitudinal requirement in the telephone interviews, stating that Western institutions tend to believe that relationships and arrangements can be developed quickly and be swiftly put into place, while in many other cultures relationships require time to develop and formal programs grow slowly out of trust and familiarity.

Along with "accommodating to a new sense of time," "willingness to be accountable to others' customs" also drew very low ratings. It is striking that general attitudes of good will, mutual respect, and openness were highly rated, but these two, which require members of the dominant culture to accommodate the patterns of another culture, rated lowest. This may be a factor of where schools are on the learning curve of cross-cultural sensitivity, or it may reflect discomfort when one's cultural patterns are challenged by cross-cultural relationships.

Conclusion

Although longitudinal comparison with previous ATS surveys on globalization is not possible for reasons discussed above, the wealth of responses to this survey demonstrates that ATS schools are actively engaged in cross-cultural activities and the globalization of theological education. They have developed thoughtful programs and courses, and are adapting their teaching environments and strategies to make them more cross-culturally accountable. David Roozen wrote of the 1989 ATS Survey, "It is difficult to determine from the survey data the extent to which the changes touch the core ethos of the institution."[3] The responses to this latest survey suggest that schools are actively working to integrate global and cross-cultural perspectives into courses,

curricular requirements, worship, and community life, as well as adapting their teaching to make it more cross-culturally effective. They want their students to be aware of the global nature of the church and are seeking to provide cross-cultural experiences both on and off campus, in classes, field education, and campus life. They have come a long way, but also seek to be even more effective in globalizing theological education.

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ENDNOTES

1.　Don S. Browning, "Globalization and the Task of Theological Education in North America," a plenary address at the 1986 ATS Biennial Meeting, published in *Theological Education* (30:Supplement 1, Autumn 1993), 15-28. Citation is from 15-16.

2.　These survey results were discussed and compared in an article by David A. Roozen, "If Our Words Could Make It So," in *Theological Education* (30:Supplement 1, Autumn 1993: 29-52).

3.　Roozen, *op.cit.*, 34.