

Theological Education

Volume 40, Number 1
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ISSUE FOCUS

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Theological Libraries in an Era of Change*

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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 are published at the discretion of the editors and may be edited for length.

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Editor's Introduction: The Prospect in View

*David R. Stewart, Issue Editor
Luther Seminary*

The first book I ever read on the Lewis and Clark expedition was slightly unusual: Dayton Duncan's *Out West: An American Journey*,¹ in which the author used a *Volkswagen bus* to retrace the journey of the original Corps of Discovery. It seemed to Duncan, I guess, that this chosen mode of transport would be just primitive and tenuous enough to retain some of the arduousness of the original quest—better than, say, a fully equipped fifty-foot motor home could have done.

Not surprisingly, in his own version of that intrepid journey, Duncan saw traces both of continuity and change: the vast, enduring emptiness of much of the land on one hand; signs of its having been tamed or domesticated on the other.

These two versions of the same quest crossed my mind again some years later while on a drive of my own from Toronto to Vancouver, by way of Chicago. After a long day on the road, with the grey sky threatening snow, I stopped for dinner one evening at a place called "Al's Oasis," in Oacoma, SD.² Just across Interstate 90 there still flowed what was left of the Missouri, looking less like a river than a reservoir after years of engineering work. Trying to capture a little of the spirit of the place, I ordered the buffalo burger and found that a couple of intriguing questions occupied my thoughts as I enjoyed the local cuisine: even if the route Lewis and Clark took is still more or less traceable and the terrain they traversed remained largely unchanged, how much of their spirit of discovery endured? How much of it could be recovered?

These same questions provide one way of framing the purpose of the essays presented here. It could be argued that no branch of librarianship has a more enduring commitment to the past than theological librarianship: history, ancient texts and their interpretation, and so on are the lifeblood of the study of theology. This part of the terrain isn't changing much—and isn't going to.

Yet, appearances of tranquility aside, the environment in which we go about our work as theological librarians can hardly be described as stable or predictable. Moreover, it's equally clear that an attachment to the past alone, or nostalgia for vanished scholastic cultures of other times, are about the least promising ways to be "outfitted" for the future.

Thus, all of us in theological education can profit from a fresh, clear-eyed look at what the terrain of the study of theology presents to us, an honest inventory of what *we*, (at our best) are able to bring to the terrain, and a thoughtful consideration of what our best prospects accordingly are. It is

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precisely this that the essays and reviews that follow in this theme issue of *Theological Education* are intended to provide.³ Let me map out just a few of the issues and contours that will be addressed in what follows:

What the terrain presents to us

Signs of retrenchment

Even for an optimist, it's a challenge to describe the current landscape of theological education and the theological libraries that support and energize the educational enterprise in terms that don't sound unhelpfully gloomy. Yet our shared interests are better served by realism than by naïve optimism. We seem to be at the end of a growth period (have there ever been *this many* theological libraries in any other phase of the history of the church?), where even libraries of great renown are seeing reorganization and restraint on a comprehensive scale. There are almost certain to be fewer theological libraries in the near future than there have been in recent generations, and with very few exceptions even those that remain are going to be grappling with cutbacks to acquisitions funds. This calls for different kinds of creativity and resourcefulness than we have needed in the past.

Greater complexity of media and of resources

Stewardship of acquisitions or materials budgets has never been a simple task, but the challenge has intensified with the diversification of media. It's no longer *simply* a matter of how to allocate resources (print, periodicals, microform, CD-ROM, DVD, web-based subscription databases, image and audio as well as text, and so on), but of how to configure their *accessibility* (e.g., how many of our students are able to visit the library with any regularity?) and ensure their *sustainability* (e.g., what happens to our access to certain resources if a vendor of web-databases goes bankrupt?). There is no sign of the range of available resources doing anything but continuing to expand, as a quick perusal of any publisher's catalog will show. It all serves to underscore the need for great wisdom in selecting and deploying resources.

Chaos in publishing

Even in those exceptional settings where financial restraints are not so intense, the instability of the publishing industry itself brings another dimension of unpredictability into play. Not so long ago, many of our ATLA libraries felt the disruption from the collapse of one of the major periodicals vendors: it cost a lot of time, money, and energy for many of us merely to be able to retain our periodical lists.⁴ Taking into account the broader trends in both the production and distribution of published resources,⁵ it would be presumptuous to rule out further mergers, buyouts, bankruptcies, and other chaotic scenarios. Yet, all too often, we find ourselves in the unhappy position of

merely responding to publishing trends rather than having a voice earlier in the process. Again, it looks like we will have to develop new skills to meet the challenges of a new situation.

A need for better advocacy

What exactly libraries are and why they matter now is not as self-evident as in earlier times. There are several reasons for this. One of them is a growing awareness of the need for better stewardship of institutional resources (i.e., less willingness to spend money for library resources on a ‘just-in-case’ basis). Another is a decentralization and realignment⁶ of the manner in which research (in theology as in all other disciplines) is carried out. To put it simply, the whole endeavor of research is *considerably less tethered to the physical library than ever before*. Scholars are accustomed to using search engines (even though public domain web resources for theological study remain sketchy and uneven in quality), to using web-based subscription databases, to purchasing their own private copies of premier reference resources in electronic format, and so on. None of these resources requires a physical library. What libraries do *is* integral to the enterprise of theological education—now as much as ever—but it falls to those who lead libraries to articulate how and why this is so.

Cultural realignment

What kind of culture must have existed to produce the array of theological schools and libraries we have at present? How much mission activity, what kind of religious renewal, how many denominations, how many universities with divinity schools, and so on did it take to bring all of this into being? One doesn’t have to be an adherent or devotee of any particular denomination to be able to recognize a critical and integral link between the fortunes of individual believers/denominations on the one hand and theological schools/libraries on the other. Not all schools of theology depend on churches to the same degree, or in the same way, yet the relationship between the broad social and ecclesiastical culture and the institutions we serve cannot be ignored. Many of us live and work in parts of North America whose cultures are increasingly post-Christian. What does such a shift portend for the mission, or even for the viability, of the institutions we serve? For the people who will use our libraries? We owe it to ourselves and to our communities to think about such questions before their effects are brought to bear on the work we do.

What we bring to the terrain

The wisdom of the past

The essays and reviews appearing here may represent a survey of the landscape from the vantage point of the end of the longest period of expansion for theological education in history. Given this stretch of recent comparative

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stability, it's easy to lose sight of what obstacles libraries like ours have had to overcome in the past.⁷ Wars, political upheavals, schisms in the church, changing technology—they've all been seen and adapted to before.

Even as this is being written, yet another electronic resource is being unveiled that "could help make libraries obsolete."⁸ As theological librarians, we have every reason to want to see new ventures succeed but, at least for the present, nobody is helped by imagining that theological resources offered online in the public domain are even remotely comparable to what is available in a good theological library. Consequently, (beyond the more obvious pressures presented by budgets, enrollments, and so on) it could be that the main challenge for our time will be the polite but firm debunking of wishful thinking. We need the wisdom of the past to help us meet the challenges of the present and the future.

Resourcefulness

At least for the foreseeable future, the task of directing theology students to the very best resources available is going to require a hybrid approach. One of the problems of web-based research not discussed often enough is the built-in temptation it offers to attain basic plausibility with a minimum of exertion. It is, finally, our local scholarly communities and cultures where a working definition of "research" is either strengthened or weakened, and where the blame or credit must lie either for overcoming the challenge posed by third-rate digital resources (especially public domain HTML sites) or succumbing to their lure of effortlessness. In other words, *somebody* has to decide whether the "scholarly horizon" is defined by what is most easily accessible or by what requires somewhat more diligence.⁹ Theological librarianship, explicitly or otherwise, has a role in mapping out the landscape of theological research in making distinctions between what is plausible and implausible, and in drawing a line between what is genuinely adventuresome and what has never been done for the simple reason that it is not worth doing.

The strength of community

In my work as a theological librarian, I have worked in three very different regions. Each of the libraries I have served has had its own character, its own set of strengths and weaknesses, and its own opportunities. The only way to compare them, as far as I can tell, is to consider first their opportunities and second, their capacity to make the most of them. Measured in this way, it is quite possible for a small library to overachieve, for a bigger place to fall short of its potential, or *vice versa*: think of it as the "Parable of the Talents" as applied to libraries.¹⁰ One area where this capacity for resourcefulness or "opportunism" is often put to the test is resource-sharing: the ability for a library (in the interests of stewardship and effectiveness) to play its own strengths off the strengths and resources of other libraries.

A major problem here is that our models for resource-sharing tend to pre-date the networked environment in which we now find ourselves. Many libraries within the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) community are already making very effective use of Inter-Library Loan, duplicate periodicals exchange systems,¹¹ shared catalogs, and consortial licensing of databases. One of the great challenges and opportunities for us in the next few years will be finding ways to extend the utility of services such as these. The best strategies will be those that build on a “complementarity” model (what unique contribution can participating libraries make?), rather than a “charity” approach (how can the strong help the weak?).

The librarian as a catalyst rather than a clerk

One of the changes, more welcome to some than to others, brought on by a shift toward a networked environment has been an unsettling of more traditional vocational models. To put it plainly, now is not the time for a new librarian to set her heart on a job whose character could be summarized as “keeper of the books.” The forces in this re-casting of librarianship include technology (the pliability and agility of information), money (the unsustainability of “come-and-get-it” library services), and disintermediation (a growing cultural shift toward self-reliance), and they affect all of us profoundly.

This is not to suggest that the traditional and established “below-decks” routines of book selection, acquisitions processing, serials management, and cataloging are declining in importance. On the contrary, in their level of detail, consistency, and searchability, on-line library catalogs continue to model the kind of organization often lacking on the web. What’s changed is not the value of these aspects of library work, but their compartmentalization. The people best equipped to grasp the opportunities of the changing landscape are the librarians who can see the whole operation integratively—both within the library and within the broader administrative and educational terrain—who know the difference between an acquisitions record and a bibliographic record, a CD-based, web-based, or print-only database, etc., but recognize that none of them serves a self-contained process.

We need recruits to theological librarianship who have an eye for the potential of energizing the study of theology in a broader way than is offered by other academic careers, who have a profound respect for tradition without being blind to the potential of the present and future, who bring with them specific skills and expertise that can be applied to broader strategic objectives, and who understand and value the fact that in *this* particular context of librarianship, we are sometimes privileged to cross a frontier from information to knowledge and even wisdom.¹²

Conclusion: recruiting for a "Corps of Rediscovery"

These are just some of the issues taken on by the essays and reviews that follow. They can be divided into three groups. The first two contributions (Lincoln, Ammerman) reexamine the place of the library within the institution and within the broader enterprise, present and future; the next three essays consider the changing array of resources for theological collections (Vorp, Crawford-Limpitlaw-Hook, and Smalley-Stuehrenberg); the last four (McMahon, Hotta, Gragg, Malcheski) consider some of the primary contemporary opportunities and challenges for theological libraries. The four book reviews engage a number of very different considerations of the place of libraries within current academic culture. Together, the contributions to this theme issue of *Theological Education* represent some of the best thought and practice from the community of theological librarianship.

At one point during his presidency, Theodore Roosevelt was visited by a group of reporters at his summer home at Oyster Bay, Long Island. After speaking to a broad range of political topics, instead of waiting for *their* queries, he put this question of his own to them: "*Do not all these things interest you? Is this not a great time to be alive? Isn't it a fine thing to be alive when so many great things are happening?*"¹³ (italics added)

It is my hope that the thoughts and reflections put forward here will help us to approach *our* interesting times with just such a spirit of enthusiasm, energy, and resourcefulness.

[Editor's note: The journal is grateful to this issue's guest editor, David Stewart, director of library services, at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. Formerly associate librarian, research services, at Princeton Theological Seminary (1998-2004), he joined the library staff at Luther Seminary in July 2004. We appreciate his suggestion that the journal turn its attention to contemporary theological librarianship and his work in recruiting talented and thoughtful colleagues in the field as contributors. Thanks to them all. *Theological Education* is also grateful to the American Theological Library Association (<http://www.atla.com>), Dennis Norlin, Executive Director, for cooperation and encouragement in the course of this project.]

ENDNOTES

1. Dayton Duncan, *Out West: An American Journey*, (New York: Viking Press, 1987).
2. URL: <http://www.alsoasis.com>
3. I wish to express thanks to the editors at *Theological Education* for their generous and warm response to the proposal for a theme issue on this subject.
4. See Gleason Sackman, 18 February 2003 "The Enron of the Library and Research Worlds," <http://www.freelists.org/archives/nethappenings/02-2003/msg00159.html>, (15 November 2004).
5. See, for example, Jason Epstein, *Book Business: Publishing Past, Present, and Future* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002).
6. See Jan Malcheski's essay in this issue, where he discusses the concept of "disintermediation."
7. Examples are cited in Richard Southern, "A Benedictine Library in a Disordered World," *The Downside Review* 94 (July 1976): 163-77. See also Thomas Cahill, *How the Irish Saved Civilization: the Untold Story of Ireland's Heroic Role from the Fall of Rome to the Rise of Medieval Europe*. (New York: Anchor Books, 1995).
8. Jeffrey R. Young, "Google Unveils a Search Engine Focused on Scholarly Materials." *The Chronicle of Higher Education* <http://chronicle.com/free/2004/11/2004111901n.htm>, (19 November 2004).
9. An introductory discussion of some of the challenges of theological research and electronic resources is provided in David Stewart, "Nurturing Curiosity: A Librarian's View," *Christian Century*, 188 (5), 2001: 18.
10. Matthew 25: 14- 30.
11. For example, the ATLA Serials Exchange program: http://www.atla.com/member/collaborative_projects/serials_exchange.html.
12. One good example of the kind of orientation needed for the changing environment of theological librarianship was the recent Wabash Center Colloquium on the Role of the Theological Librarian in Teaching, Learning, and Research (<http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/programs/librarianscolloquium.html>).
13. Edmund Morris, *Theodore Rex* (New York: Random House, 2001): 258.

What's A Seminary Library For?

Timothy D. Lincoln

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ABSTRACT: Knowing the over-arching purpose of a seminary library is important for seminary leaders as they allocate scarce resources of money and personnel. After briefly reviewing the role of libraries in recent literature of theological education, this article argues that seminary libraries do more than preserve classic Christian texts and assist patrons in finding information. The services of seminary libraries are important to the broad education of ministerial students. Thus understood, librarians are educators who should be partners in all discussions of teaching and learning and decisions about library budgets are not educationally neutral.

Why the question matters

"The typical academic library costs about three percent of a university's budget, and is thought about by the university administration approximately three percent of the time." Sometime while I was earning my degree in librarianship, I came across this sentence, or one very like it, in an article about academic library management; the thought stayed with me. While perhaps incorrect from an empirical point of view, the sentence resonates with the experience of many library directors of theological schools as they compare notes about how things are going in their respective places of work.

I want to engage seminary presidents, deans, and trustees along with library directors to think about how a theological library fits into a particular school's vision for theological education.¹ Such thinking is important for several reasons. First of all, many ATS accredited schools are financially stressed and are looking for ways to cut costs.² While hard economic times tend to cause graduate school enrollments to increase, those same conditions tend to lower the revenue available to endowment-driven institutions, due to endowment draw formulae. Past drops in endowment asset value continue to be a factor in computing allowable spending amounts, even after the asset value begins to climb. Like it or not, the library is a significant cost center for a seminary. The library often has its budget cut during such low points in the boom and bust cycle.

Second, decisions about cutting library budgets produce distinctive and lingering aftereffects. The usual targets for library budget cuts are collections and personnel. Frugality here, it often appears to seminary leaders, can be endured in the short-term with graciousness for the sake of the greater good of the school. When better days come again, runs the argument, the library's operating budget will be raised. I will argue, however, that such cuts may

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create “unhappy ghosts” that will haunt the educational mission of a seminary for some time. Clear thinking about how the library fits into a school’s mission may prevent such future unforeseen visitations.

Third, thinking about how the library fits into a school’s mission is important for educational reasons. Ultimately, only educational reasons justify spending money on seminary libraries. Thus, it behooves librarians to make a case to their supervisors and to trustees about the enduring value of theological libraries. To be persuasive, the case needs to rise above special pleading (i.e., “libraries are important because they provide meaningful work to dedicated librarians,” “reading is valuable in itself,” etc.).

I do not propose to solve once and for all the question of how schools should situate libraries in their organizational structures, how much funding good libraries require, or the related question of the proper role of the library director in the chain of command and communication. Rather, I propose to chew on these issues in the hope of sparking renewed dialogue about these important matters among seminary leaders.

In this article, I will first briefly review how the literature of theological education has addressed the issue of the library’s role in the seminary. Second, I will suggest that the issue ought to be framed within the broader category of stewardship. Third, I will construct an argument for the educational value of a school’s theological library. Finally, I will suggest how the implications of the library’s value might affect the structural location of the library and difficult decisions about budgeting.³

Libraries in the literature of theological education

The literature of theological education in North America in the past decade offers little that situates theological libraries in the broader context of the life of seminaries. The recent significant monographs of David Kelsey, for example, do not mention libraries explicitly at all. Kelsey’s two works seek to pursue a “lively but fragile” conversation⁴ about the meaning of North American theological education a full generation after the comprehensive work done by H. Richard Niebuhr in the 1950s.⁵ In doing so, Kelsey focuses on what is distinctively theological about theological education and the several strategies that theological schools have employed in pursuit of Christian *paideia* and *Wissenschaft*, the tensions between Athens and Berlin.⁶ Kelsey deals with a broad range of significant issues in theological education, most notably the tensions between the academic and the practical, the classically universal and the historically conditioned and particular, and the difficulty of creating an unfragmented theological curriculum in the midst of academic sub-specialities and student diversity.

What might be suggested by Kelsey’s lack of acknowledgment of libraries and their roles? The omission is not completely surprising because the Berlin

pole in theological education was born in German universities that presupposed that attention would be given to supporting structures for the pursuit of knowledge, including the acquisition and preservation of texts. The issues that Kelsey wrestles with, such as the nature of “the Christian thing,” what we mean when we say “theology,” and how a given school puts together the inherited “Christian thing” with the demands of current culture are more about large educational ends than about the ways and means needed to achieve those ends.⁷ Libraries, in this conversation, are perhaps too obviously useful to get any ink.⁸

Seminary administration as stewardship

Many factors are in play in thinking about a text, and explication of the factors involved helps to clarify both the issue “out there” and the values and social location of conversation partners. I want to propose, therefore, that the framework of Christian stewardship is a commonly shared value for those involved in theological education and, moreover, that it is a helpful explicit conceptual framework in which to think about the role of the theological library in the life of a school.

Stewardship, is a “philosophy of life,” T.A. Kantonen wrote in his classic study, “which determines not only religious activity in the narrow sense but also all of life’s orders: home, citizenship, business and industry, science, art, and education.” In Kantonen’s view, such things as health, mental prowess, and opportunities as well as one’s possessions “must be viewed as talents which God has entrusted to use according to his purpose.”⁹ Seminaries are accountable to accrediting bodies, boards of trustees, donors, and ultimately to God to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to them. In the context of our discussion, common affirmation of the Christian value of stewardship takes up mundane concerns about dollars, books, and the leaky library roof into a broader conversation about how the library, in all its dimensions, fits within the mission of a given seminary. A seminary administrator, in short, is a steward. A competent steward plans, evaluates, and manages ongoing activities with an awareness of both the big picture and the quotidian. From the perspective of a steward, seminary leaders will ask, “How does the library aid the mission of our school as it seeks to be faithful to God?” or taking up David Kelsey’s nuance about theological education, “How does the library aid the mission of a school as it studies things that lead to a true knowledge of God?” Agreeing that stewardship is a useful and commonly held conceptual framework for this discussion does not in itself produce a definitive answer to the question of how a library fits into the mission of a school. Rather, the framework sets some of the boundaries for talking about the question.

Classic arguments for value of theological libraries

In arguing for the value of theological libraries, there are two lines of arguments that carve out an enduring niche for libraries. These arguments grow out of the experience of Christian readers, scholars, teachers, and students and undergird the standards of The Association of Theological Schools for libraries.

The first argument is that theological libraries matter because the Bible matters. Christians value an ancient collection of documents—the Bible—and use this anthology as Scripture, a treasury of stories, laments, laws, puzzling parables, and letters addressed to people long dead. Yet, Christians claim that the Bible continues to speak God's Word to subsequent generations. It is because Christians have valued the Bible that they also value the vast literature of theological reflection based on the Bible. Now, some Christians would make the argument a bit differently (e.g., libraries matter because theology matters), but with a similar effect: we Christians have necessary and beloved texts, and because we do, it is part of our responsibility to take care of them and make them available to readers. One important context for preservation and access to these texts is the theological library. To be a "People of the Book" is to be a "People of Libraries."

The second argument explaining the value of theological libraries emphasizes the role of librarians. A library is not merely a warehouse for books. It is an information agency that provides intellectual access to needed information for a concrete community of information seekers. In the old radio show *Fibber McGee and Molly* (NBC, 1935-1959), one of the ongoing schticks was the opening of the hall closet. Without fail, once the door opened, out would tumble all sorts of beloved junk. A library differs from a closet stuffed with books in large part because a library has had intelligibility imposed on it. Skilled professionals have created systems for using standard terms to describe the subject of a book or other document (subject cataloging), a set of short-hand for giving books local addresses on a set of library shelves (classification), and automated searching systems to hunt at the speed of electrons for particular books, specific subjects, or key words (the ubiquitous on-line catalog). Just as importantly for the actual use of library materials, patrons of theological libraries may ask competent professionals (librarians) for assistance in finding the particular information needle they seek from larger and larger stacks of information. To put it in library jargon, a key role of librarians is to be *mediators* between patrons and the universe of information.¹⁰ One reason why the Internet will not put librarians out of work in our lifetime is that the World Wide Web is much more like *Fibber's* closet than it is like a library. The swamp of electronic information potentially available to patrons makes the role of librarians as information sleuths more important than ever.¹¹ In sum, theological libraries matter because patrons need skilled specialists to assist them in minding pertinent information.

The educational value of the theological library

The first argument sketched here properly calls attention to the need to preserve and make available classic Christian texts. The second argument highlights the complexity of finding pertinent theological information and the valuable skills that librarians bring to the process of linking readers to pertinent materials. Neither of these, however, focuses attention on the *educational value* of a theological library, that is, on the value added to the formation of ministers in training by an apt program of library collections and services. In my view, it is precisely the educational value of a theological library that stakes a valid claim for the library's share of the human and financial resources of a theological school.

Building on the two arguments made above, I now want to argue for the educational value of theological libraries in the explicit curricula of seminaries. Setting aside for a moment the real and lasting benefit of library collections to support faculty research,¹² theological libraries materially aid the formation of ministers in ways that a broad spectrum of North American Christians find valuable. I begin by stating some axioms. First, ministers in training need broad exposure to the Bible, documents of their own particular tradition, the theological traditions of the Catholic church, and an awareness of the world's cultures. Let's call this the *breadth of reading* axiom. Second, ministers in training rightly expect to be taught skills in information analysis that will assist them to make sound judgements in their future ministries. Let's call this the *information literacy* axiom. As one librarian put it, "It is time to begin considering information literacy as a key element in the subject matter of seminary education, both because we live in an information age requiring information skills and because the complexity of systems and tools of information demand knowledge beyond that of simple library use."¹³ Third, ministers in training are busy people who generally do not choose enrichment activities offered by their seminaries. According to one informed observer, one in ten full-time seminary students had a commute of one hour or more to campus in 2001.¹⁴ Let's call this the *time crunch* axiom.

Braiding these three axioms together, the resulting cord forms a set of parameters that define some of the educational needs of theological students. These needs are aptly met by librarians and libraries. Because of the *breadth of reading* axiom, students need to widely read in all aspects of theology, more widely than the required readings of their classes. Libraries collect a broad range of materials, making available to students voices that may not be literally present on the faculty or among the student body. The *information literacy* axiom states that theological students need skills in information seeking. Librarians are experts in information seeking and are the most qualified persons on campus to teach such skills to students.¹⁵ Finally, the *time crunch* axiom asserts that theological students do not attend optional sessions about

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using the library. Thus, libraries and librarians will be able to meet student information needs *if and only if* seminaries structure their curricula to require library use and the acquisition of information-seeking skills. In the argument that I'm espousing, libraries are not understood as good in and of themselves. Rather, libraries and librarians comprise the most appropriate delivery system to provide *students* what they need for an excellent theological education. In the world created by the interplay of the breadth of reading, information literacy, and time crunch axioms, a library (or something very much like it) is required for students to thrive. Thus, the theological library has educational importance along with classroom teaching, reading, the practice of spiritual disciplines, and mentoring.¹⁶

In the argument I am making, a picture emerges of a seminary and its library that may not look very much like a typical North American theological school. The neuralgic point for seminary leaders lies in a challenge of moving the library from the status of beloved icon ("our library is the heart of the seminary") to become a full partner with students and professors in the actual process of teaching and learning.¹⁷ My contention is that theological libraries will be treated as money-sucking "cost centers" to the extent that seminary leaders consider them as secondary to the mission of a given school. On the other hand, when seminary leaders consider libraries and librarians an integral part of the process of teaching and learning, the entire landscape changes. Now, libraries and librarians are valued resources and colleagues in the main business of theological education: teaching students what they need to know to begin fruitful ministries. Library expenses are real, to be sure, but conceptually these expenses are part of the core business costs of the school. Such a conceptual redeployment of the role of the library puts librarians into significant conversations with faculty, students, and administrators about how a particular school engages in theological education. Transposed into stewardship language, the library brings specific gifts to bear for a school's ministry.¹⁸ Librarians, no less than those who teach in classrooms, are significant stewards working together to further the equipping of the saints. In the next section, I turn to some implications of my argument.

Implications

If arguments for the value of theological libraries hold water, what are the implications for the administrative location of the library? ATS standards speak articulately about the role of libraries in a seminary's work. The standards state that the director of the seminary library should be a voting member of the faculty.¹⁹ Librarians talk among themselves at length about the perils and promise of "faculty status." These discussions often involve issues of power and one's place in the academic pantheon. These are not inconsequential issues in a finite and fallen world. My point here is that following the ATS standard

should place the library director directly in the thick of things when significant matters of the school's mission, curricula, and resource needs are discussed. Librarians should be at faculty meetings not simply so they will not be blindsided by the ripple effects of faculty decisions, but because what the library provides is as important in the life of the school as classroom teaching, field education, or opportunities for spiritual formation.

Second, library accountability should be firmly lodged in the instructional and academic department of a school. I'm aware that in some instances the library director reports to a dean/vice president of computing. As a librarian, of course, I am a supporter of technology, yet I am not in favor of the library director being accountable to a computing administrator because the library directly serves a school's instructional program. It makes far more sense for the library director to be accountable to the academic dean.²⁰

Third, my argument assigns to some professional library staff the role of teachers with the specialty of information seeking. I do not question the need for skilled librarians who select materials, create good cataloging records, or ensure the long-term preservation of library materials. However, if a theological library is actively part of the core purpose of a seminary—teaching and learning—then some librarians should be persons who teach the craft of theological information seeking. Librarians should be held to high standards not only in the quality of bibliographic data they produce or their adroitness in dealing with patrons, but in their teaching of information-seeking skills.²¹

Fourth, if libraries are an integral part of theological education, schools seeking to reduce costs will understand that reducing library allocations materially reduces resources for *student learning*. If libraries are simply cost centers, laying off library staff has no more effect on instruction than outsourcing janitorial services to cut costs and might not have any discernible effect. If, however, seminary libraries deliver instruction needed in the curriculum (viz. information literacy), decisions about cutting library staff rise to the same level of seriousness as laying off professors or employing fewer adjunct faculty. Many schools will choose to safeguard jobs and reduce expenses by reducing the funds available for the acquisition of new materials for the library. Indeed, there have been cases in which schools have reduced a library's acquisitions budget to zero dollars for an entire fiscal year. Such decisions have long-term consequences for two reasons. First, library collections are like glaciers. In any given year, there is little discernable movement. Over time, however, one begins to notice the long-term impact of advance or retreat. Decisions made in the current budget cycle will continue to affect the usefulness of the collection for decades to come. Why these lingering ecological effects? In the jargon of librarianship, scholarship in the humanities is cumulative knowledge, not replacement knowledge. Users of a collection that dramatically cut its budget for journals fifteen years ago will continue to notice the hole because theologians continue to argue about ideas contained in older books or journals far longer

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than biologists or computer scientists. The useful shelf-life of technical publications in hard sciences may be measured in months, but in theology technical scholarship may well continue to be read for decades.²²

Now, library budgets for personnel and acquisitions are not sacrosanct. Seminary leaders necessarily make difficult decisions in lean times. Discerning the relative merits of library books and student stipends or choosing between retaining a librarian's job and another member of the instructional staff is the work of a Solomon. There is a competition between goods in a seminary's budgeting process. What I am advocating is the recognition that the best seminary libraries are an instructional good that directly benefits student learning. Prudent stewardship of the school's educational mission, therefore, requires a frank recognition of this competition between goods.

Finally, if my argument is valid, the administrative location of the library must enable top level administrators and trustees to hear the voices of librarians. Some of my librarian colleagues lament that decision-making processes in practice do not take these voices seriously, no matter where the library is mapped on the official organizational chart and no matter how many meetings the librarians attend. If the library makes a significant contribution to the education of students, then listening to the voices of librarians is a requirement for sound decision-making about educational policies and expenditures.

Summary

Theological libraries make a significant contribution to the educational mission of schools that seek to educate graduates who have wrestled with the meaning of "the Christian thing" by reading broadly in the Christian tradition and acquiring skills in information seeking. A school that chooses to understand its library's role as curricular will, as a good steward, place the library on a par with an academic department accountable to the chief academic officer and will consider the library and the library staff as assets when making educational and budget decisions.

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ENDNOTES

1. As used in this article, “theological library” refers to a library whose personnel, services, and collections focus on the provision of information to a community engaged in graduate level theological education, including both ministerial formation (associated in many contexts with Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degree programs) and academic degrees (for instance, a Master of Arts in theology). I use seminary, theological school, and school inter-changeably. In my years as a theological librarian, I have found that many of the issues facing directors of theological libraries are common whether the library in question serves a freestanding seminary, a university-related divinity school, or a doctoral granting institution.
2. Data reported from ATS institutions for 2001-2002, for instance, showed an aggregate deficit of expenditures over revenues. See Melinda R. Heppe, “Bottom Lines Dropping,” *In Trust* (Autumn 2003), 13-15.
3. The opinions I express here are my own and not necessarily shared by other theological librarians or the leaders of my institution.
4. David H. Kelsey, *To Understand God Truly: What’s Theological About a Theological School* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 14.
5. David H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 1.
6. “It is more accurate to say that what distinguishes a theological school is that it is a community that studies those matters which are believed to *lead* to true understanding of God,” *To Understand God Truly*, 31. Italics in original.
7. Peter C. Hodgson contends that Kelsey’s theological school paradox (that schools best prepare persons for Christian leadership while pursuing the nonutilitarian goal of understanding God) also applies to liberal education. See his *God’s Wisdom: Toward a Theology of Education* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 137-138.
8. Similarly, libraries are not part of the more recent discussion of the “ecology” of theological studies by David F. Ford, “Theology and Religious Studies at the Turn of the Millennium: Reconceiving the Field,” *Teaching Theology and Religion* 1:1 (Feb. 1998): 4-12, although he does acknowledge a lively interest in the study of texts.
9. T.A. Kantonen, *A Theology for Christian Stewardship* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1956), 36. While many recent authors limit the meaning of stewardship to possessions and money, Kantonen rightly grasped that Christians are accountable to God for their use of skills and time—all of life.
10. To make my point succinctly, I have simplified the complexity of information sources available to users of North American theological libraries and the skill set that librarians employ when helping patrons.
11. Because the electronic information swamp is so vast and impenetrable, students and faculty at theological schools will continue to need an organized, filtered subset of information for the foreseeable future. Traditionally, we call this subset a library.
12. For a spirited defense of Christian scholarship as honest-to-goodness rigorous scholarship, see George M. Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (Oxford University Press, 1997).
13. William Badke, “Not Your One-Shot Deal: Instructional Design for Credit Information Literacy Courses,” Preconference Workshop, *American Theological Library Association Summary of Proceedings* (Fifty-seventh Annual Conference, 2003), 8.
14. For more on the busy lives of North American seminarians, see Melinda R. Heppe,

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"Who Are They? Putting a Face on Student Statistics," *In Trust* (New Year 2001).

15. Individual faculty members have a solid grasp of the literature of their own disciplines but, in my experience, are not likely to care generally about how one moves from an information need to crafting a strategy for finding information and then implementing and refining that strategy. This skill set is the stock and trade of professional librarians.

16. Lest readers think my argument is completely idiosyncratic, I would also draw attention to ATS Standard 5 for Library and Information Resources, which stresses the library's educational role.

17. Several years ago, one librarian described a seminary library as being like an older, respected relative about which one feels guilty for not visiting more often. Simply having a library on campus does not ensure its use. Daniel Aleshire, executive director of The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, has repeatedly pointed out that seminary library use is driven by a school's curriculum.

18. If the value of the library is not understood as being primarily educational, then the library has to justify its existence (and budget) on the grounds of either documenting the literature of Christianity or as a form of cultural enrichment. Sound arguments can be made for both of these views of a theological library, and it is important for future Christian readers that some theological libraries unabashedly collect comprehensively (e.g., the H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, The Hekman Library, Calvin College). I've argued for the library's fundamentally educational role because, in my view, a museum of the book does not make a contribution to the shaping of Christian minds or the advancement of scholarship, but a library does.

19. ATS Standard 5, Statement 5.4.1.

20. North American seminaries and divinity schools are organized in a variety of ways. In some cases, library directors have a dual-reporting responsibility to an academic officer and to another administrative officer (e.g., to the president). In e-mail exchanges in March 2004, some directors with these dual-reporting responsibilities expressed satisfaction with the arrangements; others acknowledged a disconnect between budgeting processes and the curricular life of their schools. The value of clear lines of authority, communication, and accountability via the scalar principle remains transparency: "The clearer the line of authority, the more effective the organizational performance and communication," Robert D. Stueart and Barbara B. Moran, *Library and Information Center Management*, 4th ed. (Englewood: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1993), 87.

21. I am not arguing that the teaching the librarians do should be equated with the instruction provided by the resident faculty. Most ATS schools make use of skilled practitioners to mentor ministers-in-training in the intricacies of pastoral care and congregational life. Schools honor their contribution as adjunct faculty members without equating them with Ph.D. holding full-time professors. In my view, librarians serve a similar niche role in teaching essential practical skills to future ministers.

22. Perhaps the most striking examples of these phenomena occur in biblical studies. François Bovon's list of commentary on the Gospel of Luke begins with Origen (third century C.E.); Bovon routinely engages in conversations with the last hundred years of biblical scholarship. François Bovon, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50* trans. Christine M. Thomas. Ed. Helmut Koester. Hermeneia Series. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002).

Jam To-morrow and Jam Yesterday, but Never Jam To-day¹: The Dilemma of Theology Libraries Planning for the Twenty-first Century

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ABSTRACT: The future of theology libraries is far from clear. Since the nineteenth century, theology libraries have evolved to support the work of theological education. This article briefly reviews the development of theology libraries in North America and examines the contextual changes impacting theology libraries today. Three significant factors that will shape theology libraries in the coming decade are collaborative models of pedagogy and scholarship, globalization and rapid changes in information technology, and changes in the nature of scholarly publishing including the digitization of information. A large body of research is available to assist those responsible for guiding the direction of theology libraries in the next decade, but there are significant gaps in what we know about the impact of technology on how people use information that must be filled in order to provide a solid foundation for planning.

Has anyone done work on the relationship between the Internet resources and the need for and use of books these days? I know that faculty and the kind of assignments they give, for example, are involved in this puzzle. The use of our library by students has decreased the past few years and we are trying to sort out what may be the cause and if we are dealing with a trend toward more Internet resources/courses and its effect on fewer books being read and taken out.² (David MacLachlan)

Introduction

Since F. W. Lancaster predicted the “inevitability” of an all-electronic system of scholarly communication in 1978,³ almost every group concerned about the future of higher education has voiced MacLachlan’s question in one form or another. Trustees want to know whether to allocate funds for new library construction. Faculties lament the increased reliance on Internet sources by students (and resulting decline in the quality of research) but celebrate the ease of such tools for their own research and scholarly communication. Administrators attempting to allocate appropriate library funding wonder whether any of

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the high costs of a technological infrastructure can be offset by reductions in those of maintaining a physical infrastructure and physical collections for the library or if they must always be additional. All the while, the expectations of students, faculties, and accrediting agencies assume the presence and integration of information technologies into the library. Inevitably librarians struggling to make sense of the rapid changes in their own profession are often asked to foresee the future. At root, the question everyone asks is “what is the future of the library?” The question is not simply one of technology, though trying to disentangle the technological issues seems as fruitless as separating the wheat from the tares.

Arnold Hirshon, formerly vice provost for information resources at Lehigh University and now executive director of the New England Library Network, described the challenge of trying to determine where we are amidst this chaos as being like Alice’s journey *Through the Looking Glass*.

The White Queen explains the rule is “jam tomorrow, jam yesterday, but never jam today.” Of course to Alice this makes no sense. If there will be jam tomorrow, and if tomorrow’s yesterday is today, then surely there will be jam today. So Alice objects that “It must come sometimes to “jam to-day,” but the Queen replies “No, it can’t. It’s jam every other day: to-day isn’t any other day, you know.”⁴

Indeed, today isn’t any other day. Ever-growing library budgets and the dominance of the print medium easily controlled by librarians and understood by users are the characteristics of “yesterday’s jam.” We hope for new electronic information systems that enhance teaching and research, while ensuring sustainable models of scholarly publishing, but those are some of the ingredients we hope will be in “tomorrow’s jam.” Meanwhile faculties, administrators, trustees, and librarians are faced with uncertainty about budget allocation, emerging technologies, construction of physical and technological infrastructures, not to mention questions about the pedagogical issues emerging from electronic technologies. Where’s the “jam” today?

I will not attempt to review here the considerable literature that academic librarians have produced in the past twenty-five years attempting to envision the library of the future.⁵ Rather, I will attempt to identify a variety of issues that provide a context for decisions about the future of theology libraries. I will also attempt to project a research agenda that may guide librarians and their parent institutions in making wise decisions for the future of theology libraries. Finally, I will propose my own vision for the future of theology libraries, though placing it in print might imply that I see it with more clarity than I generally do.

The changing context of theology libraries

Thomas S. Kuhn's notion of a paradigm shift⁶ has been interpreted broadly as a model for describing change and applied not only to scientific thinking, but also to many social phenomena including the rapid changes taking place in libraries. Charles Lowry claims "the paradigm shift is found in the organization and delivery of information ...—not in libraries."⁷ Regardless of what is shifting and where, it is clear that few feel in control of the process. Rapid changes in information technology are certainly a factor in the changes taking place in libraries, though not the only factor. Changes in curricula and models of pedagogy have a tremendous impact on theology libraries as well.

Lowry suggests the changes taking place in libraries today should be seen in view of the changes that took place in the middle of the nineteenth century. Libraries as we know them today began to take shape in response to an earlier information revolution that was spawned by the industrial revolution. Until that time, libraries had been little more than repositories or archives. Few services were offered and fewer standards existed. Libraries had essentially remained unchanged since the invention of the printing press.

By today's standards the collections of early nineteenth century theology libraries were meager. The paucity and high cost of theological books made building a collection very difficult. Kansfield suggests this is largely because of the immigrant nature of the American church. Ministers leaving Europe "took with them only those books judged most necessary to their pastoral task."⁸ In addition, North American presses were publishing only a limited number of theological works, primarily "sermons, polemic works of theological controversy or biographies of famous churchmen."⁹

Libraries were valued, but attracting a strong faculty was often considered a higher priority than acquiring books or collections. Timothy Dwight, in the inaugural sermon for Andover Theological Seminary, refers to the library before making any mention of the faculty, but clearly gives more emphasis to the latter.¹⁰ Even those schools that already held strong collections frequently had library practices and procedures that supported "the purely lecture-based curriculum of an older scholastic tradition."¹¹ In describing the library at Andover Theology Seminary prior to 1837, for example, Kansfield describes very limited hours of access and circulation. The hours specified for loaning books to students were from two to four o'clock on Saturday afternoons. No more than three books could be loaned to a student at any one time.¹² The library's collection was clearly valued, but its role in theological education could hardly be seen as primary or dynamic.

Changes in higher education in the nineteenth century resulted in academic libraries being identified as the "heart of the university." First used by Harvard University President Charles William Eliot, who served from 1869 to 1909,¹³ the phrase gained popularity as a way to recognize the importance of the

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library to the educational enterprise. Harvard had already adopted the “university” ideal, but “Johns Hopkins University, founded in 1873, was the first to follow the German university model.”¹⁴ It stressed research and the provision of “a center of concentration, the association of other scholars, research materials, laboratories, and a means of publishing. Scholarship rather than teaching became the vital core of the new profession.”¹⁵ The emergence of the German system of doctoral education increased demand for a new type of scholarly literature, and the invention of linotype in the 1880s made large-scale production and distribution of scholarly books and journals possible.

Responding to changing models of education and a vastly more efficient publishing industry, academic libraries began to evolve to address the new requirements. By 1910, academic libraries had emerged much as we have known them until the present. Standards for cataloging, classification, and indexing emerged. Public services such as reference and circulation had developed. Collaborative interlibrary loan agreements were instituted. Librarians developed policies and procedures to handle the increased volume of scholarly literature being published and to facilitate the delivery of scholarly information to support the pedagogical and research needs of the new model of higher education.

Not surprisingly, theological educators in North America began to be attracted to this model of education. Niebuhr, Williams, and Gustafson assert the “development of theological education in modern times has much in common with the educational movement in democracy in general.”¹⁶ In *The Advancement of Theological Education*, they proposed “theological studies should develop in close relationship to the mediating disciplines in the sciences and humanities.”¹⁷ Library collections that could support theological inquiry in the context of a broader secular learning would need to be developed. How rapidly the changes they called for were implemented is debatable. It is clear, however, that the social sciences in particular have influenced the curricula of seminary education. Models of pedagogy began to shift from a traditional scholastic model of primary engagement with the professor to models that encouraged engagement with the literatures of theology and related disciplines. Library research came to be an expected part of the seminary experience. Librarians were encouraged to build collections that focused on theological research, not only the classroom teaching of the faculty.

This shift in theological education to a focus on engagement with a broad range of literature¹⁸ had a tremendous impact on theology libraries. Acquisition budgets were increased, at least for a time. Buildings were constructed. The instructional role of librarians was emphasized, however with less clarity than would be helpful. As it gradually emerged in the standards for assessment in the accreditation process of The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, the library was to be a partner in curriculum development. The library was to fulfill:

. . . its teaching responsibilities by meeting the bibliographic needs of the library's patrons, offering appropriate reference services, providing assistance in using information technology, teaching theological bibliography and research methods that foster knowledge of the literature and enable students to locate resources, incorporating library research throughout the curriculum, and helping to serve the information needs of graduates, clergy, and the church.¹⁹

Unlike the focus on collections and buildings, however, there is far less data to support the changes in the instructional role of librarians. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, even now, theological librarians rarely share equal footing with faculty in curriculum development and are often limited to bibliographic instruction opportunities that are marginalized within the curriculum. A session at the 2004 American Theological Library Association Annual Meeting on faculty status for librarians along with related listserv discussions draw attention to a perception held by many librarians that they have little voice in issues about the theological curriculum and teaching that takes place in their institutions.

Theology libraries gained recognition as being essential to theological education. The popular metaphor, "heart of the university,"²⁰ was readily adapted by theological educators to describe the importance of their libraries to theological education, even where there was reluctance to provide adequate financial support required for a strong and steady heartbeat. Niebuhr, Williams, and Gustafson use the fact that schools "state in their catalogues that the library is the center of the academic life"²¹ to call seminaries to provide adequate support for library facilities and staffing. Though imprecise, the "heart" metaphor does strongly imply a primacy for the library in the curriculum and the enterprise of theological education.

It should not surprise us, then, that in the midst of our own information revolution, we find theology libraries evolving again. To assume that the issues being raised are merely technological is to miss the point. Absent from such a response is attention to what Mark Hansen calls the "exocultural" dimension of technologies. "More fundamental than all the intentional, explicit—dare I say cultural?—uses we make of our technologies are the largely unmarked alterations they operate on our basic perceptual and subperceptual experiential faculties."²² Our world is certainly changed by technology, but the way we perceive and experience the world is changed also. "Not only do computers and electronic media bid to shake up the forms, social practices, and educational bases of writing and reading, they also provide powerful and appealing new metaphors for knowledge and communication, often replacing those of the book."²³

For centuries, "reading" and the "book" have provided metaphors for our perception of the world. We speak of "reading" a situation or another person like "an open book." At a life transition, we speak of starting another "chapter"

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in our lives or sometimes “turning over a new leaf.” As people of faith, we find commonality with Jews and Muslims in that we are all “people of the book.” Today, however, we are more likely to turn to metaphors born out of computer and Internet technologies. “Linking,” “interfacing,” and “downloading” have all come to represent ways we think about information. “Networking” refers not just to the connection of computers, but also to social interaction. “Googling” describes our efforts to discover new information, and so on.

Some argue that it is more than our metaphors that have changed. In his nostalgic eulogy to the book, Sven Birkerts argues that books have functioned as the building blocks of our intellectual history. The book:

... spatializes knowledge, puts a roof over its head, as it were. And the reflex of the reader is to project attributes upon it. The material substance of a book represents the claim it will make upon our time and attention. Its three-dimensionality testifies to the palpability of its subject, the merit of its claims. . . . It establishes the material status of a thought.²⁴

Less provocatively, Eyal Amiran suggests the electronic text in fact alters our perception of time, knowledge, and the way we organize information. The periodical, he argues, produces:

a particular model of order, that of serial succession. The series is one of the most pervasive of Western metaphysical orders. With family trees, the hours and the days, houses of the sun, and apostolic generations, Western culture has organized time and phenomena in succession. Serials extend this vocabulary. In serials, issues are numbered and appear in volumes—in this they replicate the library itself. . . . And the uniformity of articles and features produces the idea that valuable information is ordered; its greatest information is order itself. So the function of serials is not only to determine what counts, but also to count.²⁵

The electronic text, Amiran claims, has no material substance. “It is disembodied and exists outside of time.”²⁶ Its abstract quality affects not only how we perceive the content itself, but how we organize, order, and control it. Naturally, those are significant issues for librarians. Freed of the constraints of printed pages bound together, no technical reason prevents the creation of an index for example, that might allow searching across hundreds or thousands of what we have traditionally considered individual volumes. Without the physical definition of pages and bindings, how do we conceive such a full-text database? Likewise, no technical reason prohibits the easy creation of what we might think of as a derivative textbook that might contain chapters, essays or articles or even smaller excerpts from multiple sources. Does such a creation constitute a new book?

Certainly the altered “seriality” and “spatiality” of information influence how librarians organize it. Much of current cataloging practice assumes the

cataloger is describing what she has “in hand.” When one can’t physically hold an item, such as an electronic file, those assumptions are quickly called into question—and these are not the only issues that confront librarians. The radical changes in scholarly publishing simply can’t be ignored. Virtually every library in the past decade has been flooded with vast quantities of information in media that emerge at rates never before encountered from publication streams that until recently didn’t exist. Even the Library of Congress has been forced to wrestle with the overwhelming changes in the volume and format of materials it collects. Once known as stable predictable storehouses of the printed word, libraries have been anything but in the early years of the digital revolution. “The intellectual function of libraries—to acquire, arrange, and make accessible the creative work of humankind—is being transformed by the explosion in the production and dissemination of information in digital form, especially over global networks.”²⁷

Reflecting on the transition that took place with the invention of the “codex,” James J. O’Donnell indicates that the survival rate for works not copied into codex form was very small. “If you were a very farsighted text of the second century and you wanted to be read a thousand or more years later, the thing you most wanted was to be copied into a codex format.”²⁸ He goes on to suggest that the current time may be a transition not unlike that which took place with the invention of the codex. “Put another way, too much attention to preservation of the printed book may have the perverse effect of undermining prospects of future readership if materials fail to be digitized.”²⁹ Whether or not that is the case, he rightly points to the radical changes resulting from the changes in publishing.

The vital difference between present and future practices will be that the forms of organization of knowledge in electronic media do not resemble those of the traditional codex book. The methods of production and distribution will diverge from those of the print media even more. Where the library has traditionally been one of a few such enterprises cooperating (if sometimes at arm’s length) with a finite community of publishers (and thus both together functioning as gatekeepers on a limited set of narrow information pathways from authors to readers), a community is now growing in which there will be as many publishers as readers.³⁰

The transformation in publishing that has taken place in the last decade changes not only the way we access information, but also the way it can be used, and ultimately the business model that makes its publication possible. Scholars continue to discover new ways to search, manipulate, and utilize information in digital formats. Yet, the business models that have served traditional print-only publications frequently limit access to such information in digital format. Referring to scholarly publishing in the scientific community, Michael Eisen asserts that the “potential we all dream about will remain largely unrealized as long as the scientific community persists in distributing information and

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supporting that distribution, using practices that were developed for the print age and then just grafted wholesale onto the electronic age.”³¹ Recognizing the critical role of scholarly journals, Eisen suggests that the practice of allowing the journal publishers to “own” and control scholarly literature makes no moral sense in the electronic publishing environment. “It completely thwarts the best interests and goals of almost every stakeholder involved in the process other than the publisher.”³² Suggesting that the practice of charging an access fee for each copy only made sense in a print world where the cost of production and distribution were the primary costs of publication, Eisen and others are developing an “open access” model for scholarly communication. The cost of publication (electronic) is paid at the front-end, allowing free and open access to the information after publication.

While this new open access model of scholarly publication is emerging first in the scholarly communities of science, medicine and technology, it will undoubtedly affect models of scholarly publication in other disciplines as well. Whether the business model adopted by open access publishers is workable in the humanities remains to be seen. It could reduce the rapidly rising cost of subscriptions libraries pay for scholarly journals. (The cost of journals in the disciplines of philosophy and religion increased 40 percent between 2000 and 2004.³³) Ultimately, the “first copy” cost to publish an article doesn’t go away, though.

Electronic publication models also hold the potential for radically changing the way libraries acquire and make such information accessible. If libraries can no longer rely on traditional channels of publication to assist in identifying recently published material, how do they do so? What should they collect? From whom should they collect? The problem of collection development becomes enormous.

What would be the contents of the electronic virtual library? Everything? Every what? Just to ask the question makes it suddenly obvious that one of the most valuable functions in the traditional library has been not its inclusivity, but its exclusivity, its discerning judgment that keeps out as many things as it keeps in. We have grown up assuming that information is a scarce resource and devised our economics accordingly; but in an information waterfall, the virtual library that tells us everything and sweeps us off our feet with a cataract of data will not be highly prized. The librarian will have to be a more active participant in staving off “infochaos.”³⁴

Of course this is not a new problem to librarians. The scarcity of publications published in the so-called “Third World” in theology libraries rarely results from conscious decision. These publications simply remain unknown to theological librarians. Identifying the literatures of peoples in the non-western world has always been a major problem. Adding the multitude of materials published electronically in non-traditional publishing channels only increases the amount of what librarians call “grey literature.”

O'Donnell and Eisen are signaling the need for a not so subtle shift for librarians. Library users increasingly require assistance in determining what information *not* to look at. Producers of "print, film, magnetic, and optical storage media produced about five exabytes of new information in 2002,"³⁵ much of that stored on hard disks. Five exabytes is equivalent in size to the amount of information contained in 37,000 new libraries the size of the Library of Congress book collections. Admittedly, only a percentage of this is theological in nature, but the users of theology libraries live in a culture in which they are bombarded by this magnitude of information daily. The need for tools of discernment will surely increase.

What we know and what we don't know

Fortunately, theology libraries can benefit from the significant research that has been done by librarians in major research libraries during the past decade. While not always strictly applicable to the theological setting, much of what has been discovered can at least identify core issues that need to be addressed, if not provide specific guidance for planning and making decisions about theology libraries.

A common theme emerges from much of this research. The focus of the work of the library must be *on the user*. Clearly this is implied in O'Donnell's suggestion that the librarian "will need to be a more active participant in staving off 'infochaos.'"³⁶ Even in considering the design of library buildings, for example, Richard J. Bazillion defines a building's efficiency in terms of its ability to make the user efficient.³⁷ Mary Ann Bates, an information professional, claims "the way to build loyal clients is to offer a streamlined and frictionless interface, coming to the client rather than expecting the client to accommodate the info pro's special needs or requirements."³⁸

Insisting this does not go far enough, Debora J. Grimes's excellent study of the "centrality" of the academic library attempted to test the "library is the heart of the institution" metaphor using organizational theory's understanding of centrality. From the data gathered in her study, indicators of a library's centrality emerged, falling into three categories: service, access, and tradition. Grimes asserts that the theme or concept that ties all of these indicators together is the user, but again, even this may be too broad.

What we really need to know is what about the user links these three concepts in a way that informs our theory and practice. When the categories are considered further, it is possible to see that *it is the success of the user that speaks to centrality* [emphasis added]; it is the success of the user (whether faculty, student, researcher, or administrator) that is affected by the service, access and tradition of an academic library.³⁹

User satisfaction is only one of several factors in this "highly focused concept that requires a deep understanding of the information and service

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needs of students, researchers, and other significant library users."⁴⁰ Most theology librarians will argue that we have always focused on users. We may not, however, have the deep understanding of the users' information and service needs and how drastically they have changed that Grimes insists we must have.

Traditional ways of categorizing library users are not always helpful. Christensen and Raynor describe market researchers' efforts to help a fast-food chain determine how to increase the sales of milkshakes. A traditional market segmentation approach that identified different types of customers resulted in no significant change in the volume of sales. "A new set of researchers then came in to understand what customers were trying to get done for themselves when they 'hired' a milkshake, and this approach helped the chain's managers see things that traditional market research had missed."⁴¹ The most interesting finding was that most of the milkshakes sold were sold in the early morning.

They discovered that:

most of these morning milkshake customers had hired it [the milkshake] to achieve a similar set of outcomes. They faced a long, boring commute and needed something to make the commute more interesting! They were "multitasking"—they weren't yet hungry, but knew that if they did not eat something now, they would get hungry by 10:00. They also faced constraints. They were in a hurry, were often wearing their work clothes, and at most had only one free hand.⁴²

Other products such as bagels, biscuits, and donuts were messy, greasy, and sticky. The "job performance" of these products was simply not as good as the shake. In addition, the researchers discovered that these same customers found the shake less satisfactory in the afternoon when they brought their children to the restaurant for a fast treat. The shake simply took too long for the children to drink. The parents got bored waiting on their children to finish, or simply ran out of time to wait.

David B. Liroff, vice president and chief technology officer for Boston's public broadcasting station, WGBH, suggests that we should think of information as a product, specifically a product that the user "hires" to do a particular job.⁴³ Understanding the job a person is hiring the information to do is essential to providing the information and service required in order to make that person successful. Few students (or even faculty) come to the library to develop strong library research skills. They come seeking information with a specific task in mind, whether it is a paper to write, a sermon to preach, or a lecture to prepare.

But what if theology librarians don't actually *have* the deep understanding of the information needs of library users that we need? We do indeed know some things about how our libraries are changing, though even that knowledge is incomplete and uncertain. Denise A. Troll claims, "we know almost nothing about why libraries are changing because our traditional data collection practices tend to be myopic, counting selected activities within our

purview and relying on anecdotal evidence about the larger context in which we operate as a basis for interpreting our data."⁴⁴

Traditional measures used by theology libraries try to quantify the raw materials, or potential (inputs) we use to serve the needs of our users and the extent to which users avail themselves of the libraries collections and services (outputs). Annual library reports generally focus on collection size, acquisitions budget and the number of circulation, interlibrary loan, and reference transactions. Gate-count is occasionally included as well. Input and output measures for a digital environment are far from standard when they exist at all. For the most part, we have no standardized comparable data, either within an institution or across institutions, to assist us in assessing library trends in a digital information environment.

What we need to know

I began with and want to return to David MacLachlan's question, "Has anyone done work on the relationship between the Internet resources and the need for and use of books these days?" Fortunately the answer is *yes*. A number of educators have indeed been working on this very issue, though it is largely focused on academic libraries associated with major universities. What academic librarians have discovered provides a solid foundation for theological educators to build upon, though it will clearly need to be adapted to address the unique needs of theological education. The first steps of any such effort are to determine what is known and what remains to be known.

Models of theological education in North America have changed several times since the seventeenth century in response to both the church and the academy. Theology libraries have always played a supporting role to the institutions of which they are a part, primarily mirroring the communities they served. Kansfield's study clearly demonstrates the primary role of the faculty, librarians, and administrators of theology schools in defining the collections and services provided by their libraries.

With changes in the role of ministers in today's culture, new models for pedagogy in higher education, and a growing awareness of the global context of not only theological education but all that we do, shifts in the notion of "what makes for good theological education" are not surprising. Nor should we be surprised to discover that theology libraries are changing to address these emerging needs. In this case, however, I believe there are two additional factors that appear to play a large role in shaping theology libraries.

First, recent educational theory has emphasized the shift from the passive role students once played as they listened to lectures. "Collaborative learning" and "teaching and learning" are only two of the recent catch phrases used to describe a style of learning in which the professor and the students are engaged as partners in the teaching and learning process. With such changes in peda-

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gological models, one would expect to discover that students are much more active in identifying the kinds of resources and services they want and expect from theology libraries. Few students are limited to the resources of a single library, and increasingly, they have access to resources available through Internet access. They bring expectations shaped by their experience in the classroom and by their experience in the broader culture. Likewise, it is not surprising to discover that reading is only one of several means of learning in the learning toolkit of most students. Students will play a much larger role in shaping the future of theology libraries.

Second, it would be naïve to suppose that technology is something new in libraries, and therefore poses an unfamiliar threat. Still, the role technology is playing in determining the shape of a library has never been so great. Hence, to ignore the impact of information technology on theology libraries would also be naïve. Christensen's distinction between "sustaining technologies" and "disruptive technologies" is intriguing.⁴⁵ A sustaining technology, according to Christensen, enables the continued improvement or enhancement of existing products that are targeted toward one's current customer or user base. With good management, corporations (or theology libraries in this case) are usually able to incorporate "sustaining technologies" into the goods and services they deliver. They listen to their customers, and they utilize the expertise and capabilities of the corporation (library) to develop and improve marketable products and services.

Despite good management, however, "disruptive technologies" are very difficult for established corporations (libraries) to incorporate. Disruptive technologies are those that make possible a completely new product or service. These new products or services are generally not as good as existing products and services initially and are, consequently, not of great interest to one's current customer or user base, at least initially. Disruptive technologies improve at such a rapid rate, though, that the products and services based upon them quickly outpace products and services based on older (sustaining) technologies. Note that disruptive technologies are disruptive only to existing companies and organizations that rely on traditional technologies. Startup companies readily adopt these new technologies as the foundation for their products and services. Customers are less concerned about the technology than they are in getting their tasks done with as little cost as possible.

Google (and other Internet search engines) may represent a disruptive technology for libraries. Many undergraduates, like Heidi Carlson, clearly prefer Internet searching to the use of traditional library resources. "I go to the library once or twice a week to study," she said. "If I'm doing research, I sit at home and get on my computer. I go to Google."⁴⁶ Librarians claim that Internet search engines are simply not "good enough" to replace the catalogs and indexes they maintain, but Internet search engines continue to improve rapidly and students who have been traditional users of the library are flocking to them, finding them "good enough" for what they want to do.

Space does not permit a full exploration of disruptive technologies for libraries. Whether Internet search engines really will become a disruptive technology for libraries remains to be seen. Those planning for the future of theological libraries should recognize that technology plays a major role in shaping our culture and theology libraries are not sheltered from its impact, but the issue is far more complex than simply determining how libraries will pay for it. Some technologies that are emerging may so radically change the way people discover and use information that the roles of libraries will be radically altered.

Confronted with changes in scholarly publishing, in pedagogical models, in information technology, and in the expectations of their users, libraries are changing. Wendy Pradt Lougee suggests that even the library as place is changing. The traditional model of a single centrally located facility that houses all of the collections and services of the library is, in many cases, being replaced with a more diffuse model. "Once the physical centerpiece of a campus with large, central collections, library resources are now more distributed and library users more nomadic."⁴⁷

Grimes offers a helpful metaphor. Speaking of the academic library in a university setting, Grimes suggests replacing "heart of the university" with "Crossroads Community:"

The crossroads community is a valuable way to consider the role of the academic library in the American university. The academic library is a scholarly community crossroads, affected by and affecting its environment, its technology, and its users. Just as a crossroads connects people to other places and other resources, the academic library connects students and faculty to other institutions and information sources.⁴⁸

Discovering what we need to know

Two decades ago, *Theological Libraries for the Twenty-first Century: Project 2000 Final Report* was published as a supplement in Theological Education. Project 2000 identified four essential roles that it envisioned theology libraries would play:

- ◆ Seminary libraries represent the historical breadth of theological thought and religious practice for the benefit of contemporary scholarship and education for ministry.
- ◆ Libraries preserve the intellectual diversity, both past and present, of theology.
- ◆ Libraries support the instructional curriculum.
- ◆ Libraries nurture research and fresh understanding of religious thought and practice.⁴⁹

The report predicted these roles would remain unchanged for the foreseeable future, yet these roles are stated so broadly that they offer little help in

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understanding how theology libraries are likely to change in the next twenty years. Funding sources, physical and technological infrastructures, staffing patterns, and of course the nature of the very materials we collect (if “collecting” is even an appropriate term) will surely look very different in the next two decades.

Written at the advent of the use of computers in libraries, Project 2000’s research methodology utilized traditional measures that are now wholly inadequate to provide the information required for planning in a digital environment. It relied primarily on traditional library input measures as provided by librarians rather than seeking to learn from library users what information related tasks they are trying to do and how they are trying to do them. Our data gathering practices have not changed significantly since then. There are too many gaps in what we know and the data we gather to allow adequate planning for the future of theology libraries. It is time to revisit Project 2000.

The landscape we find ourselves in requires that we:

- ♦ Articulate the pedagogical models used in our institutions.
- ♦ Clarify the role of the theology library in support of the educational goals of the institution.
- ♦ Develop means for gathering comparable data that can help in assessing user needs for resources and services in a digital environment.
- ♦ Discern the nature and impact of emerging technologies.
- ♦ Develop effective feedback mechanisms to allow librarians to continually discover the information needs of the users they serve.
- ♦ Develop collaborative relationships with all the stakeholders in the enterprise of theological education.

Looking to the future

Proposing a vision for the future of theology libraries seems rather audacious after claiming that we don’t yet know enough to make informed decisions, but I’m continually pressed by my own faculty and administration to do just that. Usually, they want to know about buildings, library collections, and the future of print materials. Normally, they are concerned about the financial implications as well. In the hope that articulating this vision—in spite of its gaps and fuzziness—will invite a dialogue through which it can be tested, I propose to briefly address three issues: function (service), collections, and space (building). It is easiest to do so in the context of the factors that drive the vision: collaborative models of pedagogy and scholarship, globalization and technology, and changes in scholarly publication and the digitization of information.

Collaborative models of scholarship and pedagogy

Though there are problems with Grimes' "crossroads" metaphor, its strength lies in its focus on building collaborative relationships. As attractive as the image of the solitary scholar in her or his study may be in the midst of interruptions we all endure, the reality is that the work of the scholar and teacher is far more collaborative than that image would suggest. As collaborative models of scholarship and pedagogy continue to emerge, theology libraries will evolve to become places of increased collaboration. The physical structure and technological infrastructure of libraries will invite and facilitate ongoing collaborative conversations among scholars, between teachers and students, and among students. Certainly networks make possible dissemination of information in profoundly more efficient ways, but the potential for collaboration among scholars, librarians, teachers, and students holds the potential to transform the scholarly enterprise. Library buildings⁵⁰ will provide space for group study, informal conversation, and instruction as well as private study. Faculty may hold office hours in offices in or adjacent to the library so that the faculty member can guide students to a resource in the library stacks or accessible from the library's network. Librarians will work collaboratively with students to assist them in accomplishing their tasks more efficiently and effectively. These collaborations may take place in the library building, but they may also utilize the technological infrastructure to engage in electronically mediated collaboration. The effectiveness of this collaboration might be measured by an increase in the quality of student assignments or an increase in the amount of time students have for their own family life and spiritual development. The effectiveness of collaboration with faculty might be measured by an increase in the number of junior faculty receiving tenure.

Networks of collaboration will extend beyond the campus. Theology libraries will collaborate with other libraries and sources of information to provide access to a vast array of resources that could never be physically housed on a single campus. Collection development will shift focus from acquisition to access.⁵¹ Libraries will also collaborate to preserve and make information easily discovered and used.

Admittedly, these predictions sound a little utopian, and that assumes that collaborative scholarship and teaching are self-evidently good and desirable. Adopting such models of pedagogy will radically alter the culture of those institutions, and simply adopting a collaborative model of teaching doesn't guarantee the library will change. Only with intentionality and the right kind of leadership will libraries evolve to become integral to such collaboration.

Globalization and technology

For much of the past twenty years, theological educators have explored and actively sought the globalization of theological education. *Theological Education* has published many articles on this line including several thematic

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issues in the late 1980s. Globalization, especially as it is made possible by technology, is a powerful force that does and will continue to shape theology libraries. The communities they serve play a large role in shaping the collections and services provided by any library. In a global context, the nature of that community naturally becomes more diverse and expansive. International scholars and students as well as simple access to the library's catalog and web pages by users around the globe all make it more difficult to draw geographic boundaries to define the community the library serves. Certainly theology libraries will continue to serve local communities, but even those local communities will grow more complex.

At a very basic level, the nature of library collections will change as librarians acquire materials published in "non-western" parts of the world. The collections in many libraries are shaped largely by western concepts of the nature of theology and religion, and even at a more basic level, the concepts of what constitutes "authentic" scholarship. Globalization will certainly expand the geographic regions (and languages) from which libraries collect, but it is also likely to change the types of materials we consider including in the collection. Previously unrepresented voices will emerge as part of the dialogue embodied in the collections of theology libraries.

Some theology libraries may choose to define the communities to which service is provided less geographically. Technology already exists to allow the provision of reference, information discovery, and document delivery services to remote users. Often packaged to support distance education, nothing would prevent such technologies being used for a globally dispersed library "community."

Changes in scholarly publication and the digitization of information

I've already described at some length the radical changes taking place in scholarly publication, some of which is beginning to appear in "digital only" or "digital first" formats. Sensing the Library's "vulnerability and uncertainty at the dawn of the information age,"⁵² the Librarian of Congress commissioned a study to develop a strategic plan concerning the path the Library of Congress should follow in the coming decade concerning information technology. In spite of the remarkably innovative work libraries have done in the past decade with the many new forms of information, the report recognizes that "no clear new paradigm has emerged even as the old one is shaken."⁵³ Most libraries have well developed collection development policies that cover print media. The report suggests that similar policy statements need to be developed for digital content.⁵⁴ Including digital content in a library's collection development policies allows it to be integrated into the overall planning, resource allocation, and services of the library in a way that treating it as a special project never will.

While few theology libraries will ever have the resources to mount major efforts for creating digital content from their local print collections, they will

increasingly encounter content in a wide variety of digital media. “No one institution, not even the Library of Congress, can hope to collect all or even a majority of all digital content. Thus, cooperative arrangements for distributed collections are not merely an option to consider but are essential”⁵⁵ to the future of theology libraries.

Building distributed collections will alter the way one measures a library’s performance. Annual reports and self-studies for accreditation frequently focus on inputs (the number of volumes in a collection, the number of circulation and reference transactions). Distributed collections make such performance measures more difficult to gather and to interpret. They may prompt libraries to recognize that if the library is focused on the success of its users, measuring user success is a far better indicator of library performance.

The dean of the graduate school I serve would never allow me to propose such a vision without helping him to understand the “bottom line.” How much will it cost? Unfortunately, just as no single vision will fit every theology library, no one cost projection is adequate. I can suggest several factors that guide my thinking.

- ♦ Print materials show no signs of disappearing (at least in the near future). We still need a physical infrastructure to house and service such collections.
- ♦ Information technology is here to stay. Building an IT infrastructure designed to make the library’s users successful is no longer an option. It is essential.
- ♦ The volume of information being published in one format or another continues to increase each year.
- ♦ On average, theology library budgets have been essentially flat for the past twenty years.

This suggests that theology libraries and their parent institutions need to:

- ♦ Explore new funding and business models that will provide the resources required for them to evolve in the next decade into libraries that can effectively serve their schools.
- ♦ Develop and expand collaborative networks that will allow each individual library to discover partners with whom it can work in the development of distributed collections and library services.

Theology libraries can be gathering places where the various stakeholders in theological education find the means and opportunities to collaborate with others, to utilize resources, and to discover new collaborative partnerships unbound by geographic location. In working to make its users successful, theology libraries will undoubtedly evolve, adapting to emerging pedagogical needs, the changing cultural expectations of its users, and the technological environment in which it exists.

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Changing Libraries, Changing Collections

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ABSTRACT: The library of a theological school and the collection that historically has been among its primary responsibilities is today a matter of complex redefinition. This article is about that redefinition and the shift, as well as the continuity, that it represents. It marks retrospectively the twentieth anniversary of a particular study of theological libraries—Project 2000—that links schools of theology with their more recent library past and overlaps substantially with their present. It asks about the relationship between the library, the collection, and the delivery of education. It reflects on the challenge and the opportunity associated with digital libraries and digital collections.

Over the past two decades, ideas about libraries and their collections have shifted noticeably, with numerous studies providing perspective on a range of issues marking the transition to a technological orientation.¹ Considerable attention has been devoted to the convergence of several dynamic forces of change: economic constraint, institutional reevaluation, pedagogical redirection, commercial publishing interests, the rapid pace of advancing technologies, and the globalizing impact of the Internet and the World Wide Web.² Much of what is currently under discussion concerns the future of the institutional library and the printed media that it has traditionally collected; economic and technical infrastructure issues; copyright, licensing, and reform of the system of publishing and scholarly communication; and the definition, creation, use and management of digital libraries and digital collections.

These conversations, wide-ranging and sometimes contentious, reflect the intensive effort that is underway to engage the structure of communication in society using computer-based systems. The library and the library collection as well-defined mechanisms in this structure have become areas of substantial modification. For those at work in theological education, the potential of constructing web-based libraries and collections that incorporate digital redesign is a significant challenge. This potential is itself a strong argument in behalf of rethinking the theological library and its collection, testing along the way the guiding assumptions about library and collection that inform local policy and planning.

The period of the 1980s was a time of ferment for theological institutions and their libraries as they sought to determine conditions of preparedness for the twenty-first century. The view of libraries and collections that was then in vogue and that accompanied theological education into this first decade of the

twenty-first century provides a background perspective that illustrates tensions and alterations now in view. This article will begin by looking backward at some of the issues embedded in this period. It will then consider the relationship between library, collection, and educational delivery that is being redefined by technology. It will conclude by commenting on the challenge and opportunity for libraries and collections prompted by digital developments.

A twentieth-anniversary perspective

One of the most important empirically based projects in the context of American theological libraries is the Project 2000 study of two decades ago.³ Begun in 1981 and concluded in 1984, this study was an assessment of the library situation in theological education, looking toward the year 2000, and was jointly sponsored by The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and the American Theological Library Association (ATLA). Supported by survey data from 141 responding institutions, the study sought to identify library issues of some consequence among institutions concerned with theological education and propose solutions that could be undertaken by these institutions, individually and collectively.

The study itself marked an important new step in the evolution of the American theological library. It assumed the indisputable centrality of the library to the educational enterprise. It promoted the idea of the library as a physical place requiring adequate space and adjusting itself over time to growing collections and services. It theorized that there were five roles of libraries in the educational setting of theology that were unlikely to change significantly over time. It viewed the library as representing tradition, maintaining diversity, sustaining curriculum, shaping new knowledge, and contributing to lifelong learning. It focused attention on budgetary issues, on personnel and staffing, and it placed considerable emphasis on collection improvement and preservation.

Recognizing that among libraries surveyed and responding there was widespread concern that collections be strengthened, Stephen L. Peterson, the project associate, challenged institutions to concentrate their collection growth on North American religious documentation, on increased North American coverage of Christianity in the Southern and Eastern hemispheres, on continued enrichment of distinctive special collections, and on measures to preserve deteriorating print resources.⁴

While we lack findings on the impact of this study and its recommendations on library collections over the last two decades, the study can be said to have focused particular attention on the problem of the preservation of collections. It furthered support for the ATLA preservation program, both through its own presentation and the work of the Joint Committee on Library Resources formed in the winter of 1984-85 to pursue implications of the report.

The report and the work of the Joint Committee also served to focus the issue of collection assessment that received attention between 1986 and 1988 in the not altogether successful project of the North American Theological Inventory (NATI).⁵

The report's concern for movement beyond the heavily westernized scope of theology collections coincided with emerging global interests in theological education. By 1988, the ATS Task Force on Globalization was validating this concern as it sketched the components of a vision of theological education that, in the year 2000, was projected to be responding with a curriculum that "includes writings from biblical, historical, and pastoral theologians from the six continents in bibliographic requirements and resources for all courses."⁶ The need for globally redirected collections has readjusted collecting decisions in some ATS institutions, with emergence of World Christianity as a current library collections issue among ATLA librarians and traceable, at least in part, to emphases in the report.

Despite the report's focus on questions of deep and enduring concern to theological education, barriers remained to its full discussion and implementation. In his revisitation of the report in July 1987, Stephen Peterson ruminated on its reception, shedding some light on institutional uses that had been made of the report: aiding staff development, performance evaluation, faculty workshops, institutional self-study, and background documentation for directorial appointments. What thought or action, if any, the report stimulated regarding library collection development is unclear, although as Peterson noted in his 1987 comments, the report had drawn criticism for its lack of attention to the collecting issues posed by world religions.⁷

In its outcome, Project 2000 does not appear to have effected substantive change in the shared assumptions and beliefs among schools of theology about libraries and collections. It was apparently difficult for schools in any large number to identify with the report, internalize it, and use it as a point of reference for forward movement. Why? Robert Lynn of Lilly Endowment Inc. speculated that it had something to do with the state of institutional sensibilities, with diffuseness and "lack of cohesion in purpose" in which theological schools had drifted from the central work of theological scholarship and were, in consequence, at a loss of what to do about the library.⁸

However that may be, the unwelcome silence that in some quarters overtook the report may have also reflected other factors. The report's dual emphasis upon saving the past and gathering the present ever more expansively may not have commended itself as simultaneously sustainable choices. The effort to situate theological library collections theoretically within an explanatory framework of the memory and legacy-based institution resulted in the casting of collection responsibility in terms of documentary stewardship that, for some, may have been counterproductive.

The report and its reception should help us to understand more fully the culture of theological institutions and the embeddedness of the library in an

institutional context that defines its parameters. The experience associated with the Project 2000 study and report has shown that it is not easy to change perception, alter perspectival outlook, adjust parameters, or reach actionable consensus on library issues.

As an assessment of theological libraries in the 1980s, Project 2000 took account of technology and its potential impact on the emerging future, *but it was technology of a different kind and on a different scale* than the content-bearing technologies that began more dramatically to alter the higher education environment in the early 1990s. Even so, the content technologies that have come along to challenge print-based concentration in libraries were already in the offing at the very time the Project 2000 report was being issued in 1984.⁹ What the report does not appear to have adequately envisioned is the extent to which the library's print culture would be challenged by the emerging future—a consequence perhaps of an underrepresented view of technology itself.

While it is the model of the traditional library that characterizes Project 2000 and while the library of 2004 is challenged to be something more than the library of 1984, the conceptual shift between these two library situations is not altogether discontinuous. Indeed, on the whole, the changes that have taken place in schools of theology—economic constraint, demographic shifts, fluctuations in enrollment, school closings and consolidations, program curtailment and redirection, and technological innovation—have not lifted the burden of library issues that challenged the 1980s.

Technology has not reversed the problems of managing print-based collections that continue to grow, require service and space, and face deterioration.¹⁰ Rather, what has occurred with advancing technological applications is the introduction of parallel agendas regarding collections and services that now compete for priority, funds, and management solutions. Collections, space, personnel, and infrastructure are not only *ongoing* aspects of the institutional context of the theological library (aspects which have in no way receded in memory with Project 2000): their importance is in fact sharpened to a critical edge by digital developments.

Project 2000 was fundamentally about advancing the stewardship of an inherited print culture, framed within the context of the physical library as a place of learning. Paradoxically, keeping pace with the changes associated with advancing communications and instructional technologies has reintroduced issues of what constitutes a library and a collection, with an additional interpretive problem posed by an ambiguity that has settled over both of these terms. While recognizing the importance of Project 2000, it is equally important to remember the distinction between two forms of both conceptualizing and representing the library and the collection—the print and the electronic, the physical and the virtual—that now affects the dynamics of the educational enterprise. Referring to this distinction might be taken as a way of disengaging libraries and collections from one or the other. At this moment, however,

neither the library nor the collection is capable of reduction to only one or the other dimension, but are characterized by an irreducible tension between both.

Library, collection, and educational delivery

The changing institutional landscape in higher education has been accompanied by transformations in libraries and collections that continue to properly emphasize their service functions. This has the considerable advantage of not treating the library nor the collection in abstraction, but of providing context and scope for what the library does.

In the institutional setting of theology, the library is still a physical localization of resource and service. As a physically structured component of an educational delivery system, the library is invested with responsibility for the provision of access particularly to published content. Synergy between this library provision and local educational demand tends to be looked at as one of the marks of a good theological school.

Regardless of how we might understand the future shape of the theological school and its component parts, theological education is, for the time being, education delivered with the aid of a physical library. The learning outcomes sought through structured degree programs are knowledge-intensive and require intellectual engagement with a widely diverse body of material. This material, arising out of a long past and transmitted across time in a variety of forms, structures the logic of the activities we encounter in library collections: selection, acquisition, organized access, persistence over time, and person-to-person mediation. Collection development extends the logic of these activities to content, with local policy functioning as an element of control on selection and the resulting collection representing the selective attention paid by the library to content in behalf of the institution's work.¹¹

The notion of collections locally developed and managed with persistence over time under the guidance of specific institutional objectives has drawn recent comment from Michael A. Keller and his Stanford associates, Victoria A. Reich, and Andrew C. Herkovic.¹² Concerned to counter pessimistic predictions about the library future, they argue that collecting roles remain central to this future, that responsibility for physical collections cannot be abandoned, and that libraries cannot allow themselves to be lured away from collection content as a vital local concern.

The library appears in this argument as a localized rationalization of educational pursuits, a collection gathered and rendered usable for a particular community through a range of content-related services. This characterization accentuates the embeddedness of the library within an institutionally defined value-system, where the collection is the ensuing result of a controlled and monitored process of institutional choices in implementing those values in behalf of the delivery of education.

The issue here, as the Stanford discussion has argued, is that “proverbially, like politics, all collections are local.”¹³ How ever much the library is embedded within the institution, in a larger cultural context and the social set of educational circumstances that surround it, the library is accountable to a set of local purposes that profoundly affect the continuing sense of library both as a place and as a collection.

This perspective on collections that take shape in localized conditions that affect their reach introduces questions at the forefront of assessment, reconfiguration, and accountability in educational delivery. How pedagogically informed is the explanatory framework within which theological libraries think about and develop their collections? How are library-provided materials related to course content and delivery? What data or analysis on how library collections are used in schools of theology are available to inform collection building?¹⁴ What do faculty expect from the library and the collection as they work? How do faculty themselves draw on a local collection for their own learning and growth? How do we build a bridge from the way theology is created, written, taught, and learned to the collections that follow in its footsteps? These are some of the forms that questions of assessment take.

When the Task Forces jointly appointed by the American Council of Learned Societies and the Council on Library and Information Resources reported in January 1999, they concluded that “what scholars want from librarians of the future is not so different from what they have wanted all along—the full range of resources they need to do their work.”¹⁵ When it comes to supporting faculty work in the theological disciplines, what are these resources that faculty expect to be able to draw upon? Are they printed books and journals? Are they electronic databases and searchable texts? Are they electronic resources of whatever kind in addition to written text—sound, image, numeric data—so long as those resources can be reached through a computer network? In the absence of supporting data, it must be conceded that theological collections are being shaped with little objective understanding of investments that are justified, expenditures that can be redirected, and costs that can be reduced. A better understanding of how scholars work in the theological disciplines, of the source problems they face and rely upon libraries to resolve, could contribute directly to improved collections and improved delivery of education.¹⁶

Ongoing discussions of library, collection, and educational delivery invariably turn to the long historical association between the library and the printed book. In these discussions it is not uncommon for the demise of both the library and the book to be anticipated in the complex interplay of emerging cultural, economic, and technological forces.¹⁷ How long will educational delivery systems in theology include physical libraries and printed book collections? How soon will occupants of the discipline take up residence in virtual space? The trite but honest answer is that *no one knows*. What is known

is that the discipline of theology continues largely to be print-based discourse, with print-based publication and print-based reading remaining a vital commercial and educational interest. To this extent, the discipline of theology and published communication within the discipline does not yet show much change. As long as the discipline and the institutions within it remain conceptually attached to the print-based culture of the book, libraries and collections will necessarily do so as well.

Writing for the computer has not yet achieved the status in theological discipline of writing for print. While there is a considerable amount of writer and publisher experimentation with on-line forms of books and journals, the established system of scholarly production continues to be dominated by print-based communication. Under current academic arrangements, it is not possible for an academic library serving the discipline to step outside this interlocking system presently characterized by hybrid forms of representation and communication.

Specialists who have commented on the future of the book such as Paul Duguid, Carla Hesse, Clifford Lynch, Geoffrey Nunberg, and James O'Donnell point out that the question goes beyond the future role of the bound physical volume to issues of memory, community, and the forms of human communication that are textually and materially embedded in society.¹⁸ If, as Geoffrey Nunberg and Carla Hesse suggest, the challenge posed by digital media is "how to reinvent the literary system and its mediators, books, libraries, and the rest in continuing service of the cultural mission of civic humanism," where does the discipline of theology fall within this reinventive process?¹⁹ What shape is this reinvention going to take in the discipline? If Nunberg and Hesse are right, then the question at issue in the relationship between library, collection, and educational delivery we have been considering might just be one dimension of the kind of future being preferred for the discipline and its mediating agencies such as schools of theology, their libraries, and their collections. Change that affects the future here will reach to the structures of thought, a reminder, according to Willard L. McCarty, that what makes computing technology such a forceful challenge is, after all, its conceptual prompt: "The computer," McCarty has said, "is a machine-for-thought that helps us confront our ideas about things with the results of applying relentlessly the theories we devise in software to explain them: our thoughts against the *models* of how we may think."²⁰

These are critical distinctions of some considerable consequence for institutional planning. Schools of theology have to create and operate with libraries and collections that move with the discipline and its discourse, with the speakers, writers, performers, narrators, teachers, producers, and readers of that discourse in whatever its forms, whether physically in place or on-line. If we wonder why the supposed obsolescence and demise of the library as a physical book-holding place cannot quite yet be accorded the status of an

administrative planning assumption, the reason lies, at least in part, with the discipline itself.

Perhaps the idea that the future of both library and collection will derive in some measure from the future form of the discipline leads inevitably to the question of the shape of schools of theology in the United States and Canada. How will the relationship between theological forms of expression, schools of theological education, libraries, and collections evolve during the next few decades? What further uses of distributed networking will be made by the theological disciplines and how will these emerging uses affect education and delivery of content? Will all schools of theology or only some eventually take on a virtual character that partly or wholly displaces physical and spatial localization? If virtuality to some degree emerges across the spectrum of theological education, what will be the consequences for libraries and the textual tradition that is represented historically in library collections?

Theological collections: challenge and opportunity

The challenges and opportunities that confront schools of theology in the development of library collections link the continuous growth of traditional materials with electronic, that is, digital or computer-readable content to form the hybrid library.²¹ This term, at least for the foreseeable future, describes the theological library we are dealing with and will have to find effective ways to manage efficiently.

If the discipline of theology is on its way toward being supported by fully operational digital libraries that present and deliver content that is exclusively digital in format, we do not yet know when that might be, how it will be accomplished, or what it will cost. The digital library is one in which collection content resides within a computerized, networked system and, in most theological libraries, the technologies for the storage, presentation, management, and archiving of such content over the long-term are not well developed. Moreover, the ability to move the hybrid library to a fully functional digital library that bypasses print altogether is dependent on many factors, including change in the published forms of theological discourse that we noted above and on mass digitization of existing collections.²²

The hybrid library has so far been successful in many institutions because a library vision, plans, infrastructure, and funding have been developed that embrace, to some degree, the digital environment. The potential for educational enrichment that lies in the presentation and delivery of on-line content has been successfully demonstrated in a wide range of digital settings. These success stories tell us that digital library development in the hybrid context is one of the more complex challenges of institutional transition. As we examine the ways in which various institutions are handling this transition, we find instances of dramatic innovation and integration, some of it focused on

infrastructure, some of it focused on collections.²³ This two-dimensional approach sets in sharp relief a distinction informing much of the debate between a digital library that represents systems and services, and a digital collection that represents an organized assemblage of objects or content.

As the published literature indicates, the term *digital library* does not mean the same thing to everyone. The question of what constitutes a digital library has been widely debated, with Clifford Lynch recently acknowledging that the debate may at present be unresolvable.²⁴ This discussion, as well as detailed case studies, draw a picture of various meanings of digital libraries ranging from operational information systems to digitized, organized, and managed collections to institutions and organizations providing digitally based services.²⁵ These variations have led Ann Peterson Bishop, Nancy A. Van House, and Barbara P. Buitendijk in their recently edited work to avoid definition intentionally, allowing the term to encompass a “variability of systems and applications.”²⁶

Part of the debate over digital libraries has been stirred by those specialists who have problems with the term itself. As early as 1993, Clifford Lynch was arguing that “digital library” is a problematic term that can easily obscure the relationship between libraries as institutions and new digital realities.²⁷ Patricia Battin subsequently concluded, as well, that the term was misleading.²⁸ In his widely cited Joseph Leiter lecture at the National Library of Medicine in 1998, Jean-Claude Guedon claimed that if we are going to base library distinction on computer code, as the term “digital” assumes, we are entertaining an “oxymoron.”²⁹ Responding to Guedon, Robert Braude said, on the contrary, the term was not so much an oxymoron as simply redundant.³⁰

Despite his own unease with the term, Lynch has noted that “three general kinds of services or systems are emerging that might be considered digital libraries,” and he includes extensions of traditional libraries “that incorporate extensive network-based collections and services.”³¹ In her richly nuanced discussion, Christine Borgman has focused her own preferred definition of the digital library on content and associated technical issues.³² Marilyn Deegan and Simon Tanner, while pointing to the varying perspectives that surround digital libraries, construct a definition around four principles in which a digital library is “a managed collection of digital objects”; “the digital objects are created or collected according to principles of collection development”; they are “made available in a cohesive manner, supported by services necessary to allow users to retrieve and exploit the resources”; and the “objects are treated as long-term stable resources and appropriate processes are applied to them to ensure their quality and survivability.”³³

The Digital Library Federation has provided a working definition that draws particular attention to content issues:

Digital libraries are organizations that provide the resources, including the specialized staff, to select, structure, offer intel-

lectual access to, interpret, distribute, preserve the integrity of, and ensure the persistence over time of collections of digital works so that they are readily and economically available for use by a defined community or set of communities.³⁴

Recognizing and learning from these different approaches to the problem of definition, we are able to focus on requirements for moving collections forward digitally. This can only happen if a developing infrastructure is in place and libraries have access to the appropriate technological applications needed to make digital collections work.³⁵ As we are seeing, a digital collection is an organized entity of coded content that, looked at from a systems perspective, requires adequate systems implementation for the lifecycle of the collection, beginning with acquisition or creation and running through long-term persistence and usability. One of the real challenges is that so few theological schools are currently equipped with lifecycle management capability for digital collections. In the current situation, this heightens the risk of potential loss of digital assets, especially where content management, repository, and migration strategies are not in place.

Infrastructure solutions bring content to life for a community of use. This is a frequent theme in the published literature that directs attention to the policy and planning framework of collections: what content is to be collected, how it is to be collected and managed, and for whom. In theological settings, the functional specifications that guide collecting decisions and are formalized in written policy have generally been adjusted to accommodate the inclusion of digital content, with the nature and extent of coverage differing according to local requirements. Typically, this content focuses on materials broadly characterized in terms of purchased or licensed materials, materials digitally reformatted from existing non-digital sources whether paper or film-based, and free or open access web materials born digitally.

Policies of collection development typically refer to the involvement of selection criteria in decision-making, including the content needs of a particular community. Presently, the selection of commercially produced content, even if judged consistent with the institution's goals and of potential value to a defined community, is rendered still more complex by many issues: copyright, contract restrictions, interface design and delivery mechanisms, linking and archiving stability, infrastructure connectivity and access, authentication and security, and cost. Particularly problematic are the intellectual property and licensing issues that will continue to prescribe boundaries of access and use that we may or may not be able to adjust in the direction of sharable resources. These are the factors that, as Clifford Lynch has said, "trump" all others and cause digital collections, despite our best intentions and design, to find their own audience.³⁶ State-wide agencies, consortia, and regional associations have been particularly successful in negotiations for wider access, and these groups remain a powerful collaborative mechanism.

The challenges involved in moving a digital collection forward vary, as we have said, in proportion to the nature and degree of digital collection development that is in view. A collection program geared to the license or purchase of carefully selected digital content will differ markedly from a more fully scoped program that intends mass digitization of its existing collection, courseware integration of teaching and learning objects with library content in one common web space, and aggregation through some repository mechanism of free web content along with locally and commercially produced content.

It is clear that as digital collection programs evolve in schools of theology and move beyond *ad hoc* projects, greater attention will need to be given to supporting infrastructure, to standards and practices necessary for interoperation across institutions and for persistence of content over time, to adequate enactment of access, and to integration of the digital component into the total library organization. While it is, at this stage, unclear how many theological schools are engaged in or are planning for digital collection programs and at what levels of intensity and financial commitment, the perception is that the number is small and geographically scattered. This suggests that as we think carefully about what is involved in building and sustaining hybrid collections for scholarly use in theology, new assessment issues emerge. Practices and patterns of usage of content in the discipline of theology as it has entered the digital age are not well known and usage data could be a helpful indicator of priorities.

In sharp contrast to other fields of study, for which there is now a growing body of documentation regarding faculty and student perception and use of libraries with digital content, the discipline of theology and its supporting libraries have yet to benefit from assessments of habits of work; of research, reading, and discovery patterns; and of how digital content is used. Some studies are indicating that use of digital content is accompanied by continuing use of print; it is probable that digital content in libraries will supplement, not supplant, print sources.³⁷ The enduring role of the physical library in academic culture is well documented, with more than half of the respondents surveyed reporting that browsing library shelves remained an important way for them to find the content they were seeking.³⁸ This value of place and space that libraries and their collections still represent has drawn the observation of Paul N. Courant who, based on his associate provost experience at the University of Michigan, suggests that academic institutions and their libraries are places of propinquity that represent agglomeration economies of long-term consequence to teaching and learning. "It's going to be a long time," he notes, "before propinquity stops mattering, and that may be long enough to hold universities and their libraries together."³⁹

How would these findings and judgments correlate with theological institutions and their libraries? As libraries invest money and effort both in commercial and locally produced digital content, the challenge as well as the

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opportunity they face is to build good collections that are useful, useable, and sustainable. Here, principles that undergird such collections, particularly those that are digitally reformatted, require attention.⁴⁰ Portal development, content management software, courseware integration with library content, and institutional repository systems are only beginning to inform library applications in theological settings, and they require energetic commitment from all parties to assure that interoperation among theological institutions is the desired outcome.⁴¹

The enduring vision of a digital theological library, comprising a digital theological collection adequate to serve the diverse educational interests and needs among ATS institutions, cannot be achieved by a single institution or commercial firm, whether acting alone or in non-collaborative distance from the communities of educational practice that these institutions represent.⁴² Of the many challenges facing theological education and the many opportunities to fund the future and shape it differently through more effective utilization of technology, the issue of content—diverse in geography, language, chronology, ethnicity, cultural, and denominational perspective—in the delivery of education especially cries out for attention. Does the future delivery of theological education call for more and more digitized content? Who will determine what that content should be, and how? Who will digitize that content and to what standards? Once digitized content exists, how will it be stored, served, and maintained over time? All these challenges will call for our best thinking and planning.

A theological collection mounted on a broadband network could at last bring into existence the globalized collection envisioned two decades ago in Project 2000. The very possibility suggests both a conclusion and a beginning. Technology does not diminish the library or the collection, but it does change the horizon.

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ENDNOTES

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4. Peterson, *Theological Libraries*, 34-53.
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6. ATS Task Force on Globalization, Biennial Meeting, The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, *Bulletin* 38, Part 6 (1988): 111.
7. Peterson, *Project 2000 Revisited*, 4-5.

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8. Robert Wood Lynn, "The Future of Theological Research and Theological Libraries," *Summary of Proceedings, Fortieth Annual Conference of the American Theological Library Association* (Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 1986): 145-147.
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12. "What is a Library Anymore, Anyway?" *First Monday*, 8, 5 (May 2003), http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue8_5/keller/index.html. Michael A. Keller is university librarian, director of academic information resources, publisher of High Wire Press, and publisher of Stanford University Press. In developing their discussion, Keller, Reich, and Herkovic elaborate on the Stanford development of LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe), an innovative collaborative collection development mechanism aimed at local access and control of electronic journal content. For more on the LOCKSS program, see <http://lockss.stanford.edu/collectionswork.html>
13. Keller, "What is a Library Anymore, Anyway?"
14. Charles Van Heck III, "Use and User Studies: An Application to Theological Libraries," *Journal of Religious & Theological Information*, 1, 1 (1993): 97-111 calls attention to the lack of data in the usage patterns of theological libraries.
15. *Scholarship, Instruction, and Libraries at the Turn of the Century: Results from Five Task Forces Appointed by the American Council of Learned Societies and the Council on Library and Information Resources* (Washington: Council on Library and Information Resources, 1999): Preface.
16. See the suggestive survey work of William S. Brockman et al., *Scholarly Work in the Humanities and the Evolving Information Environment* (Washington: Digital Library Federation and Council on Library and Information Resources, 2001).

17. Ray Kurzweil, "The Future of Libraries," Parts 1-3, *Library Journal*, 117 (January-March 1992); also his *The Age of Spiritual Machines* (New York: Viking 1999), where a scenario is drawn for the year 2009 that projects "the majority of reading is done on displays" (191) and 2019 where it is forecast that "paper books and documents are rarely used or accessed." (204, 278). As a computer scientist and futurist, Kurzweil's views of the future of books and libraries is heavily influenced by his views of the evolutionary move of the human being to becoming "software-based intelligence" (234). Mark C. Taylor, *The Moment of Complexity: Emerging Network Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), places Kurzweil among those "latter-day practitioners of once occult arts" longing for "a spirituality achieved through *disembodiment*." (223).
18. *The Future of the Book*, ed. Geoffrey Nunberg, with an Afterword by Umberto Eco (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); "Future Libraries," *Representations*, Special Issue, 42 (Spring 1993); Clifford Lynch, "The Battle to Define the Future of the Book in the Digital World," *First Monday*, 6, 6 (June 2002), http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue6_6/lynch/index.html.
19. *The Future of the Book*, 16, 28, 32.
20. Willard L. McCarty, "Peering Through the Skylight: Towards an Electronic Edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," in *Research in Humanities Computing 4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 241.
21. Chris Rusbridge, "Towards the Hybrid Library," *D-Lib Magazine* (July/August 1998), <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/july98/rusbridge/07rusbridge.html>; Stephen Pinfield et al. "Realizing the Hybrid Library," *D-Lib Magazine* (October 1998), <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/october98/10pinfield.html>.
22. Questions of purpose, practicality, cost, priority all bear on these issues and differ based on perspective and situation. From the standpoint of purpose, David M. Levy has questioned the "digital library faith" in an all-digital world in his "Digital Libraries and the Problem of Purpose," *D-Lib Magazine*, 6, 1 (January 2000), <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/january00/01levy.html> while Deanna Marcum in her "Requirements for the Future Digital Library" is more optimistic: http://www.clir.org/pubs/archives/dbm_elsevier2003.html. Interestingly, the report published by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, *Status of Technology and Digitization in the Nation's Museums and Libraries 2002 Report*, found that, of academic libraries surveyed, 34 percent reported digitization activities, 19 percent projected involvement in the next 12 months, and 44 percent expected involvement beyond 12 months. Commonly cited hindrances were lack of funding and other higher priorities. In reporting on digital activity in academic libraries, the Institute defined digitization as "the process of converting, creating, and maintaining books, art works, historical documents, photos, journals, etc. in electronic representations so they can be viewed via computer and other devices." <http://www.imls.gov/reports/techreports>.

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23. Daniel Greenstein and Suzanne E. Thorin, *The Digital Library: A Biography* (Washington: Digital Library Federation, Council on Library and Information Resources, 2002). Greenstein and Thorin's work that recounts six case studies has been followed by Ian H. Witten and David Bainbridge, *How to Build a Digital Library* (Boston: Morgan Kaufmann, 2003), which looks at a specific instance of the use of Greenstone software to build a digital collection drawing on experience with the New Zealand Digital Library Project. Both of these works call attention to the important reliance of a developing digital collection on an adequate support structure that can be highlighted in two further comments. The first is that of Bruce Schatz: "A successful digital library is a place where a group of users (people) can effectively search a group of documents (collection) via an information system (technology). These three components must be in harmony, and all must be effective for the digital library to be useful." In *Digital Library Use: Social Practice in Design and Evaluation*, eds. Ann Peterson Bishop, Nancy A. Van House, and Barbara P. Buttenfeld (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), vii. The second is that of Michael Lesk: "What does it take to build a digital library? You need to get stuff into it, you need to be able to get stuff out of it, and you need to be able to pay for it." *Practical Digital Libraries: Books, Bytes, and Bucks* (San Francisco: Morgan Kaufmann, 1997), 2.
24. Clifford Lynch, "Colliding with the Real World: Heresies and Unexplored Questions about Audience, Economics, and Control of Digital Libraries," in *Digital Library Use*, 191.
25. Peter Lyman, "What is a Digital Library? Technology, Intellectual Property, and the Public Interest," *Daedalus*, 12, 4 (Fall 1996): 1-33; William J. Arms, *Digital Libraries* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000); Christine L. Borgman, *From Gutenberg to the Global Information Infrastructure: Access to Information in the Networked World* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000); Marilyn Deegan and Simon Tanner, *Digital Futures: Strategies for the Information Age* (London: Library Association Publishing, 2002). See also Roy Tennant's crisp one-page description that reminds us that "electronic library" is an outdated term: "Digital v. Electronic v. Virtual Libraries," <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/mydefinitions.html>.
26. *Digital Library Use*, 19, note 1.
27. Clifford A. Lynch, *Accessibility and Integrity of Networked Information Collections, Background Paper No. BP-TCT-109* (Washington: Office of Technology Assessment, 1993).
28. Battin, *The Mirage of Continuity*, 277.
29. Jean-Claude Guedon, "The Digital Library: An Oxymoron," *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association*, 87, 1 (January 1999): 9-19.
30. Robert M. Braude, "Virtual or Actual: The Term Library is Enough," *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association*, 87, 1 (January 1999): 85-87.
31. Lynch, *Colliding with the Real World*, 191.
32. Borgman, *From Gutenberg to the Global Information Infrastructure*; see also her "Designing Digital Libraries for Usability," in *Digital Library Use*, 85-118.
33. Deegan and Tanner, *Digital Futures*, 138.
34. Donald J. Waters, "What are Digital Libraries," *CLIR Issues*, 4 (July/August 1998), <http://www.clir.org/pubs/issues/issues04.html>.

35. While infrastructure is a widely used term to convey perspective on a support structure of hardware and software, organization, personnel, and services, cyberinfrastructure is a word increasingly used to designate infrastructure that has advanced technology at its base and core. Note the October 2004 discussion sponsored by the Association of Research Libraries and the Coalition for Networked Information: "E-Research and Supporting Cyberinfrastructure: A Forum to Consider the Implications for Research Libraries and Research Institutions."
36. Lynch, *Colliding with the Real World*, 197.
37. *Dimensions and Use of the Scholarly Information Environment* (Washington: Digital Library Federation and Council on Library and Information Resources, 2002), <http://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub110/contents.html>.
38. *Ibid.*; see also Carol Tenopir, *Use and Users of Electronic Resources: An Overview and Analysis of Recent Research Studies* (Washington: Council on Library and Information Resources, 2003).
39. Paul M. Courant, "Changes in Scholarship and the Academy and, Perforce, Academic Libraries," *Advances in Library Administration and Organization*, 18, eds. Edward D. Garten and Delmus E. Williams (New York: Elsevier, 2001): 283.
40. See the seven principles of good digital collections identified in the report of the Digital Library Forum, "A Framework of Guidance for Building Good Digital Collections," November 6, 2001, <http://www.imls.gov/pubs/forumframework.htm>; Timothy W. Cole, "Creating a Framework for Building Good Digital Collections," *First Monday*, 7, 5 (May 2002), http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue7_5/cole/index.htm; Dan Hazen, Jeffrey Horrell, and Jan Merrill-Oldham, *Selecting Research Collections for Digitization* (Washington: Council on Library and Information Resources, 1998); *Moving Theory into Practice: Digital Imaging for Libraries and Archives*, eds. Anne R. Kenney and Oya Y. Rieger (Mountain View: Research Libraries Group, 2000); Timothy D. Jewell, *Selection and Presentation of Commercially Available Electronic Resources: Issues and Practices* (Washington: Digital Library Federation and Council on Library and Information Resources, 2000); Abby Smith, *Strategies for Building Digital Collections* (Washington: Digital Library Federation and Council on Library and Information Resources, 2001); Louis A. Pitschmann, *Building Sustainable Collections of Free Third-Party Web Resources* (Washington: Digital Library Federation and Council on Library and Information Resources, 2001); *Collections, Content, and the Web* (Washington: Digital Library Federation and Council on Library and Information Resources, 2000).
41. On these issues: *The Current State of Portal Applications in ARL Libraries*, compiled by Mary E. Jackson (Washington: Association of Research Libraries, 2004); *Digital Library Content and Course Management Systems: Issues of Interoperation, Report of a Study Group* (Washington: Digital Library Federation, 2004); *Electronic Resource Management: The Report of the DLF Initiative* (Washington: Digital Library Federation, 2004).
42. What might theological institutions be able to learn from the Distributed Open Digital Library (DODL) initiative underway with the Digital Library Federation? See *Cliringhouse*, 19 (November/December 2003), <http://www.clir.org/pubs/cliringhouse/house19.html>; and Deanna B. Marcum's contribution to the Fiesole Collection Development Retreat, "The DODL, the NDIIPP, and the Copyright Conundrum," http://digital.casalini.it/retreat/2004_docs/Marcum.pdf

Is There Anything Worthwhile on the Web? A Cooperative Project to Identify Scholarly Web Resources in Theology and Religion

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ABSTRACT: *In the emerging age of electronic publishing and Google searching, is there still reason to speak of (and maintain) library catalogs and local collections? Scholarly materials do exist on the World Wide Web, at times, freely available for those who are able to locate them. How should theological libraries seek to extend their historical role of selection and organization of publications relevant to the mission of the institutions within which they reside? An emerging model has been proposed by members of the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) that may illuminate some of the implications for local library collections in the twenty-first century. Drawing on the expertise of librarians in various roles and at various institutions, this cooperative cataloging model provides a means to attempt to sift through the "chaff" of the web to find the "wheat" worth harvesting.*

The context: theological libraries in the electronic era

In little more than three decades, theological libraries have seen their collections and work processes altered dramatically. Automation and information technologies have had a tremendous impact on all academic libraries, and theological libraries have not been exempt from the changes wrought by the new technologies. Only thirty years ago, collections were essentially all paper-based (except perhaps for microfilm much disliked by users), cataloged locally, and organized under a variety of classification schemes. If a book or journal was not a part of the local collection, the interlibrary loan procedure to determine where it was available was often a difficult and lengthy process.¹

In a remarkably brief time, shared cataloging utilities such as OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) have transformed what had been essentially an isolated creative activity into a task that could be standardized and shared on a national and even international basis. Identifying which libraries held a title became vastly easier, at least for recent publications. Older materials remained problematic as retrospective on-line cataloging of historical collections moved forward more slowly.

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As the Internet and World Wide Web emerged in the 1990s and moved from being a sparsely used technical realm to becoming a commercialized consumer commodity, individual users were provided with ready access to library catalogs across the country, even across oceans. The ability to determine which library owned a given title became much easier, even if it still required some effort on the part of the user to locate and search individual library catalogs. When OCLC made FirstSearch widely available as an end-user database in 1991, individual researchers had an even easier way to find where an obscure title might be held.²

As high-speed networks became ubiquitous on academic campuses, electronic full-text publications emerged to feed the rapidly growing desire for immediate and direct access to content. Starting in the STM (science, technology, and medicine) disciplines, journals migrated from paper to paper plus electronic and even in some cases to electronic only—ceasing paper editions entirely. Quickly (at least in a broad historical sense), the nature of journal publication and access was transformed, pushing beyond the walls of the library building to emerge on the researcher's desktop. No longer did patrons need (or want) to hunt through the print indexes for a volume citation, as scholarly publications were increasingly made accessible in electronic format.

Even in the humanities, where the pace was slower (because commercial profits are less common than in STM publications), journal publishing has steadily grown to include on-line editions. Back files are typically thin (with the exception of projects such as JSTOR, Project MUSE, and the ATLA Serials project); nevertheless, the momentum toward electronic publication continues for journal literature in all disciplines.

Is it any surprise then that the process of disintermediation raises the question about whether local collections will continue to be needed? Administrators are liable to make comments such as, "why build more library space? It will all be available electronically in [insert *your* guess here] years...."

Particularly for text-based humanities disciplines such as religious studies and theology, the growing enthusiasm for electronic resources overlooks the importance of historical materials: old and even not so old books and articles remain significant for research in a way not typical of STM disciplines. Certainly the nature of our collections will change and factors weighing in our decisions about purchases are being altered, but it seems safe to project that theological institutions will continue to build their collections from largely paper-based resources tailored to the local programs and missions of the institutions.

A trend imposed by aggregators of electronic publications presents a challenge to the historical paradigm of locally defined collections. The bundling of large collections of titles, creating a "big deal" that makes more titles available as a part of the overall package, makes sense in some contexts but abandons a significant amount of institutional control to the commercial

vendor. Fewer incremental adjustments to the local collection are possible, as individual titles can neither be added nor omitted locally. For smaller institutions not otherwise associated with a consortium or larger (college, university) entity, the benefits of broader coverage through the purchase of an aggregator's product may be marginal or the price too steep to justify the cost. Particularly when acquisitions funds are tight, local collection decisions of what to purchase and what *not* to purchase, are important aspects of building a reliable and relevant body of material for the programs of the institution.

In addition to these kinds of changes affecting the library's traditional collection of books and journals, technological advances have also introduced a whole new set of resources that pose their own particular challenges to librarians. Not only did the emergence of the Internet and World Wide Web bring about changes in areas such as interlibrary loan access and journal publication, it also created an entirely new venue for the dissemination of information. While certain resources such as databases, e-books, and e-journals tend to be subscription based, there are other resources freely available to anyone with access to the Internet. It could be argued that freely available websites should not be considered part of a library's collection because they are not available for purchase or subscription; yet this does not mean that librarians need not take some responsibility in providing access to such resources for their patrons. Indeed, in the age of Google searches as the first step for a growing number of researchers, it is this sea of free Internet resources where the librarian's selection and evaluation role is perhaps most sorely needed. When students assume that all they need to do is use five or six of the sites they pulled up on Google, the value of a reviewed and selected collection of resources for instruction and research begins to stand out in bold relief.

It is with this challenge in mind that we have initiated an association-based cooperative model for evaluating, selecting, and cataloging web resources that would meet standards appropriate for inclusion in a seminary or academic library collection. Just as the criteria for purchasing print products vary from library to library, some web resources will be appropriate for one institution's collection, but would not be chosen by another. By coordinating the evaluation of websites across the range of theological libraries represented in ATLA (the American Theological Library Association), and utilizing the subject expertise and experience of a number of librarians, we hope to create catalog records for a rich core selection of websites that ATLA libraries can confidently choose to add to their on-line catalogs.

The problem: dealing with web resources

The ATLA Selected Religion Websites (ATSRW) Project thus involves cooperative effort among ATLA librarians to select and create catalog records for websites. The main goal of the project is to provide library patrons with

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access to the best of what is available on the web in the subject areas of theology and religious studies. This project, of course, is not the first such endeavor to assist patrons in accessing web resources. Before outlining the parameters of the project, it may be helpful first to review some of the other strategies employed by librarians to provide access to this kind of material and to consider the advantages and disadvantages of these different approaches.

For the librarian, the least labor-intensive method of providing access to web resources is simply to direct patrons to web search engines such as Google or Yahoo. This is sometimes done by providing a link on the library's own web page to the search engine. Most college and graduate students, having grown up with the Internet and the Web available, are already familiar with the various search engines and know how to use them.

While this method may be the least labor intensive for the librarian, it is also the least effective for the patron. What is found using web search engines such as Google is not always the best of what is available on the web. Search engines simply do not have the capability to distinguish between websites of scholarly merit and sites of questionable content. One example of a scholarly resource freely available on the web is the ETANA site.³ This site is a joint project of a number of scholarly institutions including the American School of Oriental Research, Case Western Reserve University, the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, and Vanderbilt University. It includes full-text access to some of the classic texts on the Ancient Near East as well as a search engine (ABZU) for locating other scholarly resources in this area. A recently conducted search on Google for resources on the Ancient Near East (using the search terms "Ancient Near East") brought up well over 150,000 hits; interestingly, ETANA was *not* listed among the first 100 hits. Thus, the researcher who would benefit from access to ETANA but who does not know of its existence will likely not stumble across it using Google.

Another drawback to using search engines as the primary means for accessing web resources is that the user may not possess the expertise to assess the scholarly value of a site. This is particularly true for college students, but even graduate students and faculty may not always be able to distinguish between sites of scholarly content and sites of questionable value. A site that has sophisticated graphics, for example, may seem to the user to have a higher value than a site with a relatively simple HTML interface, but its actual content may nevertheless be of questionable worth.

Another popular method of providing access to websites has been the posting of the URLs for such sites on one of the library's own web pages. Here, unlike with the use of search engines, the expertise of the subject librarian comes into play. Sites that are of questionable content will normally not be selected, and the better sites will be posted.

There are, however, a number of drawbacks to this approach. Users may be more accustomed to searching for resources through the library's catalog or

an indexing database and may not bother to check out a list of recommended websites. If the list is extensive, it may be organized topically, but without a search mechanism it will still tend to be cumbersome to use. The task for the librarian of keeping such a list up to date can also be daunting. Not only do websites occasionally disappear or change URLs (this happens even for sites of scholarly content), but keeping apprised of what is new and worthwhile on the web is itself an enormous undertaking for the individual subject librarian.

Librarians have been supported in the task of becoming aware of what is of value on the web by published reviews and guides to web resources. These are helpful tools, and some of them are themselves websites. In the field of theology and religion there are a number of these, many of which are excellent: for example, the *Wabash Center Guide to Internet Resources for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion*,⁴ is an excellent resource, as is *Religious Studies Web Guide*.⁵ Many of these guides are organized topically and also provide short annotations of the recommended sites.

Some libraries simply post a listing of these Internet guides for users interested in what is on the web. However, while the existence of such guides alleviates part of the problem for the librarian, there is still the issue of the user who may be searching for resources in a particular subject area (such as the Ancient Near East) and who may not even be aware that the web is a potential source for the kind of resources he or she is seeking.

The traditional method of making scholarly resources available to library patrons has been through the library catalog. Materials included in the catalog are deemed to have enduring worth and relevance for the mission of the institution. Many libraries, however, do not include websites in their catalogs. There are a number of reasons for this omission, including the erroneous belief that there is little of value on the web along with the view that users already know how to access web resources using search engines such as Google. Perhaps the strongest reason for excluding websites from the library's catalog is simply that the tasks of selecting and then cataloging such resources are difficult and time-consuming. Websites have characteristics that make them different from material that is purchased and owned by the library; they are typically continually updated, occasionally change their URLs, are not always maintained, and even occasionally disappear. It is perhaps even more difficult to keep track of changes to websites when they are in the catalog than when they are posted on a list for users. The library may already have a schedule for periodically checking URL links posted on a list, but if the resource is simply another item in the catalog, it is less likely that the URL link will be checked on a regular basis. For these reasons, many libraries have simply chosen not to go to the effort of including websites in their catalogs.

Nevertheless, in the academic library the catalog remains the essential tool for directing researchers to scholarly resources. Bibliographic records in the catalog allow users to locate items that have been specifically selected for

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inclusion in the library. Most On-line Public Access Catalogs (OPACs) now have the capability of including links to external resources and patrons are growing more familiar with finding electronic resources through links from the catalog.

Most academic librarians are specialists in one or more subject areas and have the expertise to determine which resources are of value and which are not. Since the catalog is the tool of choice for providing access to scholarly resources, it stands to reason that the catalog should also be the preferred mode of access for scholarly resources that happen to be located on the World Wide Web. The key is to find a way to overcome the problems that make creating and maintaining catalog records for web resources such a cumbersome task.

A proposed solution: association-based collaboration

The ATSRW Project follows in the footsteps of a long history of collaborative projects undertaken by ATLA librarians and the larger profession of technical services librarians. The most prominent indexing tool for literature in religion and theology, the ATLA Religion Database, grew out of just such a collaborative initiative of ATLA librarians with the creation (in 1949) of the *Index to Religious Periodical Literature*.⁶

Creating tools for bibliographic control of resources (card catalogs and, more recently, on-line catalogs) is labor intensive and unaffordable if done independently in individual institutions. OCLC, founded in 1967, is a consortium of more than 45,000 libraries that contribute bibliographic records to create the world's largest on-line catalog (WorldCat). Standards and rules govern the format, structure, and subject terms employed by thousands of librarians who contribute records to the database. Local on-line catalogs are built record by record by downloading bibliographic data from OCLC into whatever software system an institution has purchased to deliver the bibliographic records to their patrons. Administrators, always mindful of the costs associated with technical services in their institution's library, should be heartened by the knowledge that much of the work is being done by the Library of Congress and catalogers employed by other institutions, without which cataloging costs would be even higher than they are.

There are volumes of documentation to guide catalogers in providing bibliographic information on every item in the library. The field is as dynamic as the proliferation of formats (print, microfilm, videotape, DVD, e-books, etc.). A cataloger's workspace is always accompanied by a backlog and enough challenges to make the job interesting on good days and defeating on bad days. With a complex and full workload already, it is therefore not surprising that there has been no rush by librarians working in theology and seminary libraries to catalog freely accessible websites. Some librarians (including the authors of the present article) have been encouraged to extend the reach of their catalogs

in this way by their parent institution. The incentive to create a cooperative project for cataloging websites is, in part, an effort to recruit colleagues to help with this effort.

The first step we took in initiating the project was to inquire of the ATLA membership (through the association listserv ATLANTIS) as to the extent and interest in providing access to web resources. Librarians who responded positively were then invited to meet at the ATLA conference in 2003 to discuss how to proceed. Following that conference, fifty association librarians signed up to join a new listserv created to continue the conversation.

This past year has been a foundational period in which a preliminary structure has been set up for organizing this collaborative effort, with further fine-tuning undertaken at the 2004 ATLA conference. The following defines the tentative parameters of the project:

- ♦ The project is designed to make selected websites in theology and religion accessible through local OPACs. The project is limited to freely accessible websites and does not include subscription databases, e-books, or e-journals (unless the website is a portal to these types of works).
- ♦ The intended users are American Theological Library Association institutions and their patrons, and other institutions and individuals interested in websites appropriate for graduate academic study in theology and religion.
- ♦ This association-based program distributes the labor-intensive tasks of selecting the sites (collection development), creating bibliographic records in OCLC (cataloging), and updating records to reflect the dynamic nature of Internet resources (maintenance). Separate working committees will be created for each of these areas of responsibility.
- ♦ Negotiations with OCLC have resulted in the inclusion of the project as an OCLC WorldCat Collection Set. A common user name and password will be used by all of the catalogers contributing records to the ATLA Selected Religion Websites collection set. These records will be available for purchase as a set from OCLC at a nominal cost.⁷ Individual records can of course be downloaded on a title by title basis, just like book records.
- ♦ The ATLA Selected Religion Websites (ATSRW) collection set will be a core group of websites (numbering approximately one hundred to two hundred) that will be selected by specialists in the fields of religion and theology. Individual libraries will then have the ability to enhance the core collection with additional sites reflecting local collection policy.
- ♦ The bibliographic records in the collection set are searchable on WorldCat through the advanced search by using the qualifier ATSRW in the library code and a keyword such as "web." [As of May 2004, doing this search retrieves twelve records.] This search will yield the entire collection set. Individual records are retrievable through the usual access points (title, author, subject, keyword). Researchers educated to recognize the

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collection set in the list of holding libraries can look for the project name as a stamp of approval for the website.

- ♦ The nature of websites is dynamic. Sites are often updated, with information being both added and deleted, and some sites even occasionally disappear. Thus, the records for the collection set will need to be periodically reviewed and enhanced to reflect such changes.
- ♦ Institutions will be able to update their local bibliographic records by periodically purging the collection set from their own OPACs and replacing the set with an updated version. Such maintenance will involve minimal effort on the part of local staff.

The ideas for this program were first presented at the ATLA conference in June of 2001. It would have gone no further had Eric Childress, consulting project specialist in OCLC Research, not cited the presentation from the print version of the ATLA Summary of Proceedings in an article published two years later entitled "Faith, Trust, and Cooperation: Sharing the Load of Creating Metadata for the Web."⁸ His employment of the word "faith" in the title and the resurrection of the concept of shared responsibility among ATLA members granted a second chance for solving the dilemma of managing the unmanageable web: how does one institution or one individual discover and evaluate the plethora of religion and theology websites on the Internet? How do we separate the wheat from the chaff? The solution requires a degree of faith and trust in your colleagues and cooperation through an association whose members have a shared mission.

When faced with a seemingly overwhelming body of material to deal with, it is understandable why no single institution could or should attempt to keep up with all potentially valuable web resources. To the extent that theological libraries are trying to do so at any level, we are often duplicating efforts. The pay-off of an organized and cooperative effort such as this project proposes that each institution is asked to contribute a modest amount—in staff expertise and cataloging costs—but the cumulative benefit to participating institutions will far exceed our individual contributions. If only ten libraries were to participate initially and each contributed only two records per month, in less than two years we will have more than 200 records in the ATSRW database. The cost to each institution that chooses to participate in the project is likely no more than what is already being expended in tracking and updating websites of interest.

Through the ATSRW Project, every ATS institution stands to benefit from the collective expertise of theological librarians working to discern the best of the Internet and to develop the means to make this core "best of the web" collection available to their students, faculty, and administrators in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

Eileen Crawford, Amy Limpitlaw, and Bill Hook are members of the library staff of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library. Eileen Crawford is the divinity cataloger and head of technical services, Amy Limpitlaw is the public services librarian, and together they are the initiators of the ATSRW Project. Bill Hook is the director of the Divinity Library.

ENDNOTES

1. In the days prior to on-line catalogs and OCLC, libraries that had published bound volumes of union catalogs were often subject to the heaviest ILL request burden, as that was one way potential borrowers could know someone owned a given title.
2. Even before OCLC made the bibliographic database available through FirstSearch, researchers were known to learn how to use the OCLC cataloging terminals to look up titles to find out where they were held. The fact that the search algorithms were less than user-friendly did not deter determined users who clearly understood the value of the information available.
3. "ETANA electronic tools and ancient Near Eastern archives," <http://www.etana.org/>
4. Charles K. Bellinger, "Wabash Center Internet Guide to Internet Resources for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion," <http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/Internet/front.htm>
5. Cheryl Adams and Sandra Lipton, "Religious Studies Web Guide," <http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~lipton/index.html>
6. The *Index to Religious Periodical Literature* (1952-1977) was superseded and expanded as a print index and replaced by *Religion Index One: Periodicals*. The American Theological Library Association also published *Religion Index Two: Multi-author works* (1976-), and the *Index to Book Reviews in Religion* (1986-) as separate print indexes. In 1993, the first electronic edition combining these print indexes as the *ATLA Religion Database on CD-ROM* reflected the shift for periodical indexes moving from printed volumes toward searchable on-line databases.
7. OCLC, "WorldCat Collection Sets," <http://www.oclc.org/worldcatsets/>
8. Eric Childress, "Faith, Trust, and Cooperation: Sharing the Load of Creating Metadata for the Web," *Journal of Internet Cataloging* 6 (2003): 7-8.

Incorporating Global Perspectives into Theological Education: The Role of the Library

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ABSTRACT: Theological libraries are searching to define and find support for their appropriate role in documenting and facilitating access to the thought of world Christianity, even as faculty in theological institutions are searching for effective ways to address “global inter-connectedness and interdependence” in their teaching. This essay explores ways in which theological libraries can contribute to theological scholarship that incorporates global awareness. It makes recommendations for actions that will support this cause.

Introduction

Theological education in America began in an apprenticeship mode, with young men learning their trade of ministry under the tutelage of experienced clergy in a parish setting. Though serviceable for generations, this method was overtaken in time by a more structured model of theological education. In the nineteenth century, new thinking was spurred by archaeological exploration, the discovery of papyri and the development of text criticism, advances in science, and increased complexity of society. These changes demanded more academic preparation to cover new knowledge, and clergy in the field were hard pressed to continue their former role as mentors and teachers. Now, in recent decades, a new change has become necessary in the theological education model, a change based on the recognition that “global inter-connectedness and interdependence”¹ require understanding of a broader sphere of religious experience. The realization that theological schools must look beyond the borders of their own settings in order to comprehend religious experience is redirecting the focus of theological education and the libraries that support it. As Lamin Sanneh has written:

I wonder what the study of church history would look like if it had a global perspective—if it viewed world Christianity not with a sense of decline and uncertainty but with a sense of expansion and promise. Indeed, might not the entire structure of theological education change if it began to respond to the realities of world Christianity? . . . [S]tandard theological sources and methods have failed to show any awareness of the Copernican shift that has taken place in the religious map of the

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world. And the meager evidence there might be of the glimmerings of an awareness that the entire landscape has shifted is shot through with fear and a sense of threat, or with a corrosive sense of guilt. Yet the global transformation of Christianity requires nothing less than the complete rethinking of the church history syllabus.²

In the beginning stages of theological education, books were scarce and libraries small; a few core texts sufficed for most pastors and scholars. As new knowledge and theories arrived on the scene, theological publishing burgeoned and an expanding core of texts was required to undertake the analysis and criticism that increasingly defined theological education. Theological libraries were the temples of these texts and of undisputed importance during this era. Now, in the new paradigm of globalization, theological libraries are searching to define and find support for their appropriate role in documenting and facilitating access to the thought of world Christianity, even as faculty are searching for effective ways to address “global inter-connectedness and interdependence” in their teaching. This essay will explore ways in which theological libraries can contribute to theological scholarship that encourages global awareness and responsiveness.

The globalization of theological education

It has become commonplace to observe that the center of world Christianity is shifting from the north and west to the south and east. As Andrew Walls has observed, at the end of the nineteenth century “well over 80 percent of those who professed Christianity lived in Europe or North America. Now [end of the twentieth century], approaching 60 percent live in the southern continents of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Pacific, and that proportion grows annually. Christianity began the twentieth century as a Western religion, and indeed *the* Western religion; it ended the century as a non-Western religion, on track to become progressively more so.”³ “Whatever Europeans or North Americans may believe,” Philip Jenkins has noted, “Christianity is doing very well indeed in the global South—not just surviving but expanding.”⁴

Partially in response to this phenomenon, for more than two decades The Association of Theological Schools has sought to have its members incorporate the globalization of theological education into their programs. Section 3.2.4 of the ATS accreditation standards states:

Theological teaching, learning, and research require patterns of institutional and educational practice that contribute to an awareness and appreciation of global inter-connectedness and interdependence, particularly as they relate to the mission of the church. These patterns are intended to enhance the ways institutions participate in the ecumenical, dialogical, evangelistic, and justice efforts of the church. The term globalization

has been used to identify these patterns and practices collectively. Globalization is cultivated by curricular attention to cross-cultural issues as well as the study of other major religions; by opportunities for cross-cultural experiences; by the composition of the faculty, governing board, and student body; by professional development of faculty members; and by the design of community activities and worship.⁵

ATS has devoted considerable effort to raising its members' consciousness on the globalization of theological education and has produced a significant amount of literature related to the subject. Six entire issues of the journal *Theological Education* have been devoted to the topic,⁶ along with many other articles and monographs.

In preparing this essay, we surveyed this literature on the globalization of theological education to see what it had to say about the role of the theological library in supporting institutional efforts to develop globalization programs. We found that the literature pays relatively little attention to the documentation of world Christianity published outside the West, an area where libraries would expect to be engaged. The focus, rather, is on such things as cultural immersion, exchange of faculty and students, and inviting scholars from abroad to prepare reactions to scholarly articles.⁷ While there are an "ever-increasing number of voices now wishing to be heard,"⁸ the traditional means of hearing those voices—reading their works—is only marginally on the agenda. In world Christianity, "we find fresh energy and intelligence being devoted to the production of new hymns, music, artistic and liturgical materials, to the creation of fresh categories for doing theology, to the retrieval of threatened cultural resources."⁹ It would seem self-evident that collecting and making available the publications that are the concrete evidence of this wave of innovation would be an important part of the process of understanding the phenomenon. Yet this issue is not prominent in writings about the globalization of theological education. Indeed, it is interesting to note that the "Guidelines for Evaluating Globalization in ATS Schools" in the *ATS Handbook of Accreditation* make no mention of libraries.

The only literature where the role of the library in supporting the globalization of theological education is featured is in the *Proceedings of the American Theological Library Association Annual Meeting*. Robert J. Schreiter addressed the ATLA assembly in 2001 on the topic "Globalization and Theological Libraries,"¹⁰ and Judith Berling was a member of a panel discussing globalization and theological libraries at the 2000 Annual Meeting.¹¹ This might be called "preaching to the choir," for theological librarians, by and large, already know that they should be documenting world Christianity at some level. Administrators to whom the librarians report often do not share this recognition. Certainly there is little in the literature to suggest that institutions should devote resources to supporting their libraries in this area.

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It is revealing to note that the literature on the globalization of theological education itself tends to make very little use of material published outside the West. In four different volumes on the globalization of theological education published in the United States, a check of footnotes shows that an overwhelming percentage of their references were published in the United States and United Kingdom.¹² By way of contrast, two volumes published in South Africa show a different pattern. *Doing Theology in Context: South African Perspectives* (John W. de Gruchy and Charles Villa-Vicencio, ed.; Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1994), which was originally published in South Africa by David Philip, shows considerably more awareness of African publications.¹³ Even more striking is the example of *Towards an Agenda for Contextual Theology: Essays in Honour of Albert Nolan* (McGlory T. Speckman and Larry T. Kaufmann, eds.; Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001). In this volume, seventy-eight citations are to works published in the United States, fifty-two in the United Kingdom, eight in continental Europe, one each in Canada and Latin America, and seventy-five in Africa.

Generalizing from such data is, of course, fraught with dangers. Many non-Western authors have Western publishers. As the case of *Doing Theology in Context* demonstrates, many works are published simultaneously in different countries. Still, it seems clear that efforts to understand and describe the globalization of theological education have delved relatively little into non-Western theological literature. Perhaps this is because access to the literature of world Christianity is limited in American theological libraries. Perhaps most theological libraries are not equipped to do an adequate job of collecting and providing access to that literature, but if Western scholars read only books published by Western publishers, they surely will get a skewed view of what those outside the West are thinking. In addition, beyond scholarly monographs, what of the “new hymns, music, artistic and liturgical materials” and other types of raw material that reveal so much of the essence of religious experience?

Projects that focus on integrating world Christianity into the theological curriculum also often neglect to bring the library’s role into focus. For example, a grant proposal featured on the ATS Faculty Grants website as an exemplar proposal, “Developing Teaching Materials and Instructional Strategies for Teaching Asian and Asian American/Canadian Women’s Theologies in North America,”¹⁴ makes no explicit mention of the libraries of the participating institutions, even while lamenting “the dearth of gathered and easily accessible material for the study and teaching of Asian women’s theologies in the United States and Canada.” Overlooking the integration of the library into such a project is indicative of the perceived peripheral status of libraries in supporting the study of the globalization of theological education.

The American Theological Library Association and world Christianity

There is no lack of interest in documenting world Christianity on the part of many American theological libraries. Even before the formation of the ATLA World Christianity Interest Group in the late 1990s, the topic appeared regularly on the Annual Conference agenda. In recent years, there has been a lively discussion of the topic with a growing body of literature.¹⁵

A website was established by the World Christianity Interest Group in 1998 (<http://www.atla.com/wcig/wcig.html>), which has as its goals:

1. to document what is currently being done by ATLA libraries to collect materials related to World Christianity and to exchange information about future collection development plans,
2. to share information about ways to collect and process World Christian materials; maintain a list of vendors and other sources for acquiring World Christian materials, and
3. to promote the use of World Christianity documentation by students and faculty at ATLA institutions and other libraries and institutions.¹⁶

In 2001, the World Christianity Interest Group conducted a survey of faculty at ATS member schools to investigate the following questions:

1. To what extent are non-Western perspectives currently incorporated into the theological curriculum?
2. What types of documentation would faculty find most useful for promoting global awareness?
3. Would it be desirable to have a digitally available core of relevant texts and images; if so what types of material would be included?
4. How does curriculum support relate to the broader task of preserving and collecting World Christianity documentation?

One hundred and forty responses to the survey were received from forty-two schools. Sample questions and responses from the survey include the following:¹⁷

1. *Do you introduce perspectives of the "global church" or non-Western Christianity into any of your courses?* More than 95 percent of the faculty members who responded to the survey answered this question in the affirmative, so it can be assumed that the respondents were somewhat self-selecting.
 - 2a. *If you do introduce perspectives of the "global church" or non-Western Christianity into your courses, can you provide a couple of examples of ways in which you do so?* The most frequent methods mentioned for introducing perspectives of the "global church" included using:
 - ♦ Writings of non-Western Christians
 - ♦ Writings about non-Western Christianity
 - ♦ Verbal contributions of international students enrolled in the course
 - ♦ Music and liturgies from non-Western churches

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- ♦ Case studies
- ♦ Reference to overseas experiences of the instructor
- ♦ Guest lecturers

Many respondents mentioned specific works that they assign for reading, and it seemed clear that an exchange of information about resources would be welcomed by many.

2b. *If “no,” do you have any comment on whether such perspectives are relevant to your field of teaching?* Most people who responded to the survey were already introducing perspectives of the “global church” in their courses, so there were not many responses to this question, but some faculty members mentioned time constraints—both in terms of time needed to identify appropriate resources and time within the classroom—when there was already so much to cover.

3. *If the following types of material were available at your institution’s library or on a website, can you imagine incorporating them into any of your courses?* Resources were ranked in this order:

- ♦ Writings of non-Western Christian theologians, 101 checks
- ♦ Biblical commentary by non-Western scholars or church leaders, 84
- ♦ Official documents, periodicals, or newsletters of non-Western churches, 78
- ♦ Images of churches and worship services in non-Western settings, 72
- ♦ Examples of curricula from non-Western theological seminaries, 68
- ♦ Liturgies of non-Western churches, 64

4. *Are there other types of material that might be useful?* Other resources suggested included:

- ♦ Videotapes of worship services and interviews with non-Western theologians and church leaders
- ♦ Sermons by non-Western preachers
- ♦ An anthology of writings of non-Western Christians
- ♦ Personal visits of non-Western Christians / Exchange programs
- ♦ Maps
- ♦ Documents from the World Council of Churches, the Vatican, and similar bodies
- ♦ Biographies of Christians in non-Western cultures
- ♦ Bibliographical search source that specialized in accessible non-Western sources

Based on the World Christianity Interest Group survey results, it would seem that libraries could play an important role in helping faculty members identify, access, and share resources that would enable them to address the global character of the church. Many faculty members appear to be eager and willing to incorporate elements of world Christianity into their courses, but are daunted by the tasks of identifying and acquiring resources and incorporating them into an already packed curriculum. Beyond just the acquiring of re-

sources, it seems clear from the results of the survey that many faculty members would also welcome a forum for discussing the concept of “world Christianity” and exchanging ideas about how it can relate to their teaching. While the traditional role of the library has concentrated on acquiring and delivering resources, perhaps there is a new concept of the library that can approach the role of providing a forum for exchange of information and ideas as well.

The ATLA’s *Religion Index*—an invaluable tool for scholars in the field—regularly indexes more than fifty-five journals published in non-Western countries, including such titles as *AFER: African Ecclesial Review*, *Asia Journal of Theology*, *Indian Church History Review*, *Melanesian Journal of Theology*, and so forth. Theological librarians may need to play a more proactive role in making faculty aware of these resources and making relevant articles available for use in teaching.

Another effort of the American Theological Library Association to address global issues, the Special Committee of the Association for International Collaboration, was established in 2000 and charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Coordinate the Association’s activities regarding international theological librarianship.
2. Support the efforts of individual libraries and librarians to participate in international theological librarianship activities.
3. Serve in a liaison capacity with international theological library associations, including but not limited to: BETH (European Theological Libraries), LATIN (Central and South America), and ANZTLA (Australia and New Zealand).
4. Plan ATLA conference activities related to international theological librarianship.

The Special Committee of the Association for International Collaboration has coordinated initiatives such as the ATLA Worldwide Partnership Program and ATLA product discounts for overseas theological libraries.¹⁸

In search of a model for documenting world Christianity

These collaborative efforts of American Theological Library Association have been fruitful in many ways, but it is not clear that American theological libraries are doing a better job of gathering the documentation of world Christianity as a result of them. To do that requires an institutional commitment that goes beyond what theological libraries can accomplish on their own. What level of institutional commitment might be appropriate will depend on the type of institution and its programs. In a festschrift for Calvin Schmitt,¹⁹ Stephen Peterson suggested some guidelines for what theological libraries at various types of institutions should look like, specifying three levels of collec-

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tion development: (1) Primary Library Collection Development, (2) Documentary Library Collection Development, and (3) Research Library Collection Development.

The goal of library collections at the “Primary Library Collection Development” level is to support the curriculum, including not only books cited in the syllabus or course reserve lists but also the literature that undergirds the disciplines included in the curriculum. Within this context, Type I libraries would collect primarily English-language materials published in North America, while Type II libraries would also collect scholarly material published abroad, chiefly from Europe. Libraries that fall into this category would purchase scholarly monographs that deal with world Christianity but would likely not build extensive collections of primary documentation.

On the “Documentary Library Collection Development” level, libraries not only support the curriculum but also collect documentary literature with the purpose of fully documenting some particular topic in Christian life and thought. These Type III libraries would, for example, include denominational seminaries that gather the documentation of their tradition, including minutes, reports of meetings and conferences, and statistics, as well as material prepared for use in the denomination’s ministries. Peterson goes on to suggest a concerted program “to assure that the official records, reports, study documents, and periodical publications of almost all the world’s churches are collected somewhere in the North American libraries.” He suggests that denominational seminaries collaborate with one another in gathering the records of their traditions.

Type IV libraries in Peterson’s model are on the “Research Library Collection Development” level. The research library is one “which intends to acquire the scholarly literature essential to the history and development of all branches of Christian thought without regard to language, date, country of origin, and theological or denominational perspective.” This scope does not mean that the research library is attempting to be exhaustive, but that it focuses on acquiring “the scholarly literature which has defined and is shaping Christian thought.”

While Peterson did not discuss the obligations of theological research libraries for gathering the documentation of world Christianity in the Schmitt festschrift, elsewhere he has advocated a geographical approach,²⁰ proposing a program in which theological libraries work to gather the documentation of world Christianity collaboratively.

But this is not a task reserved only for research libraries. Documenting world Christianity “is a responsibility that must be shared by many institutions, even by schools not offering advanced research degrees.”²¹ Large research libraries cannot document every field and every current of Christianity, let alone religion, with equal quality. There is a role for all theological libraries.

The fact of the matter is that most theological libraries are not equipped to carry out this agenda. In his *Project 2000 Final Report*, Peterson noted that

increasing the documentation of world Christianity would raise “serious questions of policy, practice, and funding.” He recommended that a study be undertaken that would address the following issues:

1. The bibliographical resources presently available and currently being developed in North American theological libraries should be assessed.
2. A scholarly assessment of the material that is likely to be needed by theological study and research over the next several decades must be undertaken. This work should be done in close consultation with scholars specializing in Third World topics.
3. A coordinated program of resource development should be established. In particular, an effective balance between what local institutions reasonably may be expected to provide and what must be provided in major research-oriented collections must be achieved.
4. A training program is needed for librarians and bibliographers to strengthen the procedures and processes through which Third World material may be acquired efficiently.
5. An agency to coordinate continuing resource development and sharing in this field must be established.²²

To our knowledge, none of these recommendations have been followed.

Furthermore, while theological libraries struggle to collect even published documentation of world Christianity in an adequate way, it should be recognized that the raw materials of documentation, archival and manuscript collections, present another largely inaccessible source for understanding the world Christian experience. Such materials not only offer rich resources for historians and theologians of the West, but also contain materials that could help world Christian churches examine their heritage and define their identity.

Recommendations to ATS schools on documenting world Christianity

First and foremost, include your library in your discussions about the globalization of theological education. The approach you take to globalization will undoubtedly have implications for what the library should collect; conversely, the library should be in a position to strengthen your programs by building collections that support them. The school’s discussion should include what focus the library’s efforts should take, and how—given scarce resources—its collections can have the biggest impact on the school’s globalization program.

Second, if your institution has international partnerships, especially ones in which you have exchange agreements, involve the library staff. It might seem obvious that one could use a partnership to exchange documentation, but if the library is not directly involved, it is unlikely that much will happen.

Faculty and students who are involved in exchanges rarely think about documentation—they have their own agendas. Involving your library staff in

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partnerships can help to make them two-way streets. In a traditional library exchange agreement, for example, documentation flows both ways. The school in India, for example, will receive U.S. publications in return for material published in India. The U.S. institution will then be able not only to engage in immersion experiences, but also to read what Indian theologians are thinking. They can use this material to prepare for the immersion experience and also as a way to reflect on what they learned.

Third, no institution can be comprehensive in documenting world Christianity—there is simply too much to document. Even the larger research libraries that are intentionally building collections documenting world Christianity (e.g., Emory, Graduate Theological Union, Princeton, and Yale) have collections that might be called representative rather than comprehensive. If world Christianity is to be documented in American theological libraries, it must be a collaborative, cooperative effort, and each library's efforts must focus on something that matters to its institution, or it won't happen.

International partnerships offer opportunities for such collaboration to take place. For example, it makes sense for a Lutheran school to have partnerships with a Lutheran institution abroad, and for that Lutheran school to attempt to document as thoroughly as possible the life of the partner church to which the school is related. Documentation might include monographs and pamphlets, periodicals, annual reports and proceedings, as Peterson has suggested, as well as more "gray" literature like position papers and web sites. No research library has the capacity to collect such materials comprehensively. If a Lutheran seminary were to do so, it would have the definitive collection, *the* place (other than the partner seminary) where people would go to learn about Lutheranism in that country.

Fourth, The Association for Theological Schools, as well as member schools, should encourage libraries to collaborate in documenting world Christianity. As Robert Schreiter has observed, "Networking is something that libraries have done extraordinarily well."²³ But, as any librarian can tell you, networking requires scarce resources—not only money, but also time. If librarians are to take the time to collaborate, doing so must be an institutional priority. Types of collaboration should include working within denominational groups to identify sister institutions abroad in an attempt to gather the documentation of the world communion.

Fifth, libraries must be proactive in helping faculty become aware of world Christianity resources relevant to their teaching, going beyond their traditional role of acquiring resources and having them available on the shelves. Librarians have investigative and technological skills that make them well-equipped to assist faculty in integrating global perspectives into the curriculum.

Finally, ATS should revisit the recommendations from *Project 2000*. Specifically, we believe ATS should commission a study to determine just how ATS schools presently engage in collecting and providing access to the docu-

mentation of world Christianity. In consultation with ATLA, we believe it would then be useful for ATS to develop guidelines that would help schools understand what is appropriate for their situation and to develop a program that would better equip theological libraries to carry out the task. Carrying out such an agenda would demonstrate the intentionality of ATS in helping its member schools to implement this vital aspect of the globalization of theological education.

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ENDNOTES

1. From ATS accreditation standard on globalization: ATS website <<http://www.ats.edu/accredit/ac3.htm>> (May 2004).
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3. Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2002), 64.
4. Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: the Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 2.
5. ATS website <<http://www.ats.edu/accredit/ac3.htm>> (May 2004).
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7. See, for example, William E. Leshner, "Meanings of Globalization," in *The Globalization of Theological Education*, eds. Alice Frazer Evans, Robert A. Evans, David A. Roozen (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1993), 45-48. For a fuller discussion of the immersion approach, see *Changing the Way Seminaries Teach: Globalization and Theological Education*, ed. David A. Roozen, et al., (Hartford: Hartford Seminary Center for Social and Religious Research, 1996).
8. Colin D. O'Rourke, "Problems of Globalization in Theological Education: an Analysis of Sources," *Toronto Journal of Theology*, 17 (2001): 235.
9. Sanneh, 717.
10. Robert J. Schreiter, "Globalization and Theological Libraries," *Summary of Proceedings, American Theological Library Association Annual Meeting*, 55 (2001): 146-159.
11. Judith Berling, "Update on the ATS Globalization Project," *Summary of Proceedings, American Theological Library Association Annual Meeting*, 54 (2000): 257-261.
12. The first volume we checked was *The Globalization of Theological Education*, ed. Alice Frazer Evans, et al.; (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1993). 267 of the works cited were published in the United States, 24 in the United Kingdom, 13 in continental Europe, 3 in Canada, 2 in Africa (1 of which was the Nairobi office of Oxford University Press), and 1 each for Latin America, Australia, and Asia. *Theological Education*, 30:1 (Autumn

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1993), "Globalization and the Practical Theological Disciplines," has the same pattern. 159 of the works cited were published in the United States, 4 in the United Kingdom, 2 in Australia, 1 in continental Europe, and 2 in Africa. Both African citations are in the article "Globalization and Social Ethics" by Toinette M. Eugene. *Theological Education*, 35:2 (Spring 1999), "Incarnating Globalization in ATS Schools," cites 102 works published in the United States, 19 in the United Kingdom, 3 in continental Europe, and 1 in Australia. *Teaching the Bible: the Discourses and Politics of Biblical Pedagogy*, eds. Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1998) shows a little more diversity. 380 of the citations were published in the United States, 66 in the United Kingdom, 27 in continental Europe, 16 in Latin America, 15 in Asia, 3 in Australia, and 1 in Africa. Three different articles included citations to Latin American publications: Paulo Fernando Carneiro de Andrade, "Theological Education in a New Context: Reflections from the Perspective of Brazilian Theology" (9 citations), J. Severino Croatto, "A Reading of the Story of the Tower of Babel from the Perspective of Non-Identity" (2 citations), and Pablo Richard, "The Hermeneutics of Liberation, Theoretical Grounding for the Communitarian Reading of the Bible" (5 citations). The 15 citations to Asian publications all appeared in R. S. Sugirtharajah, "Biblical Studies in India." The sole African publication cited was by Musa W. Dube in "'Go Therefore and Make Disciples of All Nations' (Matt 28:19a): a Postcolonial Perspective on Biblical Criticism and Pedagogy."

13. It cites 108 works published in the United States, 60 in the United Kingdom, 14 in continental Europe, 30 in Africa, and 1 each in Latin America and Australia.

14. *ATS Online Faculty Grants* <<http://www.ats.edu/faculty/grants/tandl/proposal/ng.htm>> (May 2004)

15. A partial listing of papers on documenting World Christianity given at the ATLA annual conference includes:

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- Voth, Mariel Deluca. "Finding Your Way through Chaos: Information Gathering in Argentina." (2000).
16. Martha Lund Smalley, "World Christianity Interest Group Web Site," *American Theological Library Association Summary of Proceedings*, 53 (1999): 187.
17. Martha Lund Smalley, unpublished report of ATLA World Christianity Interest Group.
18. ATLA Special Committee of the Association for International Collaboration website <http://www.atla.com/international_collab/committee_charge.html> (May 2004).
19. Stephen L. Peterson, "Collection Development in Theological Libraries: a New Model—a New Hope," in *Essays in Theological Librarianship Presented to Calvin Henry Schmitt*, eds. Peter De Klerk and Earle Hilgert (Philadelphia: American Theological Library Association, 1980), 143-162.
20. Stephen L. Peterson, "From Third World to One World: Problems and Opportunities in Documenting New Christianity," *Library Acquisitions*, 15 (1991): 177-184.
21. Stephen L. Peterson, "Theological Libraries for the Twenty-First Century: Project 2000 Final Report," *Theological Education*, 20:3 (1984): 41. As he notes in "Project 2000 Revisited" (1987), "Given the pedagogical roles which libraries play in theological education, library resource development will be a very effective measure of the depth of commitment the seminaries have to the globalization agenda" (5).
22. Peterson, "Theological Libraries for the Twenty-First Century," 47-48.
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Librarians and Teaching Faculty in Collaboration: New Incentives, New Opportunities

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ABSTRACT: New campus-wide initiatives and developing technology now provide librarians with fresh tools for supporting and assisting faculty as fellow educators. Librarians can participate in instruction activities as collaborators and by acting as teachers to the teaching faculty. Librarians can foster this interaction by cooperating in assessment and accreditation processes, and by joining in learning communities and writing programs. This article will explore ways that the librarian can partner in professional development with faculty by participating in curriculum planning and educational assessment.

Background

The changing academic environment has prompted many institutions to identify themselves as “communities of scholars” and to assign renewed value on the interrelationships of faculty, librarians, and students. New ideas about the nature of scholarship and how it is transmitted are transforming campuses, whether theologates or universities where theology or religious studies are taught, and challenging old notions of traditional roles.

Institutions have very good reasons for keeping abreast of these developments and avoiding the risk of falling behind their peers. Likewise, teaching faculty need to stay up-to-date on content and pedagogical methods or risk a decline in professional prestige. For their part, librarians need to develop collaborative strategies that keep them from becoming irrelevant in the institution.

In a 1995 article in *Theological Education*, David D. Thayer wrote of the many forces causing a “rapid process of transformation.”¹ He concluded that responding to these challenges would “necessitate a transformation of faculty identity from guild identity to interdisciplinary identity.”² If this “community of scholars” is allowed to flourish, the potential benefits for the institution could be enormous. This article suggests ways that librarians can be collaborators as teachers to both faculty and students and demonstrates the benefits for the institution.

Faculty priorities and library concerns are best seen as complementary, rather than competing. Most librarians recognize that the prospect of playing a part in the educational process has often been an important factor in their

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choice to work in an academic setting, but to make this partnership fruitful, it is librarians who will especially need to lead the effort to develop a more reciprocal relationship.

Many librarians bring with them considerable subject specialization, and many have a strong motivation to incorporate their own academic research into teaching, but there can be other factors—such as the prospect of securing tenure—that create the impetus to become more involved in teaching and learning activities. Designation of faculty status usually implies that the librarian has advanced degrees and thus has some subject expertise and presumably an interest in continuing to expand and transmit that knowledge.³

Theological librarians have long been interested in clarifying and making the most of their role as educators. In the book of essays published for the American Theological Library Association's fiftieth anniversary in 1996, Paul Schrodts stated that "the function of theological librarian is that of an educator"⁴ and declared that the library is a "parallel educational arena" with the classroom.⁵ He suggested that the theological librarian has a role akin to other educators in the institution to be educational "empowerers." Schrodts sees the ideal of the theological librarian as attaining the "level of an educator's educator—one who can also stimulate the faculty to reflection and further research."⁶

At the same time, his colleague, Louis Charles Willard, expressed his concern that the passivity of the theological librarian has encouraged teaching faculty to consider librarians to be "helpers" and "subservient," not peers. Yet Willard believed that the "relentless, irresistible onslaught of technology is transforming the playing field."⁷

Library literature published since 1996 has demonstrated both views to be correct. Librarians clearly want to achieve this ideal but are still fighting against stereotypes and old attitudes. Interest in the relationship between teaching faculty and librarians has skyrocketed since these essays were published in 1996. Over three hundred articles have been indexed in *Library Literature* with the heading "College and university libraries—Relations with faculty and curriculum." Explanations for this interest vary; many librarians have felt that teaching faculty are hostile and loath to share time in the classroom. At least one librarian has gone so far as to state that "enmity exists between librarians and teaching faculty."⁸ However, it seems more reasonable that most resistance to collaboration on the part of both teaching faculty and librarians may be due to inertia and discomfort with innovations in education.

Reasons for better collaboration

The need to increase awareness and reputation of the library to combat declining budgets and to overcome charges of irrelevancy demands that librarians begin to act as stakeholders in the institution, rather than as specta-

tors. One way to act as a stakeholder is to foster collaborative relationships with faculty. In his recent column in the *ATLA Newsletter*, “The Faculty are the Target,” Dennis Norlin stated, “unless theological librarians consciously view the faculty as the primary target for our activities, we could become irrelevant to our students, faculty, administrators, and institutions.”⁹ He outlines how he has discovered, through his involvement in a number of conferences, that many faculty are themselves relying on Google, and that this underscores the need for librarians to reconnect with faculty. Librarians can begin by “taking advantage of every opportunity to expose them to the advantages of utilizing the full range of library resources and services in their own research and in their teaching and learning activities.”¹⁰

One recent article explores how faculty/librarian partnerships have changed at the University of Manitoba. Five areas for improved collaboration are identified:

- ♦ teaching/instruction
- ♦ information services
- ♦ information technology
- ♦ research
- ♦ collections¹¹

All of these contribute to the teaching and learning endeavor and should be considered together in collaborative partnership. As librarians, we should be asking: “What knowledge and information do we have that can benefit teaching and learning on the campus?”

While the general trend of library literature assumes that most of the best opportunities for these types of educational collaboration activities present themselves to public services librarians and those who teach bibliographic instruction, others believe that there are opportunities for *any* librarian who is genuinely interested. (In many libraries, public services librarians may be the only instructors, but in others there may be librarians whose sole responsibility is instruction, while in others, all librarians—whether public or technical services—may participate in bibliographic instruction or information literacy initiatives.) For example, Antje Mays, in a column in *Against the Grain*, writes of ways that librarians whose focus is acquisitions and technical services can contribute to building a “community of teachers and learners.”¹² Of course, in many smaller theological libraries, there may only be one or two librarians, and this can make collaborative efforts seem even more seamless.

New emphasis on such collaborative initiatives as learning communities and scholarship of teaching are countering the perception that only public service and bibliographic instructors have a stake in participating in these endeavors. In 2000, the American Library Association (ALA) published a book, *The Collaborative Imperative: Librarians and Faculty Working Together in the Information Universe*, which originated in 1996 with discussions of a group of education and behavioral sciences librarians.¹³ The essays in this book are

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“premised on the observation that the world has changed.”¹⁴ These writers strongly believe that in the future, all educators—librarians and teaching faculty—will work as teams to meet new challenges created by new models of teaching and learning, especially in interdisciplinary areas.

The trend of the literature clearly indicates the need for librarians to be proactive in contributing to the learning community and in promoting collaborative initiatives with teaching faculty. Some schools have gone so far as to give a librarian the responsibility of “outreach.”¹⁵ The FIRST (Faculty Information Research Service Team) program at Texas Women’s University, designed to meet faculty information needs, has become so successful that current staffing levels are not sufficient.¹⁶

Strategies for better collaboration

Librarians as “teachers to the teachers”

Some authors have called for librarians to adhere to a concept found in the educational administration literature called “instructional leadership.” This concept originally described the functions of the principal in a school as: “defining the school’s mission, managing curriculum and instruction, promoting a positive learning environment, observing and improving instruction, and assessing the instructional program.”¹⁷ More recently, the term has been used for teachers who lead or who act as facilitators to enable *others* to become more effective teachers. Fowler and her colleagues argue that this is a valid model for librarians who may be able to coordinate instructional initiatives from outside the library with those inside the library. These instructional leaders must be able to continually monitor the campus scene for complementary initiatives outside the library and be able to communicate these to fellow librarians. Librarian instructional leaders must be able to provide “advice and expertise” to classroom faculty as peers. In a discussion of this model as it applies to instruction coordinators, but also applicable to all librarians, Fowler further details how this model has the benefit of explaining “how forces both in the profession and in higher education are affecting the roles they play in the library and on campus.”¹⁸

In many institutions, all faculty are being asked to rethink their teaching styles to incorporate new technology and the growing body of knowledge of learning styles. In some ways, librarians are positioned ideally to be effective teachers, having provided interactive modes of instruction for several years in library instruction courses. By acting as “teachers to the teachers,” librarians can have a direct effect on the educational experience of the students.

One typical initiative on many campuses is to increase technology use in the classroom. Some ATS schools are accomplishing this by participating in programs funded by The Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion. The center’s mission statement says that it seeks to strengthen

and enhance education in North American theological schools, colleges, and universities by helping faculty members and institutions keep abreast of appropriate technology that will enhance teaching and learning.¹⁹ Librarians, because they are likely to be aware of new and emerging sources of information, are natural teachers to the teaching faculty in this initiative. The new technology necessary to use these resources can serve as an enticement to get faculty to attend workshops. Coupled with sophisticated research content as well as information the instructor can use in the classroom, technology provides a platform for librarians to cooperate in professional development efforts.

Digital image and music databases are very good examples of such useful technology. Many faculty are unaware that these databases exist or how easily the technology can be used in a classroom that is prepared for technology such as Smart Podiums. Some theological faculty may be amazed at the range of images offered through such databases as ATLA's Cooperative Digital Resources Initiative,²⁰ OhioLINK's Foreign Language Video Databases,²¹ which include video clips of foreign language speakers talking about daily life in their cultures, including religious life, and other art and architecture databases including the new *Iter* database of images of baptismal fonts, *Baptisteria Sacra*, etc. Digital sound services, such as the Naxos Music Library,²² can also be used to enhance classroom teaching by incorporating musical examples from a database into church history courses, for example.

The use of technology may increase the likelihood that teaching faculty rethink teaching styles from lecture style to more interactive approaches. This shift may lead, in turn, to faculty being more open to other new ways of teaching, including team teaching or other collaborations that might involve librarians.

The "instructional leader" model may help shape a role for librarians to train faculty to provide instruction in research skills in the classroom as an integrated part of the learning experience. As the use of instructional tools such as Blackboard²³ become more pervasive, librarians often have the opportunity to team with faculty to create assignments for courses. Some schools may offer added incentives, such as curriculum development awards, that allow faculty and librarians to collaborate on incorporating information literacy assignments into a course.

To cite one example, Kara Giles at Dominican University details her collaboration as an instructor with a history professor. She was added as a "course builder" in Blackboard that provided her with all the functionality she needed, yet did not allow her to access students' grades. She used the course builder function to add her "profile and contact information, start a forum on the discussion boards, upload course documents, and initiate or respond to a threaded list on the discussion board."²⁴ Giles attended the first three-hour class session in an effort to make it clear that she was an integral part of the class

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as an instructor. She followed up with a traditional library instruction session. Her commitment to the class increased her interaction with students as an educator within the library.

In another instance, at John Carroll University (JCU), two faculty librarians have teamed with the faculty who teach First Year Seminar—a course required of all freshmen—in order to “develop exercises using library resources” for this course. If teaching faculty prefer to create their own assignments, the librarian team will “provide assistance in choosing relevant library materials, including print resources, library databases, and electronic journals,” or they will simply review any assignments created by the teaching faculty. This collaboration reduces the burden on the teaching faculty who participate in this program that often requires teaching outside of the teaching faculty’s discipline.²⁵

Another strategy for librarians to help foster effective teaching and enhance the education of students is to help teaching faculty stay up-to-date on research that may be used in teaching. Some faculty may be adept at accessing resources they need for their specialization, but not know how to keep up with changes in their teaching subjects. One faculty member remarked to me following a brief shared teaching session that the knowledge he gained would clearly make his teaching more “fresh.” Informal surveys and interviews of the religious studies faculty where I work indicate that each of them has different comfort levels and abilities when it comes to using new resources or resources that are familiar but are offered in new technological formats. In some cases, librarians may serve as “research consultants” with faculty.

It is not unusual for faculty to arrive at our campuses already knowing how to use databases and online catalogs, yet we need to remember that our offerings of the same services in a different package may confuse them. One faculty member at a liberal arts school has written that though she felt competent using databases at her larger graduate school and believed that she had access to much more than she had at her new school, she was surprised when librarians at her school showed her how she could access many of the same resources and have online access to titles she was used to having in print. She notes that regarding library use that involves technology, “would-be mentors in my department are less able to help me on this score.”²⁶

A third-year faculty member at my institution (in a department other than religious studies) recently disclosed to me that he had done almost no research since he was hired, yet at the large research institution where he received his Ph.D. he did database searches everyday. He just did not know how to access the same databases he had used before and no faculty in his department had provided any support in this area. Librarians are well positioned to provide this kind of mentoring, as they are continually required to stay abreast of new developments with the research resources they provide for all constituencies of the institution.

Some faculty may have never learned to use online databases at all. A recent survey of my religious studies department showed that two of twelve faculty members did not feel comfortable using the *ATLA Religion Database*. Further, some theological faculty may be very adept at using the specialized database of their discipline, particularly ATLA-RDB, but may be totally unaware of broader-based databases that can provide more appropriate information in some cases. For example, RLG's *Francis* database²⁷ covers many journals that are not specifically theological, but may carry occasional articles on topics that a theologian would find of interest. *Iter*, the database that describes itself as "the gateway to the Middle Ages and Renaissance,"²⁸ also provides coverage of articles on theology of which theological faculty are often unaware.

The recent advent of electronic selection tools offered by vendors provides librarians with a chance to help teaching faculty enhance their research or teaching activities. Whether or not the library wants to gain the increased participation in selection and collection development that use of these tools often engender, the librarian can promote this as a way to enhance the teaching faculty's research. Profiles that match the faculty member's areas of interest can be established, either narrowly or broadly. For example, in our library, one faculty member wants to retrieve only selection slips that have a specific classification number or one subject heading. This is a little unusual, yet matches his research needs closely. Other faculty members want to retrieve a much broader group of slips than we were able to deliver in the past with paper slips, and also have interdisciplinary retrieval.

Often the simple process of setting up the profiles can reinforce the idea of librarian as collaborator with teaching faculty. Librarians can indicate that they have an understanding of the teaching faculty's area of interest and that they desire to enhance research that in turn enhances teaching effectiveness. One librarian reports "conversations with faculty concerning their material selections allowed librarians to obtain details about the course for which the faculty sought the material. Sometimes the material is for a faculty member's own research, and such revelation can also allow for improved relationships with faculty."²⁹ If nothing else, providing such a program can be the opportunity to improve public relations with teaching faculty and demonstrate the technological leadership of the library that aids more effective teaching and learning.

Similarly, many faculty members keep up-to-date with journal articles in their fields, but even the most technologically savvy faculty are often unfamiliar with dissemination services such as journal alerts provided by several journal aggregators like EBSCOhost³⁰. The teaching faculty I have taught to use these services agree that they are extremely beneficial in keeping their courses fresh with new material. Sometimes inter-library loan librarians are in the best position to discover which high-volume borrowers might be targeted for teaching this service.

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Librarians as teachers to the students

Librarians have often taught bibliographic instruction or research methods, ranging from one-hour overviews to semester-long courses. Beyond that, many other possibilities may exist. In cases where librarians have faculty status, opportunities might occur for them to teach non-bibliographic courses. The library faculty at John Carroll University are required to provide two instructors for the required First Year Seminar program for freshmen. This is a two-year commitment to an interdisciplinary program, described as follows:

Through its content and its method the seminar emphasizes central elements of the university mission: integrating various branches of knowledge; forming whole persons; creating informed, compassionate citizens who are committed to serving others; extending the boundaries of individual and shared knowledge; conserving the earth and its resources; expanding the possibilities of human community.³¹

Since all departments are required to supply instructors for this program, most professors end up teaching outside of their discipline. This has helped to break down traditional barriers between teaching and library faculty even further.

Information literacy for students is the chief area where librarians have collaborated with teaching faculty. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) standards state "incorporating information literacy across curricula, in all programs and services, and throughout the administrative life of the university, requires the collaborative efforts of faculty, librarians and administrators."³² Douglas Gragg, in his article in this issue, "Information Literacy in Theological Education," provides a history and methodology of this topic.³³

In some cases, even casual comments made while working with faculty will lead to opportunities beyond the ordinary. For example, recently a graduate assistant approached me for information about which audio CDs we might have with religious music. I discovered that a teaching faculty member was lecturing on American Protestantism and seeking musical examples that might go along with topics on which he was lecturing. I gave the graduate assistant a copy of some handouts I had prepared for a portion of an ATLA workshop on "Sacred Music and Hymnody of the Christian Church" thinking it would help her identify some songs from our collection. A few days later, the professor called to see if I was interested in guest lecturing.

In some institutions, librarians may be encouraged to teach within the discipline of their second subject degree. All faculty at John Carroll University are eligible to apply for Summer Course Development Fellowships that provide a stipend and require two consecutive months of full-time course development work in the summer. This past year, I submitted a proposal to develop a course on Catholicism and music that will explore the use of music in the Catholic tradition, concentrate on such topics as the theology of music in

Catholic documents, and look at the ways in which Catholicism and Catholic music influence the wider musical culture. I have been interested in pursuing research on this topic for several years and the opportunity to present a section on “Catholic Music Since Vatican II” during an ATLA workshop on “Sacred Music and Hymnody of the Christian Church” gave me the chance to develop some ideas for the semester-long course. The proposal was granted and I will be teaching the course during the next year.

Other opportunities through campus-wide initiatives

Outside forces such as assessment programs and changing models of organizational strategy can also create new venues for librarian/teaching faculty collaboration. New initiatives, such as the development of learning communities, centers for scholarship of teaching and learning, writing programs, new faculty orientation, service learning, and information repositories all offer ways for librarians to participate in institution-transforming groups. This changing scene creates opportunities for librarians to establish contacts that lead to collaboration. Sometimes working with these programs has a broader appeal that individual collaborations do not. The fact that such initiatives often have a high campus profile makes the opportunity for the library and librarians to participate even more attractive.

In her article on establishing campus partnerships, Patricia Iannuzzi lists three steps to becoming engaged in campus-wide initiatives:

- ♦ keep informed,
- ♦ meet the key people,
- ♦ get involved.³⁴

There is no doubt that being actively involved in the academic life of an institution is invaluable when it comes to building partnerships. When teaching faculty see that a librarian has an interest in the same issues and they have a valuable exchange of ideas, more and better opportunities for collaboration are created.

The push to develop assessment programs is an area where librarians can partner with other academic departments. Required by accreditation agencies, assessments are mandated in many institutions. Most departments will have a goal of developing students’ academic skills such as research techniques. Often, librarians can help departments identify specific resources students should master to exhibit competency in a field in order to meet assessment goals. Librarians can provide appropriate ways to measure these outcomes and probe ways that they can assist departments in teaching these skills. At many institutions, the library itself may be required to provide an assessment document. This gives a library an opportunity to determine if it meets the goals of its mission in terms of teaching and learning and that of the institution it serves. When new academic programs are considered, librarians should evaluate with teaching faculty the resources that are available to support these

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programs and make recommendations for developing collections in support of these programs. Teaching faculty will not be able to be effective in the classroom if the collection is not adequate.

Librarians can demonstrate interest in collaboration by participating in programs such as celebrations of scholarship designed to enhance the culture of scholarship on campus. At JCU, librarians are encouraged to present research during the program that celebrates “the commitment of John Carroll faculty members and students to the life of the mind in research, in teaching and in professional competency”.³⁵ This program, which includes faculty, staff, and students, clearly promotes a culture of collegiality and mutual respect for all teaching and learning and professional competency.

Another recent initiative on many campuses is to establish interdisciplinary courses or groups of courses that are team-taught. Although some schools may discourage this movement because they perceive it to be especially labor intensive, faculty members at schools where it is encouraged find the process to be very rewarding, often enhancing their own specialized research. Librarians may be welcomed to meet with teaching faculty in such communities and offer to pursue this kind of collaboration where they have the expertise and interest. This interdisciplinary approach has the effect of changing the way faculty teach and research, and it often generates opportunities for librarians to establish contacts that can lead to still further collaboration, perhaps even team-teaching a course.

Many schools are developing programs that encourage scholarship of teaching and many provide grants and fellowships to pursue this scholarship. For example, The CASTL Campus Program, a joint effort of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and The American Association for Higher Education, works with institutions of all types that are prepared to make a public commitment to foster and support the scholarship of teaching and learning. Through this program, campuses work together to cultivate the conditions needed for such work.³⁶ Librarians may be eligible to participate in such programs. When librarians participate with teaching faculty in these groups, there is a mutual growth in understanding of the roles of both groups and how they intersect, including providing clearer understandings about how the library can strengthen its resources and programs and about how librarians support the curriculum. Teaching faculty may develop a better grasp of the many ways librarians provide this support for teaching and learning. If librarians participate in programs designed to promote teaching excellence, teaching faculty will grow to understand that this is an area consistent with being a librarian. Offers to collaborate on a course, guest lecture, or even develop a course are possible outcomes from this connection.

Challenges

What are some of the challenges that are anticipated in the literature on library-faculty collaboration?

First, librarians are often not provided with an adequate foundation to be teachers. Library schools generally teach about library instruction, but do not provide the means to actually learn how to teach more broadly. Some schools are beginning to remedy this by providing practicum or assistantships for graduate students who teach.³⁷ However, while teaching effectiveness cannot be taught in a single class, it is useful to recall that teaching faculty rarely have had courses on the art of teaching either. Librarians can learn to be effective teachers by observing colleagues (both teaching faculty and librarians) whose teaching style they respect, studying learning styles, giving presentations and workshops at professional conferences, sitting in on classes as a student, and by the age-old method, practice.

Second, it is clear that sometimes teaching faculty do not perceive that librarians have the expertise or ability to teach or to collaborate in teaching/learning activities. Often, it has simply not occurred to faculty that academic librarians are partners in the educational enterprise. This perception can be individual, departmental, or a pervasive campus-wide climate. There is no consensus regarding theological faculty perceptions of this type of collaboration. Dennis Norlin suggests that theology faculty are used to working independently even from their undergraduate days and that the "humanities' research climate remains one of relative privacy, solitude, and competitive endeavor."³⁸ Yet a study done by the University of Manitoba suggests that scholars in the sciences may be more loath to collaborate with librarians and quotes Rebecca Kellogg: "Scientists will have few interactions with librarians due to the nature of their work. Humanists will have had a much greater number of interactions, since the library is essentially their laboratory."³⁹

No matter what perceptions apply in a given situation, however, librarians need to take responsibility for the promotion of their own knowledge and skills and must take the initiative in fostering strategic relationships. While all librarians might not want to pursue the kind of commitment this kind of collaboration entails, those who do often develop the respect of their teaching faculty colleagues and engage in collaborative projects that are valuable to all involved.

Benefits

For libraries, librarians, and institutions that participate in any of these types of collaborations, substantial benefits are gained. Libraries achieve higher visibility on campus. Literature on the phenomenon of irrelevancy of the library in higher education indicates that an alarming percentage of

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students erroneously believe that everything they need can be found on the Internet. The greater the inability or unwillingness to challenge and overturn such misconceptions, the more likely it becomes that libraries will be targeted for cutbacks. A higher visibility and improved profile as collaborators in education will go a long way toward helping libraries withstand such challenges.

Carefully planned and well-conducted types of collaboration often place librarians in positions to have more of an impact in policy-making for the institution. This can be beneficial to the library when decisions are made that influence its prospects and profile directly.

Some librarians may desire to pursue these types of collaboration because it is advantageous to the library, others because they feel it will enhance their professional reputations as valuable colleagues of the teaching faculty, thus providing more opportunities to have their voice heard in policy- or decision-making arenas on campus. Still others may feel it is a way to raise their status or enhance their chance of receiving promotion or tenure, or that it provides an outlet for sharing expertise on a subject of particular and sustained interest. In other cases, there may be present the strong vocational desire to pursue, as John Paul II says of the vocation of the university, "a common love of knowledge" and to share in the "joy of searching for, discovering and communicating truth in every field of knowledge."⁴⁰ Whether for any of these reasons, or simply for the sake of enjoying increased participation in the educational enterprise of teaching and learning, there is no shortage of opportunities or strategic benefits.

Summary and conclusion

"How do we create a climate where the contributions of librarians to teaching and learning are recognized, expected, and valued by the teaching faculty across the academy? The answer is always the same: by seeking collaborative opportunities with faculty all the time."⁴¹

In her response to a presentation by Richard Danner at an ATLA plenary session in 1999 on "Redefining a Profession," Sharon Taylor stated that "we need to think more consciously of ourselves as theological educators. Perhaps that is a more natural role for directors or others in the library who are also faculty members, but I believe that every member of the library staff needs to re-image themselves into a mindset of theological education."⁴²

For institutions, the positive impact of quality collaborations can be enormous. David Thayer states "theologates need to identify themselves as dynamic communities of scholars within which individuals can exercise their talents in a manner that promotes individual satisfaction while understanding that such satisfaction arises only in relationship to others and fulfills the changing needs of the institution as well as scholarship itself."⁴³ By doing all

possible to promote collaboration, more voices are heard in the decision-making process, voices that can help to inform better decisions. More members of the community, particularly librarians, will feel they are stakeholders, increasing and realizing collegiality in a community of scholars.

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ENDNOTES

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Is There a Strategic Alliance in Your Future? Lessons Learned from Library Consortia

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ABSTRACT: Library consortia are working examples of mutually beneficial strategic alliances between two or more institutions. Theological libraries are active members of many different consortia, and their experiences can be drawn upon as theological institutions face growing financial pressures. In particular, the need to improve technological capacity has been one of the primary shaping forces in the creation of library consortia. This article examines how library consortia have helped to address this need for library service, with considerations on what implications there might also be for the institution as a whole.

Introduction

Not long ago, an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, “Worldly Challenges for Theology Schools,”¹ featured a particular school with a plight shared by many schools today—a shrinking endowment and increasing costs. In the face of this challenge, theological schools—and, in fact, all higher education institutions—have had to come up with new ways to do more with less. A separate *Chronicle* article proposes partnerships between institutions or, in current parlance, “strategic alliances” as a solution.²

Many may not realize it, but most schools already have a strategic alliance with another institution. To find it, one need look no further than the library. Libraries have been forging strategic alliances with libraries at other institutions for decades³ and continue to do so together.⁴ Although libraries usually call these arrangements “consortia,” chances are that your school’s library already belongs to one or more.

Although these “worldly challenges” result from many different needs, acquiring technological capacity is one of the biggest. This need is the focus of this article. Many library consortia, past and present, were created to address technology-related issues.⁵ How are these consortia faring in the new technological environment? How are new technologies influencing the development of consortia, for good or for bad? What can be learned here by the institution as a whole? Is there a strategic alliance/consortial endeavor in your school’s future?

Activities of theological library consortia

“Consortium” is an ambiguous word that ranges in meaning from a group of libraries whose staff members get together to share ideas, to libraries that enter together into legal, contractual agreements, either with each other or with a third-party vendor. The American Theological Library Association (ATLA) lists no fewer than nineteen regional groups⁶ that actually function as consortia, even if the word “consortium” does not appear in the group’s name. The activities of most of these groups fall into the more “casual” end of the consortial spectrum. Many meet to share the latest news or solutions to problems and sometimes sponsor professional development workshops. The Chicago Area Theological Association has one unique activity: sharing a “hygrothermograph,” a piece of equipment used to measure environmental conditions for the preservation of materials.

Four regional groups, however, offer reciprocal borrowing privileges. Reciprocal borrowing is an agreement that allows the students and faculty at one institution to borrow materials directly (e.g., in person) from the library of another institution. These agreements do not require the exchange of any funds and require mutual goodwill more than anything else. In the case of the Boston Theological Institute and the Washington Theological Consortium libraries, the parent institutions belong to consortia that allow cross-registration for classes. Reciprocal borrowing in this case is a natural extension of these cross-registration privileges.

Besides these regional groups, I know of two instances where institutions share a common library. The Jesuit-Krauss-McCormick Library in Chicago is one of these and the library of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley—my own place of work—is the other. The “common library” concept can be thought of as a single administrative unit that manages the library collections and services of two or more institutions. A common library can exist even before an actual library building exists, but the key is that staff report to the same person and there is one, single budget. The Jesuit-Krauss-McCormick Library Trust was established in 1993, but only recently were all the library collections consolidated. In the same way, the GTU Library has existed since 1969, but the actual Flora Lamson Hewlett Library building was built much later. The common library is an unusual concept, not just among theological libraries but among academic libraries in general. In the early 1970s, fifteen library consortia were chosen from a nationwide survey of library consortia by the U.S. Department of Education for an in-depth study,⁷ and of historical note is the fact that a theological library—the library of the Graduate Theological Union—was among these. It is geography more than denominational affiliation that tends to gather libraries into consortia. Clearly, geographical proximity is a critical element for the success of reciprocal borrowing or a common library, but there are other reasons that consortia cross theological boundaries.

First of all, libraries serve users who want to read books written from many different perspectives, even (or especially) by people who have beliefs that differ from their own. In this way, there is actually more to be gained from cooperating with a library that is different, theologically speaking, than with a library that is the same. By sharing resources with another library, users can gain access to a broader spectrum of resources. Secondly, the skills and resources needed to manage a library for a Baptist institution are not substantially different from the skills and resources needed to manage a library for, say, the Orthodox Church. Given these factors, the bonds that most naturally grow are the connections with one's nearest neighbors.

The case of the disappearing distances

We live in a time, however, when physical distances present less and less of an obstacle to human interaction. Even library resources are confined no longer to the printed page but can be electronic, traveling swiftly across international networks. Nowadays, a large portion of library budgets are spent on electronic resources. These can be accessed from the comfort of home via the Internet and, indeed, our students increasingly demand this convenience.

Meanwhile, "distance" has taken on a new meaning for people. It often seems to mean "further than my front doorstep." Once upon a time (really, fewer than ten years ago) libraries could proudly point to reciprocal borrowing agreements with other libraries. We would send our users to those libraries to get the books our library did not have. Now, however, when other libraries are delivering some of those resources to the homes of users electronically, our users want that same service. Now, even being asked to go to the library next door seems to be asking for too much.

Unfortunately, electronic resources are licensed from vendors; the library does not own them but rather pays a fee for access to the digital content. The use of electronic resources cannot be controlled in the same way as a single copy of a physical book. Access is controlled by contracts rather than by physical limitations. For example, if a library licenses access to the ATLA Religion Database, then the contract will state to whom the library can or cannot provide access. Because the library does not own its databases, it thus is not free to give them away (or, for that matter, resell the information). This is understandable because it is technologically possible for a library to open its web resources to the entire world and if it did that, the rest of the market would disappear. At that same time, this is a new kind of restriction upon the use of materials that libraries have not had to face before.

Furthermore, the license fee for an electronic resource is usually based upon the number of students at an institution and/or the number of institutions included in the license. For example, if the total number of students is twice as great, the licensing fee may well be twice as much. Moreover, even if

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two theological libraries decide to get together to license that database, the vendor will usually still consider the two institutions as two instead of one and charge accordingly, regardless of the total number of students.

In reality, reciprocal borrowing is still a great benefit for the users of libraries, but its perceived value seems to have diminished as users clamor for access to electronic resources from home. Since reciprocal borrowing does involve some extra work for each library, is it still worth it? Whatever the ultimate answer, the question does have a certain dampening effect on consortial energy.

Vendors are open to opportunities, however. If enough institutions cooperate and promise enough new subscribers to a product that the vendor offers, then most vendors will pay attention and show at least some flexibility. In fact, this willingness of vendors to give a break to “bulk” subscribers has, ironically, given rise to a new kind of consortium. In this consortium, institutions seek sufficient “clout” to entice the vendor to lower its prices. Theological libraries have gathered together and joined in a shared license for certain religion-related databases. The American Theological Library Association is a licensing agent for these institutions. Libraries, however, do not need to share geography or even subject specialty to cooperate in this way. For example, the GTU library purchases its electronic database subscriptions through the Statewide California Electronic Library Consortium (SCELC), a consortium of private research and higher education institutions in California. Through SCELC, we cooperate not only with theological libraries, but with academic libraries at private colleges and universities, art institutes, medical libraries, and other private research institutions.

Virtual reference

New technologies have created the potential to attract more students, and in this way have made distance education a hot idea for institutions. Access to library services, however, could be the Achilles heel of distance education programs. First of all, the book has not yet disappeared from theological inquiry and is arguably still the best medium for the kind of information prevalent in theological study. So far, the e-book has not proved itself to be cheaper or substantially better than the codex,⁸ but someday—conceivably even someday soon—all that may change. The real problem is that good “access” refers not only to the ability to obtain materials, but also the ability to figure out what one needs and how to find it. Students require as much help as ever, if not more, to find information and evaluate its quality. Libraries in theological schools share in the educational mission of the school⁹ and the role of the librarian is to empower students to be independent researchers and to equip students for lifelong learning, but it is very difficult to provide this kind of guidance in a distance learning environment.

What about “virtual reference”? In a virtual reference service, a user at a remote site can connect in a real time environment to a librarian. The software for this kind of service already exists (although it is not fully mature) and consortia of libraries have already begun to offer this kind of service. Developing and/or paying for software to have one’s own service would be beyond the resources of theological libraries, let alone staffing it all week long. Would this then be a candidate for a consortial effort? It should not be overlooked that library consortia, until now, have almost all been concerned with the technical side of library operations: cataloging, purchasing materials, licensing databases, automation, and creating digital archives. This is because economies of scale have not existed for the public side of library service—especially for helping students find information for research papers—but virtual reference services are changing this. Most existing virtual reference services are consortial efforts; however, the libraries that belong to these consortia are mostly public libraries. Some academic libraries are also participating, including a handful of theological libraries. In 2003, the ATLA Public Services Interest Group’s Virtual Reference Task Force, of which I was a member, set out to determine if a consortium of theological libraries could provide a virtual reference service to the students of member schools. Consider, however, that public libraries and, to some extent, even public academic institutions have as part of their mission a mandate to assist the general public. The mission of ATLA libraries is to serve the students and faculty of their *own* schools, not the students and faculty of other theological schools. Therefore, joining one of these existing consortia did not make sense to most theological libraries because this would require fielding questions that mostly came from the outside. Only a tiny fraction would be from the school’s students and faculty. Even a virtual reference consortium of theological libraries would require answering questions for other schools’ students and faculty. Most libraries balked at this idea. In the end, the Task Force concluded that no clear mandate existed from ATLA member libraries to form a cooperative virtual reference service. Virtual reference appears to be an idea whose time has not yet come for theological libraries.

Intellectual capital

One benefit that could have been gained from joining in a virtual reference consortium with public and academic libraries would have been a gain in technical expertise. Someday, the economics of such a service could become more manageable, or even if not, students might come to expect such a service. “Intellectual capital” can be defined as “everything an organization knows...ideas, different kinds of knowledge, and innovations.”¹⁰ This expertise in virtual reference would have been intellectual capital for theological libraries. For-profit organizations have begun to recognize that intellectual capital is an asset, just like the organization’s physical assets.

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In the 1970s, consortia provided access to expensive mainframe computers and access to the technical expertise needed to do things with those computers. Even though the cost of the hardware is vastly cheaper today (with vastly more power), the need for technical expertise has not gone away. This is particularly true for theological libraries where the typical staff size is on the order of three to five professional staff members. This handful of people must take care of myriad specialized needs for the library. Most theological librarians today wear more than one hat. In a larger library, four different people might be in charge of those specialized tasks, but most theological libraries simply cannot afford that level of staffing.

Still, even in a small theological library, all those tasks need to be done. Even small libraries require a diverse set of specialized skills to be effective today. Through library consortia, even small libraries can gain access to technological expertise. For example, the Cooperative Digital Resources Initiative (CDRI) is an initiative to create a shared repository of digitized images of ATLA member library holdings. ATLA provides some technical assistance and helps to manage the image files. This assistance enables libraries with staff with no previous experience to digitize archival materials and make those images available to the world. This is one example where pooling technology resources has enabled individual libraries to do more than they could do on their own.

An IT consortium of theological schools?

It is not just the library that requires an increasingly diverse set of technical skills. The same can be said of the technology needs of theological institutions as a whole. While in an earlier day a school just needed faculty and a few administrators (usually former faculty), today even a small school needs many specialists: webmasters, network engineers, and database programmers to name a few. Information technology (IT) expertise has become part of the intellectual capital necessary to run an institution. Is it possible for theological schools to form consortia that pool technological expertise?

One can already see a budding example. For three years, the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning Theology and Religion (at Wabash College, Indiana) managed a consortial license for Blackboard, a course management system. Thirty-two different theological schools throughout the U.S. participated in this consortial license. These schools were brought together by a grant from the Lilly Endowment, "Information Technology for Theological Teaching." For a very reasonable annual cost, the schools shared one Blackboard system license. System administration was centralized and taken care of by Wabash College IT staff. This was a successful effort, and now that the grant period has ended, plans are underway to move the license to the care of Fisher's Net in Minneapolis-St. Paul.

At this point, we move purely into the area of speculation, but it is worth noting that it is already possible for small businesses to outsource all of their IT functions to companies that specialize in doing this. There is no need for even the main server to be on campus anymore. So, might there be some way for theological schools to work out a strategic alliance here? I do not know the answer to this, but it is worth considering.

Any consortial effort also creates a new set of issues to solve: how will costs be allocated? Who is in charge? Does the consortium need its own staff? It is no secret that library consortia have their downsides; Thomas A. Peters humorously describes some of these in his 2003 article, "Consortia and Their Discontents."¹¹ Too many meetings and difficulty in making decisions in a timely fashion are just two of the common complaints. These same complaints plague consortia of any kind. For example, an article in a 2003 edition of the *San Francisco Chronicle* wrote that the *Chronicle* was one of the last major daily newspapers to modernize its printing technology.¹² For years it shared its printing operation with its *competitor*, the *San Francisco Examiner*. Even though they were competitors, the shared printing operation saved money for both newspapers. Unfortunately, the two newspapers could rarely agree on joint changes or capital expenses. Only when both of the newspapers were sold and the agreement ended was the *Chronicle* finally able to update its operations.

Standardization is another difficult adjustment that members of consortia have to make, however this is the grease that makes consortial wheels run smoothly. Libraries realized this long ago. Long before technology made consortia blossom in the 1960s, libraries were laying the foundation for things we take for granted today: a common classification system, standards for machine-readable data, and standards for entry of names, titles, and other parts of the bibliographic record. Librarians were already forming professional networks with one another, nurturing common values through professional education and creating a culture of resource-sharing. Thus, when technology made things like on-line catalogs possible, all the pieces for further collaboration were already in place.

The benefits of consortia do not come cheaply, and so it is always important to keep an eye on the bigger picture. At GTU, for example, the creation of a common library was not a cost-saving measure; it grew out of a belief in the common good and out of a vision for something that could be greater than the sum of its parts. This vision in turn grew out of a larger social context:

With the post-World War II period...came a rise in ecumenical sensitivities and cooperation. The war had brought devastation, displacement of populations, and disruption of church organizations in Europe. The global church community responded with the formation of the World Council of Churches (begun prior to the war, but not completed until after) in the Protestant tradition, and the Vatican II Council in the Catholic tradition, 1962-65. The understanding of theological educa-

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tion, too, began to shift away from denominational isolation to a more ecumenical approach. Seminaries began to understand the advantages of working in cooperation to strengthen curricula and advanced degree programs. Consortia of seminaries began to form in major cities throughout the United States during the 1960s.¹³

Conclusion

Just the other day, a library user came to the reference desk and asked if I could help her locate a copy of a book about the life of Mary Baker Eddy. The first edition of this book was easy to find; in fact our library owned one, but the person wished to find a copy of the second edition. This rare second edition had a controversial preface that differed from the preface in the first edition. This person had a reference to the second edition that gave a year and publisher. I looked this up on the WorldCat database. (WorldCat is a huge database that combines the holdings of thousands of libraries around the world.) It was an easy task to find who owned this rare edition—in fact only one copy was listed in the database. Not only this, but I could see that the reference was incorrect, as the second edition's publisher and date of publication were different.

This was a simple five-minute transaction, but it struck me that it was made possible by the cooperative work of thousands of libraries that had been working together for more than four decades. If that was not enough, there I sat in the GTU library, a library born of a strategic alliance of theological schools and now one of the finest theological libraries in the western United States—no mean feat for an institution only forty years old. This vividly illustrates how the sum is truly greater than its parts. No theological library exists unto itself; no institution exists without the help of others. Through thoughtful and intentional collaboration, strategic alliances between libraries or between institutions can not only take us through these difficult economic times, they can take us to places we could never have gone alone.

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ENDNOTES

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Information Literacy in Theological Education¹

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ABSTRACT: Digital technology has made much academic work faster and easier and has provided tools for delivering information to students more efficiently, conveniently, and engagingly. It has also presented new challenges, however, that most educators have only begun to recognize and address. The sheer volume of information now available and the unevenness of its quality and reliability present strategic and critical challenges that students must learn how to manage. A metaphor to describe the ability to manage such challenges that has gained currency in recent years, particularly among librarians, is information literacy. This article describes the emergence of the information literacy agenda out of the work of librarians and other educators, indicates the distinctive shape it has taken in higher education in general, and proposes a practical model for applying it to theological education.

Toward the end of the fifteenth century, European literate culture was transformed by a technological revolution—the invention of movable type as a means of mass-producing printed materials more quickly and less expensively than ever before imagined. Five hundred years later, in the closing decades of the twentieth century, another revolution in information technology occurred that is presently transforming world culture. The current transformation, driven by the digitization and electronic transfer of information across global networks at high speed, is so radical that we have come to call our own new era simply “the information age.”

Humanists and theologians at the dawn of the sixteenth century were quick to exploit the new technology at their disposal in support of their scholarly and educational aims. New critical editions and vernacular translations of classical and biblical texts as well as commentaries, grammars, and many other sorts of educational and polemical books, pamphlets, and tracts flowed from the new European presses, facilitating rapid and wide dissemination of information and ideas. Those of us involved in humanistic and theological education at the beginning of the twenty-first century have been eager to exploit the newest information technologies in a similar way. We are using digital technology not only to produce *printed* materials at a rate that would have boggled the minds of our early modern forebears, but also to search that vast corpus quickly and efficiently by means of electronic databases. Further, we are wiring classrooms, learning how to use course management and presentation software with increasing effectiveness, designing web pages,

producing electronic journals, delivering electronic reserves, and conducting electronic colloquies with colleagues and students across town or around the world.

The new technologies have made much of our academic work faster and easier and have provided tools for delivering information to students more efficiently, conveniently, and engagingly. We will do well to exploit as aggressively as possible the educational value of these tools and the even more sophisticated ones that are sure to follow. We must also recognize, however, that the new technologies have presented us and our students with significant new challenges that we have only begun to address. Learning how to use the technologies to the greatest advantage is, of course, one of these. A more fundamental challenge, however, is what we might call the new information "landscape" created by digital technology, a landscape with seemingly endless horizons and vistas. The sheer volume of information now available and the unevenness of its quality and reliability present strategic and critical challenges that we must help our students learn how to manage. A metaphor to describe the ability to manage those challenges that has gained currency in recent years, particularly among librarians, is *information literacy*. In this article, I briefly describe the emergence of the information literacy agenda out of the work of librarians and other educators, indicate the distinctive shape that agenda has taken in higher education in general, and propose a practical model for applying it to theological education.

From library orientation to information literacy

During the past thirty years or so, academic librarians have become increasingly conscious of their role as educators. Before the 1970s, the standard approach to library instruction in higher education was to provide *library orientation* sessions for new students at the beginning of their studies and then to provide individual reference assistance as requested. Orientation sessions typically included introduction to the physical layout of the library and the arrangement of materials; to basic use of the card catalog, periodical indexes, and selected reference works; to pertinent library policies; and to library staff who could be consulted for assistance as needed. Verbal instruction was sometimes supplemented by printed handouts or handbooks that students were encouraged to consult later on their own.

In the 1970s, librarians began launching campaigns to persuade school administrators and faculty (and sometimes one another) that library orientation and individual reference assistance, though certainly necessary, were not enough to meet students' needs. The *bibliographic instruction* movement, which gained momentum in the 1970s and peaked in the 1980s, encouraged librarians to move beyond the role of passive facilitators "on call" to that of active teachers of library research skills. Intermediate and advanced bibliographic instruction

("BI") sessions were offered, allowing librarians to provide training beyond the basics not only to individual students "on the fly" but also to groups of students more systematically. Although such sessions typically took place in the library, some faculty members allowed librarians to visit their classes once or twice a semester to provide instruction. This reflected a growing sense that library instruction needed to be more closely related to classroom instruction and assignments.

By the late 1980s, "BI" had established itself as a standard component of library service. Some librarians had even persuaded administrators and curriculum committees that courses in library research skills should be offered for academic credit at their institutions. The 1980s also saw, however, the automation of library catalogs and indexes and the arrival of network connectivity. With the 1990s came the Internet. These technological advances increased access to information exponentially, creating more complex instructional challenges. At the most basic level, students (and faculty!) needed to know how to use the new technologies to access the mushrooming volume of information that was now, literally, at their fingertips. Beyond that, however, the new situation presented *strategic* challenges, especially to new researchers. With so many databases and search engines available, where does one begin? With so much information within reach, how does one decide where to stop and what to use? How does one judge the reliability of information that can now be "published" electronically without subjection to editorial or peer review?

In response to such challenges the concept of *information literacy* gained currency in the 1990s as a metaphor to (re)describe one of the fundamental intended outcomes of education. A definition of information literacy proposed in 1989 in the *Final Report* of the American Library Association's Presidential Committee on Information Literacy proved to be influential:

Out of the super-abundance of available information, people need to be able to obtain specific information to meet a wide range of personal and business needs. . . . To be information literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information. . . . Ultimately, information literate people are those who have learned how to learn. . . . They are people prepared for lifelong learning, because they can always find the information needed for any task or decision at hand.²

Key concepts here are "locating, evaluating, and using information effectively," "learning how to learn," and "lifelong learning." Such concepts led librarians to rethink their instructional objectives. Many concluded that teaching *critical thinking* is fundamental to achieving these outcomes. The globalization of information access has made critical thinking the most essential survival skill in the information age, they argued, because it enables one to become a confident, discriminating navigator of the information labyrinth. Critical think-

ing is required to design appropriate search strategies, to select from the sea of possibilities the information that will best meet one's need, to make judgments about the reliability of information and its sources, and to deploy information wisely and effectively in argumentation or problem-solving. Critical thinking skills empower students to become active, independent, lifelong learners.³

Librarians advocating information literacy found natural allies among educational theorists who had long stressed that students should be helped not only to learn but also to learn how to learn.⁴ There is, of course, nothing particularly profound or counterintuitive about this recommendation, nor is there anything especially novel about the desirability of fostering students' independent learning skills. What information literacy advocates emphasized, however, was that in the new information landscape (as I referred to it earlier), the task of fostering such skills had become both more complicated and more urgent. Information literacy proponents considered it unfortunate, therefore, that most instructors in higher education continued to rely almost exclusively on traditional teaching methods that emphasize the controlled transfer of information through lectures, textbooks, and other assigned readings. Assignments designed to help students learn how to select, evaluate, and deploy information independently were rare by comparison. The traditional term paper, often imagined to meet this need, was routinely assigned by instructors with little reflection on how students were supposed to acquire the information management skills needed to complete it or on how it might prepare them for personal or professional life beyond the classroom. Librarians suspected (rightly, as it turns out)⁵ that the average student's ability to manage relevant information was far less developed than either students themselves or their professors believed.

It became increasingly obvious to information literacy advocates that the desire to help students become competent managers of information was a *broad educational goal* that librarians could not achieve on their own; it was going to require the committed involvement of both teaching faculty and academic administrators. Correspondingly, education for information literacy could not be construed simply as a program of the library, but had to be understood as a fundamental component of a school's academic mission. It made sense, however, for librarians to exercise leadership in the development of strategies for achieving the goal in light of their training and practical experience in helping students learn how to conduct research. In the next section, I clarify further what the information literacy model entails, particularly as it has been applied by librarians working with their colleagues in higher education.

Information literacy in higher education

Consider the following scenario: A professor assigns a term paper without offering much instruction on how to find, select, evaluate, and use information

relevant to the topic because she assumes that her students either know how to do this already or will ask a librarian for help. Later in the semester, shortly before the paper is due, a reference librarian encounters one of the students wandering through the library with a confused expression. The librarian offers assistance and the student asks, "Does the library have any books on women's health?" The librarian invites the student to sit down and explain more about the assignment. It turns out that the student is supposed to write a paper that compares the incidence of breast cancer in the United States and in Japan. The librarian shows the student how to use the library catalog and a couple of serials databases to locate relevant material and silently hopes for a miracle. Perhaps this student, who seems to have few clues about how to find—much less select, evaluate, and use—information effectively, will actually succeed in this assignment.

This scenario may seem contrived to some, but experienced librarians know that it is distressingly common. Our imaginary student, let us say, will have attended the required library orientation session at the beginning of the year but likely has not used the skills that were demonstrated there frequently enough in the meantime to retain them. Like most fellow students, she did not attend any of the library workshops that offered further training. The need did not seem great enough at the time to justify the expenditure of time and effort. The academic advisor had recommended taking the elective course on general research methods, but that had sounded a bit boring and there had just been too many other courses to take.

As educators, we might be tempted to conclude that the fault in this case lies with the student who failed to take advantage of opportunities to learn. We might be tempted further, therefore, to make participation in such training opportunities mandatory for all students. Advocates of the information literacy model would agree that students bear final responsibility for what they do or do not learn. They would also have much to say, however, about the limitations of the opportunities offered (orientation sessions, library workshops, methods courses) and would not necessarily be in favor of making those particular forms of training mandatory. For one thing, they would point out that the instruction offered in those forms of training—as valuable as it may be otherwise—is nevertheless *decontextualized* instruction; that is, it does not offer students help in relation to particular course assignments and it does not offer the help when they most need it. It should not be surprising, therefore, that the motivation to participate is low. A closer look at what the information literacy model entails will show that much more can be done to educate students for survival and success in the information age.

The information literacy model operates on the basis of several strategic principles. One of these addresses the issue of motivation directly: *Students are most receptive to instruction when they perceive its value and relevance for their immediate concerns and projects.* This unsurprising reality suggests that the best

strategy for helping students develop competence in finding, evaluating, and using information is to correlate our instructional efforts with the research they are completing for their courses. The idea of fostering general information competence through highly contextualized instruction may seem paradoxical, but the fact is that we learn and remember best when learning meets a perceived need or solves a pressing problem. The skills we want students to learn are indeed adaptable to a variety of contexts, but this is, in fact, one of the main reasons those skills can and should be learned contextually! This emphasis on the importance of contextualization does not, of course, imply that students no longer need library orientation at the beginning of their studies or that they would not benefit from a one-shot library workshop on advanced search strategies. They still need to know their way around the library and how to use its resources comfortably and effectively. It does suggest, however, that, if orientation and workshops are all that we offer, we are missing the best opportunities to help students become information literate.

Assignment-related instruction, of course, is already routinely offered in academic libraries in the form of individual reference assistance. Not everyone who needs this kind of help seeks it, however, and there are far more students than librarians anyway. A more systematic approach is needed to ensure that every student acquires the information competence required to succeed in the completion of course requirements and whatever “assignments” professional life hands them later on. This need, combined with the “motivation principle” just articulated, leads to a second strategic principle: *Information literacy instruction is most successful when it is embedded in the curriculum.* Such instruction reaches every student and addresses immediate perceived needs. It might be delivered through a required information literacy course, whose assignments are correlated with assignments from participants’ other courses,⁶ or through existing required courses across the curriculum. Most advocates of the model recommend the latter approach because (1) it does not involve adding yet another required course to curricula that are already full (something that would be difficult to sell in many schools anyway), (2) it permits instruction across a range of disciplines, and (3) it requires close collaboration with teaching faculty.

The last point regarding collaboration is important enough to warrant consideration as a third strategic principle: *Information literacy instruction is most successful when it involves the cooperative efforts of librarians and teaching faculty.* When teaching faculty become convinced that helping students develop information competence is an essential component of education in the twenty-first century, creative partnerships can be formed in which the combined expertise of professors and librarians is brought to bear on the task. Through lectures and assigned readings, professors impart fundamental knowledge about the subject areas in which they are expert, including the history, critical methods, traditions, social contexts, and working results of scholarship

in those disciplines. Students need this kind of orientation before they can conduct responsible independent research. Professors who understand the implications of the information explosion and the resulting challenges researchers face at the beginning of the twenty-first century realize, however, that this is not enough. Students also need informed and patient guidance in learning how to navigate oceans of information with potential relevance to the subjects of their research. Because many professors do not feel adequately prepared to provide such guidance, some decide to ignore or deny the need for it while others seek the help they need to get the job done. Those who turn to their colleagues in the library discover that librarians can be enthusiastic and competent partners in this task. Through such partnerships, librarians learn more about what students need most, and professors often learn about new resources and research strategies relevant to their students and even to their own research.

If the goal of education is not only to inform students but also to enable them to inform themselves, professors and librarians working together have a strong motivation to develop effective pedagogical schemes for achieving this. Here, a fourth strategic principle comes into play: *Students learn best how to find, evaluate, and use information effectively by doing it themselves, first with guidance and then independently.* They need to be given creative assignments that require active learning and critical thinking. The traditional term paper assignment might still be useful, but it might need to be broken down into components, each of which is accompanied by relevant instruction. The assignment could, for example, be divided into three parts:

1. Finding information relevant to the paper topic, requiring instruction in developing effective search strategies for various databases and indexes as well as other methods of tracking down sources;
2. Evaluating sources identified and deciding what to use, requiring instruction in critical thinking and in the kinds of questions to pose to potential sources; and
3. Using vetted information effectively and ethically to write the paper, requiring instruction in effective argumentation and proper use of evidence and in such legal and ethical issues as copyright and plagiarism.

The term paper need not, however, remain the only or even the primary type of assignment in higher education. Some assignments might be designed, in fact, to simulate projects that can be expected to arise in personal or professional life beyond graduation. Students, after all, need to become information literate *in school* so that they can flourish *in life*.

This focus on acquiring skills for life points to a fifth strategic principle (and the last that will be elaborated here): *Information literacy instruction prepares students for lifelong learning best when it emphasizes skills that will be useful and resources that will be available beyond graduation.* Most academic libraries these days offer current faculty and students access not only to substantial print

collections, but also to a wide range of electronic databases and full-text resources through expensive restricted contracts with third-party vendors that generally do not extend to alumni. Many graduates will have to rely for their information needs primarily on resources available in public libraries and repositories or on the Internet. Educators should bear this in mind and be sure that their instruction includes training in the use of resources available to the general public.

To reiterate, I have identified in this section five strategic principles of information literacy instruction:

1. Students are most receptive to instruction when they perceive its value and relevance for their immediate concerns and projects.
2. Information literacy instruction is most successful when it is embedded in the curriculum.
3. Information literacy instruction is most successful when it involves the cooperative efforts of librarians and teaching faculty.
4. Students learn best how to find, evaluate, and use information effectively by doing it themselves, first with guidance and then independently.
5. Information literacy instruction prepares students for lifelong learning best when it emphasizes skills that will be useful and resources that will be available beyond graduation.

In the final section, I recommend an approach to information literacy instruction in theological education that adheres to these principles.

Information literacy and theological education

Much effort has been expended during the past decade to promote information literacy as a goal of general education from pre-school through college. If many students are graduating from college now with such skills already in place, is there really any need for us as theological educators to be concerned with the issue? The answer is a resounding “yes” for at least two reasons. First, a significant percentage of students entering theological schools are returning to school after spending several years pursuing another career.⁷ Many of these students finished college before some of the technological and cultural developments occurred that made information literacy such a pressing concern. Second, becoming information literate in theological education means more than simply adding to general information literacy facility in using a few more subject-specific databases. As in the case of medicine, law, engineering, or any other field of professional specialization, achieving information literacy in theological education includes mastering methods, traditions, and practices of research and practical reasoning related to a particular form of professional practice. It remains, nevertheless, a form of *information* literacy because it equips one to pursue that practice in the inescapable context of the new information landscape. From these two points we can draw two conclusions:

(1) many theological students need training to bring their general information literacy skills up to an acceptable level and (2) all of them need training beyond that to achieve the further forms of information literacy required for success in professional practice.

Because the concept of information literacy is new to most theological educators, I offer now some practical suggestions about how a theological school might incorporate information literacy into its educational mission and program. I should stress that the model I propose here represents only one of several ways schools might proceed. Theological schools vary in size, in overall mission, and in other ways so it is to be expected that different approaches might be needed in particular local situations. The model I propose is based nevertheless on lengthy engagement with professional literature on information literacy and on observation and study of several exemplary programs for general education at colleges and universities of different sizes and orientations across the country.⁸ For the sake of simplicity, I focus here only on programs leading to the standard first theological degree (Master of Divinity).

If information literacy instruction succeeds best when it is embedded in the curriculum, and if all students need it, an obvious place to start would be with courses that all students must take in order to graduate. M.Div. programs typically include core courses that introduce biblical studies, history of Christianity, theology, ethics, preaching, pastoral care, and so on. Associated with each of these areas of study are traditions and methods of scholarship that students must master and particular reference tools and databases through which they must learn to gain access to historical and contemporary results of that scholarship. Librarians and the professors who teach these courses could collaborate to build information literacy components into the courses in stages. At first, this might mean simply having a member of the library staff visit a class once or twice during a semester to talk about important resources and strategies for research related to the subject matter of the course. Planning ahead together, professor and librarian could time such instructional visits to coincide with particular phases in the completion of course assignments. A further step might be for the partners to upgrade the course website (or design a separate page to which a link could be provided on the website) to include information about resources in the library and on the Internet that are pertinent to the course, links to on-line tutorials for using those resources, and tips for evaluating resources and for avoiding plagiarism by proper citation of sources.⁹ In the ideal case, such collaboration would eventually lead to shared reflection on fundamental issues such as intended course outcomes and the kind of course design and student assignments that would best produce those outcomes.

It is quite possible that some faculty who teach core courses will be unwilling to collaborate with librarians in this way, but full participation is not essential for success. Those who do participate and who develop a commit-

ment to the importance of information literacy instruction (perhaps when they see their students writing better papers!) will become advocates for the cause. As they spread the word to colleagues, librarians will find themselves receiving more and more invitations to collaborate—eventually more than they can handle—making them victims of their own success. That day may seem distant now, but our plan must take it into account. Apart from hiring armies of librarians to meet increasing demand, there is only one solution: *The responsibility for information literacy instruction must eventually come to rest primarily on the shoulders of teaching faculty.* Librarians are doing most of it now (where it is being done) because they understand the need and have the expertise, but this approach cannot be sustained as the demand increases.

If information literacy instruction is increasingly taken over by professors as an integral part of their teaching responsibility, what role will librarians play? Librarians will always be the “experts” on the latest resources and strategies for information management because that is the focus of their work. At least in this regard, librarians will increasingly play the role of “consultants” to teaching faculty, whose responsibility to keep up in their own areas of specialization keeps them from maintaining the same level of expertise and currency in the field of information science. Librarians can fill this supportive role in a number of ways, including:

1. Developing “packaged” resources, such as on-line tutorials and research guides, that faculty can use in instruction;¹⁰
2. Assisting faculty in the development of course websites and in the use of educational technologies;
3. Conducting periodic workshops for faculty on particular resources or recent trends in information management; and
4. Organizing more substantial seminars or summer institutes in which faculty can share successful strategies with one another, evaluate one another’s course syllabi, develop solutions to common problems, and so on.¹¹

In addition to professors and librarians, academic administrators have important roles to play in the development of curricula and policies that reflect awareness of the importance of information literacy. There is also much that can be done collaboratively at the level of professional associations devoted to theological education. Members of the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) can work together, for example, to develop sophisticated interactive tutorials for common resources, such as the ATLA Religion Database, that small schools might not have the ability to produce on their own. They can also formulate standards for information literacy in theological education, against which results can be measured, and discuss these with representatives of The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and other appropriate accrediting authorities.¹² ATS can reexamine its own accreditation standards—not only the sections devoted to libraries but any section in which educational outcomes and their assessment are considered—and look for ways to emphasize further

the importance of information literacy. Both ATLA and ATS can intensify efforts to encourage professors and librarians in theological schools to take advantage of opportunities for advanced professional development in this area (such as those provided by the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion) and can encourage deans and other academic administrators to offer greater incentives to participate.

Change is difficult, but our only constructive choice in this case is to embrace it. The long-term personal and professional effectiveness of our students is at stake. If they falter in their vocations because they are not adequately equipped for life and work in the information age, it will be because we faltered in ours.

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ENDNOTES

1. Research for this article was completed during a sabbatical granted by the Pitts Theology Library of Emory University and was funded by a grant from the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion. Some of this material was presented to the Public Services Interest Group of the American Theological Library Association on June 17, 2004 at the association's annual meeting in Kansas City, MO, and was subsequently published as "Charting a Course for Information Literacy in Theological Education," in *Summary of Proceedings, 58th Annual Conference of the American Theological Library Association* (Chicago: ATLA, 2004), 50-53.
2. For the full report see <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlpubs/whitepapers/presidential.htm>.
3. The literature on information literacy is substantial. For concise overviews of major trends, activities, and literature, see Hannelore B. Rader, "From Library Orientation to Information Literacy: 20 Years of Hard Work," in *What is Good Instruction Now? Library Instruction for the 90s, Papers and Session Materials Presented at the Twentieth National LOEX Library Instruction Conference* (1992), ed. Linda Shirato (Ann Arbor: Eastern Michigan University/Pierian Press, 1993), 25-28; "The Learning Environment—Then, Now, and Later: 30 Years of Teaching Information Literacy Skills," *Reference Studies Review* 27/3 (1999): 219-224; and "Information Literacy 1973-2002: A Selected Literature Review," *Library Trends* 51/2 (2002): 242-259. For a full discussion of the issues by one of the most influential advocates of the information literacy model, see Patricia Senn Breivik, *Student Learning in the Information Age*, Series on Higher Education (Phoenix: American Council on Education/Oryx Press, 1998).
4. For influential examples of this educational literature see Ernest L. Boyer, *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), and Lion Gardiner, *Redesigning Higher Education: Producing Dramatic Gains in Student Learning*, ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report 7 (Washington: Graduate School of Education and Development, The George Washington University, 1994).
5. For recent empirical confirmation see Patricia Davitt Maughan, "Assessing Information Literacy among Undergraduates: A Discussion of the Literature and the University of California-Berkeley Assessment Experience," *College & Research Libraries*

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62/1 (2001): 71-85, and Barbara J. Cockrell, "Talking with Faculty and Administrators: Using Numbers to Demonstrate the Value of Bibliographic Instruction," in *Integrating Information Literacy into the College Experience, Papers Presented at the Thirtieth National LOEX Library Instruction Conference (2002)*, ed. Julia K. Nims et. al. (Ann Arbor: Eastern Michigan University/Pierian Press, 2003), 213-219.

6. Issues related to the rationale and design of independent information literacy courses are discussed in William Badke, "Not Your One-Shot Deal: Instructional Design for Credit Information Literacy Courses," in *Summary of Proceedings, 57th Annual Conference of the American Theological Library Association* (Chicago: ATLA, 2003), 8-18.

7. From the 1960s to the 1980s the average age of seminarians rose from early 20s to early 30s, according to Ellis L. Larsen and James M. Shopshire, "A Profile of Contemporary Seminarians," *Theological Education* 24/2 (1988): 10-136, and that average has remained high. At Emory University's Candler School of Theology (the largest United Methodist seminary in the U.S.), for example, the average age of M.Div. students has not dropped below 31 since the school began keeping that statistic in 1996.

8. A number of the ideas I recommend here are based on insights gained in conversation with generous colleagues who allowed me to visit their campuses and study their information literacy programs during the spring semester of 2004: Patricia Breivik, Dean of University Libraries, Sandra Belanger, Bridget Kowalczyk, and their colleagues at San Jose State University; Patricia Iannuzzi, Associate University Librarian, and Elizabeth Dupuis at the University of California, Berkeley; Hannelore Rader, Dean of University Libraries, Anna Marie Johnson, and their colleagues at the University of Louisville, KY; and Thomas Kirk, Library Director, and Christine Larson at Earlham College in Richmond, IN. I also visited and derived valuable insights from conversations with fellow theological librarians Ann Hotta and Kris Veldheer at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley; Angela Morris at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary; Jack Ammerman, Library Director, Jim Skypeck, and their colleagues at Boston University School of Theology; and Cliff Wunderlich at Harvard Divinity School.

9. A good sample page, designed for an anthropology course at the University of Louisville, is available at <http://library.louisville.edu/research/assignments/anth333.htm>. See also the page designed for a course at Earlham College on Contemporary Religious Movements, available at <http://www.earlham.edu/%7EElibr/courses/spring2004/rel360-04.htm>, and the pages created for selected courses at Emory University's Candler School of Theology, available at <http://www.pitts.emory.edu/researchassist/courses.html>.

10. Tutorials can be relatively simple sets of instructions, such as those posted on the website of the Pitts Theology Library (<http://www.pitts.emory.edu/ResearchAssist/tutorials.html>), or they can be fully interactive, such as TILT (Texas Information Literacy Tutorial), developed by the University of Texas (see <http://tilt.lib.utsystem.edu/faq> for details). TILT is a web-based tutorial available to anyone on the Internet. It is also an Open Publication, which can be modified for local use according to the terms of the TILT Open Publication License. An example of creative adaptation of the resource is the InfoPower tutorial developed by the King Library at San Jose State University (see http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/literacy/info_comp/index.htm).

11. The University of California at Berkeley has piloted a model summer institute for faculty, funded by the Mellon Foundation. For details see <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MellonInstitute>.

12. A useful model for this is the set of information literacy standards published in 2000 by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) for use in general education. The text of the standards and related materials are available at the ACRL Information Literacy site (see <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/acrlinfolit/informationliteracy.htm>).

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Assessing Library Performance in a New Landscape, or “How Did We Do Today?”

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ABSTRACT: Traditionally, libraries have been very good at counting things: books cataloged, check-outs and check-ins, questions answered, workstations, even study seats. Libraries have long reported, and generally been content with, these measures. The standards by which libraries were accredited and compared to peers relied on quantitative statistics: the number of volumes in the collection, journal subscriptions, monies allocated, professionals on staff, etc. More difficult qualitative measures, although important, have not received nearly as much attention. Now, though, the measurement landscape is changing. Increasingly, educational institutions have embraced decision-making models based on mission, strategic initiatives, and assessment of teaching and learning (often as outcome measures). These models may drive not only goals and objectives, but also resource allocation. Libraries are going to be challenged to count not only “how many” and “how much” but also to measure “how well” they are performing.

The prospect

In only ten years, the landscape in which theological libraries flourished for centuries has been transformed by information technology. During the same decade the broader landscape in which theological libraries prosper has also undergone a different but still profound change, one in which school administrators now follow the bellwether of outcome-based assessment of institutional performance. These two landscapes, as they relate to one another, form the subject of this paper.

On the one hand, computer technology has radically transformed information retrieval. The World Wide Web’s unprecedented success is refashioning how libraries provide both resources and services. On the other hand, continuing fiscal constraints ensure that libraries struggle to get adequate funding, not only to enhance existing collection strengths but to exploit a new world of digital resources for which patrons and stakeholders now politely clamor. Unless there is increased funding, libraries can expect to traverse some rough terrain in the new landscape.

Education’s interest in outcome assessment, rooted in the movement for accountability, will also begin to affect libraries, although more slowly. As stakeholders, educators are challenged to justify claims on scarce resources;

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academic library managers are being asked to measure the value libraries provide in educational outcomes. In turn, theological libraries will ultimately be called on to bolster their requests for increased financial support with facts and figures. To accomplish this, it will be necessary for libraries to measure outcomes as set out by institutional policy. In public and private institutions both large and small, there is no compelling reason to suppose that the mandate for quantitative and qualitative assessment measures will weaken. For various reasons, theological libraries lag behind in the movement toward assessment. Nevertheless, the situation is improving and libraries can already see the effects. This is the inevitable outcome of a refashioned landscape of accountability in theological education.

Despite the standing of stability as a core value in the library world, digital technology has made the word "change" into a cliché. Still, libraries have done a tolerable job adapting to the new scene. For library materials and subscriptions, inflation more than eats up budget increases. Libraries do their best to satisfy demand for digital full-text and images, a balancing act hard to keep up. While not a pretty picture, it is not out of proportion to structural changes challenging higher education.

One of the poignant, indeed, ironic developments of the last ten years has been a realization that libraries will be called on to give documented evidence of their value to the parent institution. Library managers face the prospect of presenting to decision-makers, benefactors, and stakeholders their case for the library's value-added contribution to seminary education and ministerial vocation. Being asked to establish this value creates an excellent opportunity for libraries, but a clear path toward assessment has not yet been laid out. The very success of libraries in adopting and adapting to web-based resources and other patron-enabling technologies raises up the specter of the self-sufficient patron, leaving libraries in an awkward bind. It may be that in the realm of theology, the approaching storm clouds of doubt about the library's new role appear only as a distant prospect. The possibility, however, is not really so remote at all. Librarians have learned a hard lesson: never be complacent. If experience with accelerating technology holds true, some nasty weather is bound to arrive. In the meantime, libraries can benefit from close study of how other units in educational institutions are coming to grips with a changed environment, assessing the library's educational role in new ways. Even if not yet pressed to do so, theological libraries will find the process of systematically analyzing their contribution a powerful tool in seeking increased, much needed, funding.

Prospect one: the input-output model and the library

The classic input-output management model has become commonplace for many administrators. Because it is still uncommon in theological libraries,

this model merits close examination and adjustments in light of how libraries function and what librarians do. Well-established in higher education, this model has become essential for strategic planning and decision-making. Further, input-output-outcome assessment, when carefully tweaked, lends itself to library processes as well as familiar measurements already in place. Kept congruent with other institutional measures, they can address the more difficult question of “quality” versus “quantity” in the library’s mission.

For decades, the profession has assiduously produced statistical measures of collection size and the outputs of internal processes. While in many research settings there is no substitute for in-depth or even comprehensive on-site collections, technology-driven improvements in the distribution of, and access to, resources has seriously undermined once universal *bigger is better* library rankings. A more accurate means of assessment is therefore needed.

Inputs

In libraries, the input measure will undoubtedly continue to reflect budget allocations from the parent institution, the materials and services purchased by means of these allocations, the personnel to acquire and make the resources available, and professional assistance in enabling use by patrons. The expenses of the physical plant, hardware and infrastructure, collection storage, ongoing maintenance, etc. are subsumed. The largest and most dramatic change in the input landscape is the tremendous growth in the “acquisition” of electronic resources. Libraries are well-equipped to track measures of expenditure and acquisition. From a business perspective, what the library calls “inputs” may seem counterintuitive because money is commonly regarded as the key input, and books and serials thus the physical outputs. This proves inadequate to capture what libraries actually do. Accordingly, libraries usually report as *input* measures the numbers of books owned and/or cataloged, bound journals, periodical subscriptions, microfilm reels, etc. Today’s inputs also include database subscriptions, on-line access to journals and collections, and any other “assets” a library purchases.

Outputs

The standard measure of a library’s standing among peers has been substantially quantitative, e.g., the ownership of outputs (volumes held, volumes added, current serials), total library expenditures, and numbers of professional and support staff.

Increasingly though, libraries strive to measure outputs in terms of activity, processing, usage, or productivity. These broader measures not only include cataloging activities but also service-oriented counts, such as the number of items circulated or requested, patrons served, library gate counts, bound journals consulted, etc. Today, integrated automation systems make it less labor intensive to compile such figures. Moreover, libraries are making

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headway with journal database vendors to report standardized usage data allowing reliable cross-platform comparisons.

In evaluating broad-based measures with an eye toward institutional outcomes, new issues can arise. Responding to pressures for accountability, libraries began to measure library activities in qualitative, not merely quantitative, terms. "How much does the library have," or "how much does the library do," or "how well the library does" are significantly different questions. It is up to libraries to stipulate how they can be answered.

Another value-added output is the contributions library personnel make, whose salaries constitute the lion's share of the budget. These range from managing access points and making varied inputs available in cost-effective formats, to providing professional expertise, assistance, and instruction in patrons' exploitation of inputs. Outputs encompass staff-enhanced bibliographic records in library catalogs, research assistance from professionals dedicated to enabling learners, transactions at the circulation and reserve desks, books and articles delivered by interlibrary loan, research skills classes taught, and the well-established activities that make libraries crucial to educational success.

Outcomes

Libraries can take considerable credit for an institution's large-scale outputs such as faculty publications, research grants awarded, student graduation rates, successful ministerial practice, etc. Libraries seldom make the claim because, as the literature agrees, it is difficult to measure directly what libraries add to these laudable outcomes. Although few would question the library's role in educational outcomes, clearly there are challenges in "manifesting" this contribution. In response to new accreditation standards, libraries now survey patron satisfaction and, to a lesser extent, student achievement as evinced by newly acquired research skills. Although often indirect, self-reported, and "soft," such qualitative measures provide valuable data, especially when gathering "hard" statistics is impractical or when subjective perceptions themselves form legitimate measures of value-added services.

Further, libraries recognize a commitment to lifelong learning and play a major role in ongoing alumni relationships with the alma mater. The needs of alumni and community outreach programs, in general, are now recognized in accreditation standards.¹ Theological libraries' parent institutions vigorously cultivate connections, loyalties, and contributions of graduates, not only for the sake of inviting monetary support but also to foster continuing education relationships.

Advancing the cause of the perceived "value" in the library environment can no longer be left to the mild affirmation, however gratifying, of the library's importance to an institution's mission. In the "brave new world" of digital publishing, libraries' ability to prove their long-term strategic importance will

present a more complex challenge. Obviously, convincing evidence will be needed.

Librarians thrive on gathering statistics for what can now be termed inputs and outputs, and are making strides to develop and collect outcome measures. However, from the current prospect in this new landscape, libraries cannot stop there.

Most libraries have yet to undertake externally focused planning, gathering, analyzing, and publicizing evaluative measurements. In the obligatory annual report, all sorts of data are recorded, yet the report seldom showcases how library resources and services make measurable contributions to teaching, learning, and research. In order for the input-output-outcome model to establish the library's value in the academic community, librarians can campaign where they have usually been less than aggressive, such as marketing the library and assessing quality. While not explicit in The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) standards, it is increasingly common for higher and professional education accreditors to require evidence of quality as measured in what are often called "campus-wide" outcomes.

Prospect two: outcome assessment

Every kind of organization employs performance assessment. Libraries have already joined in to a certain extent. While not new to other educational sectors, full-scale outcome assessment represents unfamiliar terrain for theological libraries. Advantages are easy to appreciate, especially with regard to the input-output model and accountability mandates in seminaries.

Adjusted for the absence of a profit motive, the original "industry-based" model works quite well in libraries. Library outputs become the building blocks (books, journals, media, and electronic resources) to which libraries provide access. These are fairly easy to measure. Standard statistics have been the bread and butter of library operations for years, especially in acquisitions, technical services, circulation, and inter-library loan. In the past, libraries have used these measures primarily for internal purposes. They present the figures to accreditation and government agencies, yet the results of such library assessment only infrequently drive goals or strategic planning. Even "customer satisfaction" surveys are more often used for accreditation self-studies than applied to difficult resource allocation and personnel decisions.

By employing objective measurements of the effect of systems on community members, libraries can assess actual impacts. The precise contribution the library makes to critical outcomes is not easily ascertained. If the worth of an information service proves too difficult to measure, the perceived value has come to be accepted as a proxy. This kind of benefit analysis is based on the subjective nature of faculty, student, and staff perceptions. The challenge to theological librarians is to identify connections between student and faculty

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"performance" and the library itself, linking inputs and outputs to defined outcome goals, and to document the extent, quality, and effect of these outcomes. The library thereby establishes its major role in "campus-wide" learning outcomes.

The first step in this kind of project is to set benchmark data for performance factors, outcomes, and achievement. It will be helpful to look at a concrete example.

Example of a campus-wide outcome statement:

"All graduates are to be information literate."² Information literacy has been defined as a set of abilities requiring individuals to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information."³

Below are some examples of quantifiable library contributions to an "information literacy" outcome:

Inputs

- ◆ Number of in-library as well as asynchronous learning opportunities
- ◆ Teaching interactions, both formal and informal
- ◆ Web-based research instruction
- ◆ Research consultations with reference librarians
- ◆ Handouts and library research guides distributed
- ◆ Participation level in information literacy program and subsequent testing

Outputs

- ◆ Documented effects of integrating library skills into seminary curricula
- ◆ Data compiled and analyzed from information literacy requirements in course work
- ◆ Number of patrons successfully completing skill assignments
- ◆ Student performance measures in course work
- ◆ Student research logs, journals, portfolios, etc.

Outcomes

- ◆ Longitudinal studies comparing matriculating, continuing, and graduating students
- ◆ Recent graduates' perceptions of the continuing "value" of information-seeking skills
- ◆ Perceptions of campus networks and library research sources
- ◆ Data from analysis of syllabi, library assignments, course evaluations, or faculty rating of librarian effectiveness
- ◆ User survey data

Quality of library services: measurements

Satisfaction surveys, information usage studies, instruction evaluations, pre- and post-testing of research skills, website usability studies, and focus groups—all these provide a measurement of how well library services meet student needs and how well a library meets its own stated goals, objectives, and mission.

To reiterate the challenge, librarians commonly muster statistics to justify and bolster pre-determined goals. These are often developed by means other than outcome processes. A re-fashioned statistical landscape will, as a matter of course, link learning outcomes to the institution's financial inputs. The ATS standard for library and library services adopts a quality over quantity emphasis and asserts the importance of collections in direct support of teaching and learning.⁴ While not mentioning assessment *per se*, the standard requires specific outcomes. In effect, these requirements present theological libraries an "information literacy" agenda.

The redeveloped ATS accreditation standards offer welcome clarifications for the library's role in a larger theological context. No longer is the library viewed as a passive repository of books, journals, and miscellanies. ATS standards insist that proactive involvement in teaching, learning, and research extend not only to teachers and learners but also in the library's primary relationships. As well, the standards promote collaboration with faculty and administrators in creating curricula that emphasize information skills. The specific processes a theological library develops are left open for the most part, but libraries themselves need to move beyond standards of involvement to an environment in which they can assess their own performance and contributions in quality learning outcomes. ATS standards may strengthen the director's hand in trying to raise the profile of the library, but the surest way to do so is to demonstrate the quality and value of library services.

Hampered by a lack of professionally designed satisfaction survey instruments, theological libraries cannot call on overextended staff for extensive in-house development nor can they likely afford to outsource design, implementation, and analysis. As a result, homegrown satisfaction surveys are of uncertain validity and thus limited utility in establishing challenging service goals. Few librarians would be surprised in typical surveys to see satisfaction percentages run well up into the mid-90s, a point at which the survey is not very useful. To address this problem, several research libraries spearheaded a program to create a reliable, valid instrument called "LibQual" (<http://www.libqual.org>) that they could confidently employ and that could be broadly marketed. The program's centerpiece, a rigorously tested web-based user survey, LibQual assists libraries to better understand user perceptions of service quality, collect and systematically interpret user feedback over time, and provide libraries with comparable assessment information from peer institutions. As an example of how LibQual is used, see the University of

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Hawaii at Manoa Libraries report at <http://libweb.hawaii.edu/uhmlib/libqual/results.html>.⁶

Prospect three: key performance indicators

Key performance indicators (KPI) are defined as quantifiable, critical measurements conspicuously integrated into strategic plans, goals, and values, and that reflect an enterprise’s critical success factors. Large-scale KPI are enterprise-wide metrics, typically a manageably small number, deployed by senior managers to monitor and assess long-term success. Key indicators analyze weakness, deficiency, and further develop recognized strengths. For the library world, their potential in planning and goal setting is obvious. In fact, by setting up measures to track outcomes, libraries can explore establishing key performance indicators to align with, support, and contribute to institutional goals. From this viewpoint, as discussed in library contexts above, performance measures are instruments to assess inputs, outputs, and outcomes.

Key performance indicators are not a brand new idea. In fact, for many years, management consultants have promoted “performance measures” over independent output measures. Several industries—healthcare, transportation, and construction—in recent years have been “doing KPI.”

The range of measures considered for smaller scale KPI is exhibited in division and department indicators that can be coordinated enterprise-wide. These KPI can include measures like outputs per enterprise functional units, or even output by employees per hour. In a library context, measures can be successfully tracked for numerous indicator bases. For example:

- ◆ Outlays per FTE student (budget divided by enrollment)
- ◆ Number and types of information products received compared to peer libraries
- ◆ Performance of library branches
- ◆ Average response time for an information request
- ◆ Document order fulfillment rates
- ◆ Cost per downloaded full-text article
- ◆ Group study space usage
- ◆ Computer terminal demand
- ◆ Cataloging department productivity
- ◆ Quality measured by various error rates

Built-to-order for goal setting while hewing to the measurability line, vetted indicators become a straightforward way to keep “a finger on the pulse” of the library. Moreover, KPI can originate from a variety of sources—both back room and out front—and from existing statistical channels, process improvement objectives, or, in a simple configuration, in-house statistics dutifully reported to accrediting bodies.

General characteristics of good KPI

- ◆ Limited in number (to increase focus)
- ◆ Affecting other indicators' success
- ◆ Focused on customer service, satisfaction
- ◆ Already collected, if possible
- ◆ Affecting more than one department
- ◆ Integrated with team and individual accountability
- ◆ Avoids pitting groups or individuals in competition
- ◆ Aligned with institutional goals/objectives
- ◆ Delineates action if targets not met
- ◆ Easily understood and communicated to staff and stakeholders

Whenever possible, data already collected from the library's automated system can be put to use. Employing an existing measurement tool (such as LibQual) will often make more sense than starting from scratch. In recommending assessment in order to set goals, management benefits most from focusing on process improvement. By establishing, monitoring, and acting on indicator driven targets, the library will seek not only to justify resource needs, but also to link strategic and operational goals to performance measures.

For purposes of illustration, let's consider a simple KPI example from the business world, specifically in the area of employee retention.

KPI: Employee Retention

- ◆ Definition

The number of employees resigning for whatever reason plus employees terminated for cause, the total divided by the number of employees at the beginning of the year.

- ◆ Measurement

Human Resources maintains records for each employee. Monthly, or as requested by senior management, HR will query its database and provide department heads with turnover reports.

- ◆ Target

Reduce employee turnover by 5 percent per year, for three consecutive years.

From a long-range prospect in the new landscape, the critical issues facing a library will have to be distilled into measures. The fundamental questions are surprisingly simple and clear.

- ◆ What services and resources is the library best able to provide?
- ◆ What resources are required to support services?
- ◆ Are patrons and supporters receiving adequate "value"?
- ◆ What are the real and perceived qualities of services?

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Again, it may be instructive to look at an example, this time from the library world itself, in which one well-known institution’s key performance indicators gauge how well its mission is being fulfilled and how resource demands are justified. By funding agreements, the British Library has begun publicly reporting key indicators, service targets, and outcomes in meeting specific annual goals. Below is a table of KPI adapted and simplified from the library’s report.⁵

<i>Selected Output Measures</i>	<i>Selected Quality Measures</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Reading Room visits◆ Searches of the British Library Public Catalogue◆ Items supplied remotely and supplied/consulted in Reading Rooms◆ Number of school children attending workshops◆ Catalogue records created by staff◆ Pages of digitized material viewed over the web◆ Items acquired◆ Cataloguing backlogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Reading Room user satisfaction◆ Percentage of readers describing services and facilities as “excellent” or “good”◆ Exhibition visitors rating the quality of their visit as either “excellent” or “good”◆ User satisfaction rating for UK remote users of Document Supply◆ Percentage of material held onsite delivered to the Reading Room within seventy minutes

(It should be noted that even an institution of the British Library’s stature can now be called on to make explicit the previously assumed benefits it provides.)

Challenges

Because of the interpersonal, value-added nature of many library services (e.g., reference), solely quantitative measures are of limited utility in assessing effectiveness. Recording a reference question by means of a tick mark does not capture actual activity or measure its value to the patron. Outside formal training sessions, librarians do not often see much of the final output from the students they assist. Now, however, libraries are beginning to develop ways to examine as unobtrusively as possible how the library helps (or hinders) education.

The basic model under which libraries support the mission of theological education will continue to change. The “old” model is based on the library’s unique centrality as the *destination* for information seekers. The model emerging, however, looks to the day when libraries will readily cede centrality as a physical destination. In exchange, they will take up a new role as the central *portal* for teaching, learning, and research. Libraries can engage learning

communities proactively by delivering information resources to the user at the point of need, wherever that may be.

The important force behind a new model of library service is the current notion of “disintermediation.” As technology costs decline and easy-to-use websites proliferate, costly human intermediaries are increasingly viewed as unnecessary. This new self-service world is represented in settings as diverse as a bank’s ATM; a grocery store self check-out; web-based airline, hotel, and car reservations; Amazon, Google and, closer to home, the American Religion Data Archive. In more complex client-provider relationships, self-service tools do not so much eliminate the need for a mediator as significantly alter relationships. For example, prospective homebuyers now have immediate access to information almost identical to that used by the real estate agent. In the library world, disintermediation is plainly evident in services like remote access to full-text databases, self check-out of books, library catalogs capable of unmediated patron loan requests, abundant resources freely available on the web, asynchronous learning opportunities for developing research skills, and more user-friendly interfaces that can even obviate the need for any professional “guidance” at all.

The formidable efficiency of disintermediation and the transformative success of web synergies meet not only in business but also at the library’s very door, as they do with almost any service-intensive enterprise. Just as assessment moves from quantity to quality, formerly straightforward “service” performance indicators take on new urgency and complexity. The challenge of measuring disintermediated patron transactions and research in terms of outcomes is better suited to a measurement climate than to mere self-reported satisfaction and anecdotal evidence of how well-liked library staff are.

The distinctive upside of disintermediation is the enabling of information seekers to become less reliant on restricted, even restrictive, delivery channels. These developments are hardly news to the library profession. The challenge to the theological library that begins this paper—to justify the library’s value and service to the learning community—can become a central mission of the library. It is no simple matter to assess learning outcomes in a typical academic setting without developing new assessment vehicles nor can these measures be collected in a vacuum. The campus political environment can often determine what outcomes are seen as most important for the library to measure, pursue, and for which to be held accountable. An institution’s information technology infrastructure also plays an important part in determining what can be measured and how. To provide stakeholders not only the raw numbers, but also the narrative interpretation requires active collaboration with other departments.

While KPI theory and rationale may be compelling, it will help to consider realistic examples. The two scenarios below describe different sorts of indicators, the first directed at resource allocations and the second at learning outcomes.

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Scenario 1: libraries in an era of scarcity

Inflation in periodical subscriptions continues to outpace modest budget increases. New developments in full-text delivery pose challenges to resource decisions, but in their wake, present positive opportunities for improving patron access to research.

In establishing strategies, one key performance indicator can be a measure of duplication between hard copy and digital versions of the same title. Another indicator can be usage patterns of full-text articles *versus* hard copy of the same content. Data collected can encompass student and faculty attitudes about access issues, the proportion of allocations for print compared to electronic subscriptions, citation studies of faculty and student work, etc. In this scenario, the KPI target can be documenting increased efficacy of library stewardship, increased patron acceptance of more cost-efficient delivery channels, and even reducing the unproductive expense of content duplication across formats.

Scenario 2: libraries in a self-service age

The study of "information seeking behavior" has become critical in determining how best libraries can configure on-line access services. Questions worth asking include:

- ♦ How can we find out how real students are using the library and its resources?
- ♦ If, as is likely, our students increasingly manage without resources provided by the library, what can we learn from how they research on-line?
- ♦ How can the faculty response to new media resources cited in research papers be assessed?

The direction libraries take depends not only on what new technology trickles down to them, but also on how competing modes of information retrieval affect learning constituencies. It is appropriate to consider alternative visions in which the research space becomes as much virtual as physical. The library is only one of many research avenues and experience confirms that, frequently, it is not the first destination for undergraduates in particular. Studying how increasingly diverse seminary students make use of expensive library resources in a highly wired, disintermediated state will require fresh thinking.⁷ In this instance, a key performance indicator can be the proportion in student papers of full-text digital resource citations compared to traditional print media, along with evaluative sampling of the choices students make. Measures can center on citation and bibliography studies of student work and can explore other quality measures. One approach can be conducting focus groups about library usefulness and real-life usage. A good KPI target could be developed based on feedback and surveys in order to increase library satisfaction levels.

A final prospect

The future of theological libraries cannot be seen with complete clarity. Media revolutions are never comprehensive. For libraries, the printed book has advantages over its digitized counterpart, and microfilm still coexists with bound journals, for the time being anyway. Yet digital coexistence may be problematic—the new information market is churned by forces beyond the grasp of any KPI strategy. Commodification, mass markets, corporate consolidation, potential erosion of fair use, and a turbulent dot-com environment can mean that the decidedly un-commercial library world will suffer. On the other hand, the promise of increasingly sophisticated human-machine interfaces (perhaps taking off from Amazon's "Search Inside the Book" promotion) will continue to show how information-seeking and knowledge production can endlessly improve digital utility.

Journal publishers, database aggregators, authors, and research institutions have yet to find workable formulae to deliver content over the web *and* preserve current business models. Libraries struggle to keep up with innovations and find themselves passive adopters—not change agents—of advances in retrieval software. Librarians themselves feel the pressure to do much more with persistently less without sacrificing a library's traditional strengths, and moreover, while being asked to answer to expectations of accountability.

The final prospect is hardly bleak. Through consortial purchasing leverage, many libraries, indeed, entire states and provinces, can now get huge amounts of full text for a fraction of what each individually would have had to pay. The great dilemma of "access *versus* ownership" is solved by simply making a virtue of necessity; access will have to suffice for all but the largest research libraries. Economies of scale can work for the benefit of patrons, libraries, and vendors alike. The value of library services in the digital free-for-all called the web will depend in some measure on how proactive libraries become in assessment and in delivering the better "goods" to patrons. With the difference theological libraries make, not just for their institutions but in the lives of students and faculty and the church, the new landscape can unfold in most productive ways.

It goes without saying, finally, that the mission of faith-based institutions is to inculcate far more than "information literacy" in forming the lifelong values of men and women preparing for ministry. Nonetheless, beyond the primary goals of successful outcomes and effectiveness, key performance indicators can become strategically important to libraries as measurable manifestations of the struggle to cope with the cost-benefit of information commodification. Ultimately, it is not surprising that as libraries become *de facto* "merchandisers" of a commodity—publishing, research, and other content—measurement models such as KPI are adopted that originated in quite different business, even industrial, environments.

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ENDNOTES

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Book Reviews

*Avatars of the Word:
From Papyrus to Cyberspace*
by James J. O'Donnell
(Cambridge: Harvard University
Press, 1998)

Avatars of the Word is a book that might best be read backward. An inverted approach would both avoid some of the misreadings that have plagued the book and demonstrate more clearly why it is still worth reading. Unfortunately, the first four chapters of *Avatars* have so bewitched some readers that they have missed the thought-provoking, indeed unnerving, issues raised by the latter half of the work. O'Donnell's project offers a sustained and powerful challenge to traditional higher education, but the depth of that challenge is only fully obvious in his later chapters.

O'Donnell himself might welcome a less straightforward reading of his work, since much of his criticism of contemporary scholarly and pedagogical methods is founded on the belief that "linear" readings serve too many unacknowledged cultural interests—he calls this "legend-making" (p.117)—that need to be exposed and complicated by more "multipath" thinking (p.138). Once this overall concern is perceived, the first four chapters of *Avatars* appear less a pleasant ramble through the history of scholarly reading and more a systematic attempt to relativize that history by showing that the apparently obvious link between scholarship and the technology of the codex really conceals

some significant assumptions and limitations.

At the very end of the book, O'Donnell reaffirms that he views himself as "an old-fashioned text-consuming, text-producing gatekeeper of our culture" (p. 195). Nevertheless, he clearly believes that traditional scholarship must adapt itself to the realities of changing technologies and cannot afford to risk irrelevancy by clinging tenaciously to older technologies that are not really essential to the task. Indeed, he suggests that he is willing to facilitate "the wise navigation of those upheavals, even if they leave me... unemployed and unemployable" (ibid.). Why is O'Donnell so willing to embrace technological change and its concomitant cultural revolution even though they threaten his comfortable scholarly traditions? Because ultimately he believes those changes can be used to correct much of what is wrong with contemporary scholarly practice.

It is in the middle chapters of *Avatars* that O'Donnell spells out his deep concern over, first, the "legend-making" that is encouraged by the univocal reconstructions of the past favored by traditional scholarship and second, the accepted practices of university pedagogy that are based on those legends. Writing specifically about Augustine scholarship, O'Donnell paints an enthusiastic picture of the kind of multilayered, interactive, and "self-correcting" (p. 136) scholarly work that he believes publication via cyberspace will encourage. His enthusiasm is a logical outgrowth, I think, of all that he sees wrong with current university practices. Just as

most scholars are blinkered by their individualistic and linear approach to texts, whole universities are likewise “locked into a no-growth policy and our productivity is flat to declining” (p. 168). Because the situation—as he perceives it—is so dire, he hopes for great things from new technologies. Not only can cyberspace correct the flawed “cult of personality” approach to figures like Augustine (p.137), it can also help us move education to a more flexible and constructive level, where community can be created more spontaneously and there will be less need for the “self-conscious, problem-solving, meddling superstructure” of the modern university (p.160).

The enthusiasm expressed in *Avatars* for the possibilities of on-line communication sometimes seems excessive, and even a little naïve. In my own area of expertise—copyright law—the rosy picture O’Donnell paints of an easy resolution to the challenges to intellectual property ownership created by the Internet has not come about. In fact, the years since *Avatars* was published have seen the battles intensify with the development of peer-to-peer file sharing, and there is no sign of either effective technological controls or a widely accepted new economic model for the transfer of copyrighted material, both of which O’Donnell predicts. His alternative suggestion, that scholars adopt a “free and open economy” for their own on-line publishing and leave “the idealists to thrash each other with lawsuits over... cartoons and noise” (p. 98), also seems slow to develop. The academic economy, based on rewards of prestige and tenure, has proven as

resistant to change as more traditional economic models.

No doubt others will find similar exaggerations in different aspects of O’Donnell’s advocacy for new models of scholarship based on on-line technologies, but one point that he makes throughout *Avatars* is hard to gainsay—the issues raised for education and scholarship by these technologies simply cannot be ignored. O’Donnell writes, “I do insist that a technology this powerful will not be refused, no more than writing and printing were in their day. The institutions we inhabit will transform themselves or fade” (p. 158). We may not like the picture of our current situation that O’Donnell paints and we may believe he is too optimistic about the ability of cyberspace to encompass the best of traditional methods of reading and teaching, but our students already inhabit cyberspace as a natural part of their intellectual environment, just as many of us inhabit the world of books and journals. Even if we ignore O’Donnell’s reflections and predictions and refuse to plan for the more dramatic changes that the Internet portends, those changes will still occur. Moreover, we may be sure that, without our forethought, the new world of scholarship certainly can never be the creative and constructive place for which O’Donnell hopes.

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Christian Librarianship: Essays on the Integration of Faith and Profession

edited by Gregory A. Smith
(Jefferson: McFarland, 2002)

As a theological librarian, I read Gregory Smith's edited volume *Christian Librarianship: Essays on the Integration of Faith and Profession* with particular interest. It appears to be a unique work within recent library literature. *Christian Librarianship* includes a foreword by Donald D. Davis Jr., an introduction by Smith, sixteen essays (four of which are authored by Smith) with opening abstracts and closing endnotes, an afterword by Smith, a selective bibliography, a brief biographical account of the contributors, and a thorough index. In his introduction, Smith writes that the purpose of the book is threefold: (1) "to help Christians in the library profession to integrate their faith with their vocation"; (2) "to provide a foundation for further discussion of library issues from a Christian perspective"; and (3) "to serve as a window through which students and scholars of library science may observe Christian librarians, a little-understood segment of the profession" (p. 6).

The book is divided in two sections. Part One encompasses six essays related to the "theory" of Christian librarianship. An underlying premise of this section is that "all truth is God's truth." In the essay entitled "A Rationale for Integrating Christian Faith and Librarianship," Smith suggests that a natural consequence of this principle is to develop a philoso-

phy of Christian librarianship. Scholars have successfully written about the integration of faith and many other academic disciplines, therefore, a seminal gathering of essays on the integration of faith and the library profession makes sense. In the subsequent essay entitled "The Cultural Mandate, the Pursuit of Knowledge, and the Christian Librarian," Smith argues that the controversial "cultural mandate" referred to in Genesis 1:26-28 "legitimizes the work of librarians and other professionals who provide access to recorded information" (p. 28). In my opinion, the very need to use Scripture to proof text arguments throughout this volume weakens the scholarly impact of the work and (implicitly) lessens the credibility of Christian librarians.

I resonate with the simple, recurring theme that runs through several essays: Christian librarians have an opportunity to positively impact the users of the library. In Part One in the essay entitled "The Theological Library: In Touch with the Witnesses," John Trotti suggests that the "ministering library" (p. 48) is basically people-centered; it is not the edifice or the tomes housed within that are most sacred. Likewise in Part Two, in the essay "The Role of the Library in the Character Formation of the Christian College Student," Smith emphasizes the relational nature of Christian librarianship. He suggests that Christian librarians can make a significant contribution to the process of character formation of library users. I embrace this ideal to a certain extent, however, I do not agree with all of

Smith's finer points of application, particularly "confronting and counseling students" (p. 187) on the basis of Christian moral standards. I would argue that taking such measures goes beyond the scope of the librarian's professional duties—Christian or otherwise.

Part Two is composed of ten essays under the umbrella heading "Christian Librarianship in Practice." While I am not persuaded by some of the arguments and conclusions presented in this section, it is evident that the contributors have sincerely wrestled with matters of faith and the practical application of these matters in the workplace. Contributors discuss a mixed bag of issues, including the connection between faith and culture, intellectual freedom, and "Sabbath-keeping." In "Library Encounters Culture," Roger Phillips explores the role of the library in society, expanding upon Smith's essay on the relevance of the cultural mandate to the Christian librarian. He warns of the secular predisposition of the major classification systems and muses about the development of a system with a Christian bias. Phillips suggests that classification schemes can be "adapted to reflect an integrated faith/life view" (p. 89)—though I would argue that such attempts are subjective and fruitless; in the end, most patrons would neither recognize nor reflect upon these subtle distinctions: they simply want ease of access.

In the essay, "Intellectual Freedom and Evangelical Faith," Donald Davis challenges evangelical librarians to support the idea of intellectual

freedom. He writes "belief in the sovereignty of God and acceptance of all truth as God's should lead evangelicals to support intellectual freedom enthusiastically" (p. 131). Davis urges Christian librarians to develop library collections that actively engage, rather than shun, popular culture. He acknowledges that controversy may ensue from this stance, but that "controversy is a part of responsible Christian librarianship" (p. 136). In the subsequent essay, "A Christian Approach to Intellectual Freedom in Libraries," James Johnson takes a more moderate viewpoint. He argues for a "distinctively Christian approach [to intellectual freedom], emphasizing both individual and community rights" (p. 139).

Graham Hedges provides an interesting historical account of the controversy surrounding Sunday opening in American public libraries in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the essay "Nothing New Under the Sun? Public Libraries and Sunday Opening in the Nineteenth Century." This is followed by a complementary essay by Rod Badams entitled "Keeping Sunday Special in the Contemporary Workplace Culture." Badams suggests various reasons why "Sabbath-keeping" is difficult to mandate today. One reason he provides is that Christians themselves "have a wide range of views" ... "and Sunday observance is one area where Christians find it difficult to agree..." (p. 173). I find this analysis quite telling, and in many ways it summarizes the central difficulty I have with Part Two of this book: Librarians (whether Christian

or not) are faced with moral and ethical work dilemmas. All must respond professionally, but not all Christian librarians will respond to such dilemmas alike—not even those who consider themselves evangelicals. Hence, it is difficult to develop a picture of what Christian librarianship should look like *in practice* that can effectively respond to differences in Christian perspective, institutional/library context, patron type, etc.

In summary, I found the *selection* of essays for inclusion in *Christian Librarianship* to be varied in terms of content and quality. Smith has incorporated a high proportion of his own work, creating a certain imbalance. Several of the essays are more than twenty years old—though still surprisingly relevant to the current discussion on Christian librarianship. Smith and his contributors have singled out “Christian librarians” as distinct from other librarians in the library profession and attempted to nuance the differences. Yet it should be noted that most of the discussions presuppose the “Christian librarian” to be an evangelical Protestant. References to Roman Catholic librarians appear in only one essay; their contributions to the overall discussion factor only slightly more in Smith’s selective bibliography. The predominant context out of which the almost exclusively male contributors write is from an American Christian liberal arts college/university perspective. Many of the contributors appear to have a connection with the Association of Christian Librarians (ACL). This is not surprising. In the introduction, Smith

writes that the impetus for publishing the collection of essays “stems from a discussion with a colleague at the 1999 conference of the Association of Christian Librarians” (p. 5). Generally speaking, ACL is not as theologically broad-based as the American Theological Library Association. As a result, this collection of essays tends to be more narrowly focused on one segment of the Christian librarian profession.

To a certain extent, Gregory A. Smith has achieved his objectives through the publication of *Christian Librarianship*. Regrettably, the subject matter does not lend itself to a wide readership and is not truly representative of all Christian librarians. I found myself questioning whether this work would serve as the foundation for future discussions pertaining to the Christian librarian profession as Smith intended. Given the scant amount of literature on Christian librarians generally, however, this book is recommended for inclusion in graduate theological school libraries.

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Library: An Unquiet History

by Matthew Battles

(New York: W. W. Norton, 2003)

Matthew Battles’s *Library: An Unquiet History* is a short but sweeping account of the formation and destruction of libraries worldwide, from ancient Mesopotamia to present-day

Bosnia. Well-known libraries (e.g., ancient Alexandria) are covered, but Battles's skills as a comparativist and storyteller are most fully displayed in his accounts of lesser known "houses of wisdom." Ancient China, Babylon, and Mexico—a number of continents and major world religions are seen to share in the rise and fall of libraries. The book also explores the cultures inside libraries – the materials, habits, and values that have variously defined the institution in different eras. The result is a series of insightful portrayals of the (often conflicted) methods and motivations of librarians from Cassiodorus down to Jonathan Swift and Melville Dewey.

Because the book draws heavily from prior scholarship, its chief contribution is the synthesis of many previously disparate facts and observations. This synthesis is significantly episodic in style. As Battles suggests, reading his book is reminiscent of browsing the stacks of a library: the topics are associated and classified, but there is an abruptness and sense of serendipity to the appearance of each new subject. This style permits the author to encompass many areas and eras in a short space and provides the reader with a case study of history written in "library mode." It is also a history constructed of epochal moments—those "points of transformation" at which the object or idea of the library was radically altered. To his credit, Battles explicitly acknowledges this methodology and employs it skillfully to create a highly engaging history—a history which will be used most responsibly by readers aware of

its motivated and selective nature.

A central message of the book is that "everywhere books are read, books burn." The sheer quantity of these "biblioclasms" in history demonstrates that the library is not, in fact, a quiet place, but so dangerously "unquiet" that it has been often silenced by threatened authorities in autocratic or nationalistic efforts to revise or erase the past. History further suggests that libraries cannot defend themselves against the social and political turmoil that endanger them, in part because these are often cultural conflicts contested in the "battle of the books" fought upon the library's shelves. The connection of cultural conflicts internal and external to the library is a strength of Battles's book.

Theological librarians and other theological educators will especially value the book's frequent references to religious and theological history (see especially the accounts of the Vatican and Harvard libraries), as well as Battles's own penchant for metaphors that conceptualize the library as sacred territory (e.g., "temple," "shrine," and "church"). Most valuable is the articulation of what Battles sometimes terms the "myths" of the library. These are the traditional and socially significant stories that continue to condition modern and postmodern understandings of the library and its place in the world, e.g., the myth of the "universal library," with its all-encompassing holdings, or the myth of the "Parnassan library," with its principled selection of "good books." With regard to the myth of an enduring library, Battles's history

highlights the mutability of libraries and their technologies of the text, reminding us that some of our most valuable manuscripts survive due to their exclusion or expulsion from libraries. The irony of this history is not lost on Battles, for whom, as a librarian, the irony is personal. The history of the conflicted library intersects the myth of the conflicted, "Promethean" librarian. Like the mythic Prometheus, the librarian (especially in the modern era) is portrayed as tortured by impulses to hubris and pity—to maintain the physical and intellectual integrity of the stacks on the one hand, but also to attend to the ideologies and illiteracies of the world outside the stacks.

These images and ideas are suggestive of both the thoughtfulness of *Library: An Unquiet History* and its meaningfulness to those invested in the development of libraries. Battles sobers us with the library's often tragic history and inspires us with stories of individual fortitude and resilience under the burden of history, but the author does not moralize. There is simply the fact of an "endless cycle of renewal" in which we contribute to the library's embattled history and participate in its myths of knowledge and wholeness. Battles's book, as he acknowledges, is offered as only one more moment in this unquiet history.

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The Enduring Library: Technology, Tradition, and the Quest for Balance
by Michael Gorman

(Chicago: American Library Association, 2003)

Popular opinion considers the long-term future of libraries as doubtful now that "everything is available on the Internet." This popular misconception is promoted even by those who ought to know better. William Y. Arms, professor of computer science at Cornell University, has argued that many primary materials are available on the Internet at no cost. Given that trend, computers could assume many of the functions currently assigned to librarians. A case in point: commence use of web-indexing services (e.g., Google, Yahoo, AltaVista, etc.) that are cheap and cover more documents than most library catalogues and indexing products; hence library catalogers as a species may soon be obsolete.

From another vantage point, novelist Nicholson Baker has taken the library community to task for its embrace of the new technology. In a famous article published in *The New Yorker* a decade ago, Baker excoriated librarians for abandoning the card catalog in favor of its electronic equivalent. He says efforts to migrate print data to electronic form generated errors and deleted valuable data, such as the "expressive dirt bands" that indicate that some cards were used more heavily than others.

Theological educators struggle daily with these and related issues. Can one receive a quality education

without access to electronic tools and resources? Is access to the Internet all that is necessary? Is a carefully developed collection of print resources truly essential to address the needs of researchers or can such needs be met by expert systems and e-mail? What does it mean to be "literate" in an electronic age? If, as in the past, librarians are charged with the preservation of books and other documents of enduring intellectual worth, how is a "document" of value to be determined when more and more data are available electronically, and when the lifespan of some electronic content is only somewhat longer than day-old bread? To what extent has the "information age" added to the stress of daily life?

Within the library world, no one's thoughts on these and related issues carry more weight than Michael Gorman's. Currently dean of library services at California State University in Fresno and president-elect of the American Library Association, his background includes stints in libraries and in some of the nation's most prestigious library schools (including UCLA and the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana). His previous publications include *Future Libraries: Dreams, Madness and Reality* (for which he received the 1997 Blackwell's Scholarship Award) and *Our Enduring Values* (for which he received the 2001 ALA Highsmith Award for the best book on librarianship).

Choosing a *via media* that would make any Anglican proud, Gorman notes that the situation is neither dire nor utopian. There have always been periods of stress when people have

had to respond to changing technology. To cite but one example, within living memory vast claims were made that drawers of microfilm and microfiche would replace shelves of books and journals. Today microforms are part of most libraries, but so too are books and journals, audio-visual resources, electronic databases, and the Internet.

For educational administrators, of course, this may not bring much comfort. If modern libraries require a variety of resources, in an era of tight budgets how is the right balance to be achieved? For Gorman, the key to resolve this and other dilemmas is a philosophical one of interpreting the profession's core values—the American Library Association's Code of Ethics—in light of Buddhism's Eightfold Path:

- Right Understanding
- Right Thinking
- Right Speech
- Right Action
- Right Livelihood
- Right Effort
- Proper Mindfulness
- Right Concentration

This framework serves as an "ethical lamp," providing "balance and clarity" to address resources and services needed by institutions and the individuals they serve, to focus attention on issues of immediate utility and long-term needs.

This framework is neither as daunting nor as amorphous as it sounds. Gorman is a provocative writer who can be read profitably by

librarians and non-librarians alike. The work began as a series of separately published essays, so each chapter can be read on its own. Some essays will be of more interest to some readers than others, but a study of the work in its entirety will provide a useful overview of the issues affecting modern libraries and insights that address them.

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Reducing the Identity Crisis in Doctor of Ministry Education

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ABSTRACT: By ATS description, the Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degree properly belongs to the larger and more diverse family of degrees called “professional doctorate.” This article looks to the praxis-centered nature of professional doctorates as a means of addressing the identity crisis facing D.Min. education amidst the (ubiquitous) influences of the Wissenschaft model, whose hegemony in Western institutions over the last 150 years has worked to sustain an impassable rift between matters “academic” and “professional.” I begin by discussing the challenge that many classically trained theological educators face when teaching in programs that have a distinctively professional focus, such as that of the D.Min. I then survey the rise of the Wissenschaft model and its impact on theological education—particularly as it gave rise to the so-called “clerical paradigm.” In addition, I propose that D.Min. education can reduce the tendency to succumb to the influences of the Wissenschaft model by orienting itself in relationship to the broader category of “the professional doctorate” to which it belongs. I do this first by highlighting the distinctive curricular features of professional doctorates in light of those typical to the Ph.D. degree, and then examine the formative role played by “praxis” as the defining component of advanced professional education. I conclude by suggesting that the distinguishing criterion that guides D.Min. education is the unique theological vision that informs Christianity as a whole.

Introduction: the identity crisis within doctor of ministry education

This article is written for Ph.D.-holding faculty members who are teaching in Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degree programs and thus required to engage in “professional doctoral education.” Since its inception some thirty years ago, the D.Min. degree has suffered from an identity crisis brought on, largely, by classically educated scholars who have envisioned such programs according to the influences that shaped their own theological education. Those who attended seminary in the mid to late twentieth century very likely encountered two pedagogical extremes that characterized most instances of education during that period. I argue that this phenomenon is due to “the *Wissenschaft* model,” which I explain in more detail below. On the one hand, theological schools tended to teach classical disciplines, such as biblical studies, theology, and history in isolation from practical concerns. On the other

hand, “practical” or “professional” disciplines were often taught without reference to the theoretical underpinnings proper to the profession to which it was directed. Accordingly, modern theological education failed to be praxis-centered because it focused either on theory without practice or on practice without theory. Graduates of modern seminaries went away with a bevy of academic facts about the Bible, theology, and history *and* a collection of practical facts pertaining to the day-to-day work of ministry, but rarely were these facts in either case accompanied by an explication of the theoretical rationale needed to determine *how best* to apply what was learned. With regard to the D.Min. degree, the influence of the *Wissenschaft* model has worked to blur its distinctive identity and value as a professional doctorate, prompting classically schooled educators either to deprecate it as an inferior degree—whose only value is to bolster one’s skills as a practitioner—or to preserve its dignity by requiring the same caliber (and type) of academic rigor as the Ph.D.

I propose that the D.Min. degree has a value all its own, equal to that of the Ph.D. though different. To appreciate the unique value of the D.Min. degree, however, it is necessary for those in theological education to extricate themselves from the either/or extremes of the *Wissenschaft* model and to see afresh the possibilities of “praxis-centered learning”—a pedagogical model that predates *Wissenschaft* by at least six hundred years. To that end, it will help to consider the distinctive features of the *Wissenschaft* model, its influence on the educational enterprise, particularly in professional theological education, and how best to construe the nature of the D.Min. degree so as to transcend the limitations of this model.

The rise of the *Wissenschaft* model and the bifurcation of modern education

The *Wissenschaft* model germinated and flourished in the fertile soil of the modern age’s post-Kantian era, when it was almost universally believed that “pure reason” was the foundation of “practical reason.” Under the impetus of Wilhelm von Humboldt, head of the Prussian government’s section on cultural and educational affairs, the University of Berlin became the vanguard of modern “research universities”—and the first institution to confer the (modern) Doctor of Philosophy degree. Other German universities quickly followed suit, attracting many students from other countries, including the USA.¹ By 1884, for example, thirteen of Johns Hopkins’ faculty had earned German doctorates. Accordingly, even though in 1861 Yale University was the first American institution to confer the Ph.D., scholars of American higher education typically cite the founding in 1876 of Johns Hopkins University as the decisive moment when the “Berlin” model made its *debut tour de force* in the American Academy. According to Daniel Fallon, during this period of birth and development of the American university, “the dominant influence, the overriding ideal, was the model of Humboldt’s enlightenment university.”²

Parker Palmer speaks about the power of “thinking the world apart,” by which he means the capacity to look at the world through analytical lenses. Such thinking, to be sure, has its rightful place, he assures his readers. But for all its help in science and technology, such either/or thinking “has also given us a fragmented sense of reality that destroys the wholeness and wonder of life. Our problem,” he continues, “is compounded by the fact that this mode of knowing has become normative in nearly every area, even though it misleads and betrays us when applied to the perennial problems of being human that lie beyond the reach of logic.”³ In describing “our problem” thus, Palmer underscores the pervasiveness of modernity’s Cartesian dichotomy, which sundered the “pure” from the “practical,” the mind from the body, the rational from the affective—and of which the *Wissenschaft* model is the pedagogical counterpart.

The *Wissenschaft* model served effectively to bifurcate the modern pedagogical enterprise into two (often mutually exclusive) foci, both of which are necessary but neither of which can stand without the other: *the theoretical extreme* and *the practical extreme*. Palmer offers a fitting description of *Wissenschaft*’s first extreme in which the focus of study is directed *outward*—*on the objectified other*—whether history or nature or someone else’s vision of reality. The inner reality of teacher and student is thus neglected in favor of a reality “out there.” Says Palmer:

The ideal of objectivism is the knower as a “blank slate,” receiving the unadulterated imprint of whatever facts are floating around. The aim of objectivism is to eliminate all elements of subjectivity, all biases and preconceptions, so that our knowledge can become purely empirical. For the sake of objectivity, our inner realities are factored out of the knowledge equation.⁴

When this phenomenon occurs, the educational process does not strive to locate and understand the self in the world, but rather to get self out of the way. Consequently, “we become manipulators of each other and the world rather than mutually responsible participants and co-creators. We become manipulators when we are schooled to be detached spectators of a world ‘out there.’”⁵ This, argues Palmer, is typical to the “conventional classroom.”⁶

The *Wissenschaft* model’s second focus, the practical extreme, can be traced to one of its chief architects, Friedrich Schleiermacher, who (“successfully”) defended theology’s place as a valid discipline in the emerging research university.⁷ David Kelsey observes that the rise of the institution of the university from the Middle Ages onward effectively overthrew the hegemony of theology, leaving the matter very unclear as to what, if any, place it would have in higher education:

In the research university the basis of theology’s claim to overarching authority was not recognized, and in effect the faculties of arts and sciences were made dominant. Granted, disestablishment does not necessarily mean eviction. Nonethe-

less, so radical a restructuring of power in the university left it very unclear whether theology still had any role in it.⁸

Schleiermacher offered an answer to the question of theology's place in the university in his seminal work, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*.⁹ He argued that theology, like the medical and legal sciences, are not divisions of a region of being or knowledge per se, but rather a discipline that is ordered toward a given professional goal. Its aim is practical. More specifically, the function of theology, according to Schleiermacher, was to guide clerics in carrying out their respective pastoral duties. Far from Thomas Aquinas's conception of theology as the "Queen of the sciences" that functions to orient all other university disciplines toward their ultimate (divine) telos, theology under Schleiermacher came to occupy a much less exalted place in the academy.

The influence of the *Wissenschaft* model on theological education

Edward Farley offers a cogent analysis of Schleiermacher's contribution to the *Wissenschaft* model and the far-reaching implications for theological education in the modern period.¹⁰ He argues that Schleiermacher's move succeeded in preserving a place for theology in the research university, but only by evacuating it of much of its essential content. Theology became "clericalized," delimited to matters proper to pastoral responsibilities and tasks, thus losing its essential "praxis element" by which to conceive of the church's relationship to the world:

Ingenious as the solution was, it created enormous problems of conceiving how theology has anything to do with institutions, human beings, or culture outside the leadership of the church. In other words if theology is related to practice simply by way of clerical leadership, it does not have an essential praxis element related to the world as such. "Theology" in other words does not refer to the self-understanding of the community of faith as it exists in relation to the *world*.¹¹

In the literature that followed Schleiermacher's proposal, theology increasingly came to be construed along the lines of "theological technology." "Its concern," says Farley, "was for methods for preserving and extending the Christian community, the science and art of the functions of ministry."¹²

The unhappy outcome of the *Wissenschaft* model's influence on theological education—including advanced programs oriented toward ministerial leadership such as the D.Min.—is the severing of theory and practice, in which matters theoretical and matters practical are construed as existing in separate spheres of knowledge. On the one hand, meaningful reflection on the correspondence between "academic" subject matter and the praxis of Christian ministry is ignored in favor of a sterile, abstracted analysis of such material in isolation from any practical considerations. On the other hand, the so-called practical area exists in contrast to the domain of theory, "thereby emptying

itself of theory responsibility even though its subdisciplines are themselves a *theoria* of practice and not just actual practice."¹³ When these subdisciplines try to conceive of a theological vision by which to account for their existence, they have no internal source from which to draw. Farley correctly argues that the only thing they can do "is build some sort of bridge from the independent disciplines of the so-called academic side: from the Old Testament to preaching, from moral theology to pastoral care, and so forth. In other words," Farley concludes, "there is no gathering up of these studies, as Schleiermacher proposed in his notion of the essence of Christianity, into a clear criteriology for these fields."¹⁴ Practical ministerial disciplines in modern theological education were thus truncated by what Don S. Browning and others call the "clerical paradigm," which is "the post-Schleiermacher tendency to associate practical theology with the specific arts of homiletics, liturgics, catechetics, and poimenics (pastoral care) needed by the ordained minister to maintain the internal life of the church."¹⁵

The result is a divide between the seminary and church that has left many seminary graduates feeling that their education did not provide sufficient preparation for the realities of parish ministry.¹⁶ Such dissatisfaction with seminary education accounts, at least in part, for the soaring popularity of the many conferences and seminars hosted by "teaching churches" and organizations like Willow Creek Community Church and Youth Specialties. If left to choose between pure theory and pure practice, sensible church leaders appear more inclined toward the latter.

The best intentions of theological educators notwithstanding, it is often the case that advanced programs oriented toward ministerial leadership betray their vulnerability to *Wissenschaft's* two extremes, leaving them vulnerable to an identity crisis that forces the choice between pure theory and pure practice.

The need for praxis-centered learning and the utility of professional doctorates

It can be fairly argued that for certain fields of theological education the "academy" is the proper domain. ATS clearly differentiates between basic and advanced programs that are oriented toward ministerial leadership and those oriented toward theological research and teaching. The trick, it seems, is in finding a praxis-centered pedagogical model that enables each field at once to engage both the theory and practice proper to its field. While this is of particular importance for programs oriented toward ministerial leadership, it is arguably just as important for those preparing themselves to be educators of students who will be going into ministerial leadership—even if a teacher's chosen field in the seminary is "academic."

Praxis-centered education instantiates the creative interplay between knowledge and practice that functions to instruct and refine one's engagement in a

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given (professional) context. In this sense, *praxis*, as Ray S. Anderson observes, is to be distinguished from the concept of *practice*. For Anderson, “*praxis* denotes a form of action profoundly saturated with *meaning*, a form of action that is value-directed and ‘theory-laden.’”¹⁷ He elaborates:

Praxis is reflective because it is action that not only seeks to achieve particular ends but also reflects on the means and the ends of such action in order to assess the validity of both in the light of its guiding vision. Praxis is theory-laden because it includes theory as a vital constituent. It is not just reflective action but reflective action that is laden with belief.¹⁸

Practice typically refers to the methods and means by which one applies a skill or theory, which tends to sever truth from action or method (the problem that I have identified with the “clerical paradigm”). The assumption is that what is true “can be deduced or discovered apart from the action or activity that applies it in practice. In this way of thinking,” says Anderson, “truth is viewed as existing apart from its manifestation in an event or an act.” Not so with *praxis*:

Praxis is an action that includes the telos, or final meaning and character of truth. It is an action in which the truth is discovered through action, not merely applied or ‘practiced.’ In *praxis* one is not only guided in one’s actions by the intention of realizing the telos, or purpose, but by discovering and grasping this telos through the action itself.¹⁹

In theological education, *praxis* must inform *both* academic and practical fields. Theoretically based fields like biblical studies, Christian history, and systematic theology require grounding in *praxis* so as not to be abstracted from churchly life. When such disciplines are not thus informed, the educational process often falls (unwittingly) into *Wissenschaft’s* first extreme—namely, teaching academic subject matter without any regard for the practical concerns of ministry.

One way for theological educators to avoid the extremes of the *Wissenschaft* model is to conceive of the D.Min. enterprise in light of the broader category of degrees to which it belongs—the “professional doctorate,” which offers a ready-made, *praxis*-centered pedagogical model that characteristically engages theory and practice. Professional doctoral education is not new to higher learning. First conferred by the University of Paris in the mid twelfth century, professional doctorates have existed for some 850 years.²⁰ Tom Bournier, Rachel Bowden, and Stuart Laing observe that professional doctoral programs were commonplace in European universities from the twelfth century on, primarily in the disciplines of theology, law, and medicine.²¹ Although the bifurcating effects of the *Wissenschaft* model endured through most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there is now a resurgence of such professional doctorate degrees as the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.), the Doctor of Clinical Psychology (Psy.D.), Doctor of Business Administration (D.B.A.), and the D.Min. All told,

professional doctorates now comprise about 5.5 percent of all doctoral degrees conferred by U.S. institutions. Of the 40,744 doctorates awarded by U.S. universities between July 1, 2000 and June 30, 2001, 2,238 were in the field of business and other professional areas.²²

ATS states that the purpose of the D.Min. degree is “to enhance the practice of ministry for persons who hold the M.Div. degree and have engaged in ministerial leadership.”²³ Accordingly, the goals that an institution adopts for its D.Min. program “should include an advanced understanding of the nature and purposes of ministry, enhanced competencies in pastoral analysis and ministerial skills, the integration of these dimensions into the theologically reflective practice of ministry, new knowledge about the practice of ministry and continued growth in spiritual maturity.”²⁴ In terms of content, D.Min. programs are required to “provide advanced-level study of the comprehensive range of theological disciplines” that provides for:

- ♦ An advanced understanding and integration of ministry in relation to the various theological disciplines;
- ♦ The formulation of a comprehensive and critical understanding of ministry in which theory and practice interactively inform and enhance each other;
- ♦ The development and acquisition of skills and competencies, including methods of pastoral research, that are required for pastoral leadership at its most mature and effective level; and
- ♦ A contribution to the understanding and practice of ministry through the completion of doctoral-level project/thesis.²⁵

Thus conceived, the D.Min. degree falls properly under the rubric of professional doctorates.

Educational institutions typically describe their professional doctoral degrees by comparing and contrasting them with the traditional Ph.D. Central Queen’s University, for example, highlights the distinctive nature of its professional doctorate by delineating two modes of knowledge. “Mode 1 Knowledge,” which is equated with the Ph.D., is “university-based, ‘pure research’-oriented, discipline-based, homogeneous and ‘depth’ seeking, expert-led, supply-driven, hierarchical, and peer reviewed from within a ‘community of scholars.’” “Mode 2 Knowledge,” which is equated with the professional doctorate, is:

- ♦ problem-solving around a particular application and context
- ♦ transdisciplinary knowledge and skills or appropriate for solving a problem rather than an academic interest
- ♦ heterogeneity in the way the problem-solving conditions and the research team change in the course of the project
- ♦ knowledge production in a huge range of organizations including universities

a sensitivity to social accountability and reflexivity which are built in from the start.²⁶

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Similarly, Stephen Hoddell of the University of the West of England observes several factors that broadly characterize the difference between professional doctorates and Ph.D.s. While he admits that there are exceptions, he offers the following as distinguishing characteristics of each:

Professional Doctorate	Ph.D.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Usually modular and often, but not necessarily, credit based. The taught modules are often shared with related master's level programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Never credit based, and almost invariably seen as a single integral programme.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Usually part-time, but there are some subject areas where this is not the case.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Traditionally full-time, but with an increasing number of part-time candidates. This trend is likely to increase as a consequence of student debt.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ There are normally explicit criteria for assessment of the Professional Doctorate; usually these are related to explicit learning outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ While most universities specify that the Ph.D. should be based on a significant original contribution to knowledge, there is not usually any interpretation of this into explicit assessment criteria.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Most Professional Doctorates are cohort based—partly because of the need to offer taught elements efficiently, and partly because of elements of teamworking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Most Ph.D.s are individual, although in the sciences the individual project may be carried out in the context of a research group or team.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ While there is a requirement that the candidate demonstrate a high level of knowledge and understanding within the field, this must also be related to professional practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ A Ph.D. may or may not be related to practice—and can be purely academic in focus.²⁷

One of the best comparative analyses of professional and academic doctoral education, though particular to the British context, is that of Tom Bournier, et al., "Professional Doctorates in England," which is based on data gleaned from 109 professional doctorate programs in English universities. While the authors

admit that neither professional nor academic programs are homogeneous, they adduce a “majority model” for each and then compare and contrast the two types of programs along the lines of twenty “distinctive features that are common to the professional doctorates” and “that together could reasonably be said to comprise ‘professional doctorateness’ at least as it is interpreted in English universities.”²⁸ It may be fairly argued that with one or two exceptions these features are common to most professional doctoral programs in the United States as well and therefore merit at least a cursory overview.

According to Bourner and company, the twenty identifying features of professional doctorates that may be distinguished from the Ph.D. are: “career focus,” “domain of research topic,” “research type,” “research focus,” “starting point for research,” “intended learning outcomes,” “entry qualification,” “experience as an admission requirement,” “taught component,” “modularity,” “position of master’s level work,” “initial or in-service continuing professional development,” “mode of study,” “integration of work and study,” “integration of theory and practice,” “cohorts,” “variability of duration,” “form of the research outcomes,” “assessment,” and “breadth of studies.”

In terms of career focus, while the traditional Ph.D. is designed to prepare professional researchers, the professional doctorate is aimed at developing “researching professionals.” The domain of the research topic therefore has a different focus—namely, to make a contribution to “the knowledge of professional practice.” This, in turn, impacts the type, focus, and starting point of research. While the burden of most Ph.D. programs is to produce an original contribution to a given field of knowledge, the type of research that professional doctoral programs engage is “applied research,” which the Organisation for Economic Corporation and Development describes as “an original investigation undertaken to gain new knowledge and with *practical aims and objectives*.”²⁹ Accordingly, one’s research typically focuses on a topic that has immediate relevancy to one’s own field of professional practice, and therefore takes as its starting place a given problem in the professional context that requires investigation and resolution. The intended outcome of such a course of study is “a significant original contribution to knowledge of professional practice,” along with one or more of the following:

- ♦ Personal development (often specifying reflective practice);
- ♦ Professional level knowledge of the broad field of study;
- ♦ Understanding of professionalism in the field;
- ♦ Appreciation of the contribution of research to the work of senior professional practitioners.³⁰

The career-based focus of professional doctoral research in turn impacts such program components as admissions criteria and the delivery system. While a four-year baccalaureate degree is typically the minimum entry qualification for most Ph.D. programs in English universities, the minimum level of entry in most professional doctoral programs is a master’s degree in the same

field of study. Experience is also an admission requirement in most professional doctoral programs.³¹ Less a distinguishing feature among academic and professional doctoral programs in the United States and Canada is the “taught component” (i.e., required coursework—English Ph.D.s require only the completion of a passable dissertation), for both Ph.D. and professional doctorates in North America typically include this component. What remains constant among English and American professional programs is the emphasis on the critical interface between what is “taught” and one’s professional context. This in turn affects the delivery system. Typically, professional doctoral programs have a modular structure and are cohort based. They are geared to function as a form of in-service professional development that incorporates one’s professional work and doctoral studies, joining theory and practice. Accordingly, the doctoral-studies component is typically part-time.

Professional doctoral education as “engagement in praxis”

The common thread throughout professional doctorates is the dynamic interplay between theory and practice. The University of Canberra, Australia, for example, describes its professional doctorate as a “course oriented to the informed and critical application of knowledge to problems and issues concerning the professions or professional practice.”³² Similarly, the University of Queensland conceives of professional doctorates as “coursework programs which allow experienced professionals to return to study to improve their professional practice through the application of research to current problems and issues.”³³ Queensland’s programs seek the intentional balancing of research and practical application. “This qualification combines coursework and research, with a component of not less than 33 percent and not more than 66 percent research.”³⁴ In the end, the desired outcome is “a significant contribution to the *knowledge* and *practice* of the profession.”³⁵

Professional doctoral education is designed to help students engage praxis in their respective professional contexts by increasing the level of intentionality with which they carry out the actions specific to their profession. As praxis occurs, professional learning occurs. James Will observes that praxis is “a dialogical and dialectical process that may continuously correct our ideological tendencies.”³⁶ The overarching objective is to empower students to engage in action that is not only aimed at achieving a given end, but that also “reflects on the means and the ends of such action in order to assess the validity of both in the light of its guiding vision” (Anderson). The “guiding vision” in every instance is determined by the values that guide a given profession to esteem certain means and ends over all others—and is thereby “value-laden.”

In the end, happy praxis is gauged by evaluative criteria internal to the professional context to which it is directed. Praxis serves these criteria as both prophet and priest—at once correcting and refining them; at once clarifying

and reinforcing them. This is true of most professions, including Christian ministry. ATS envisions such a phenomenon in its framing of the purpose, goals, and general content of D.Min. education. The use of such phrases as “. . . *integration of ministry in relation to various theological disciplines,*” and “. . . a comprehensive and critical understanding of ministry *in which theory and practice interactively inform and enhance each other,*”³⁷ reflects the essence of praxis-centered education whose guiding vision is that of ministry itself.

Doctor of ministry education as “engagement in praxis”

Like other professional doctoral programs, D.Min. education is committed to achieving healthy praxis in the respective professional settings to which it is directed. What distinguishes D.Min. education from other professional doctorates is the unique *theological vision* that informs Christian ministry. Arguably, different Christian traditions are guided by varying overarching visions of Christian ministry. There is, however, at least one distinguishing characteristic particular to most conceptions of ministry. Paul Ballard and John Pritchard observe that the term praxis “points to the fact that all practice reflects the inner dynamic that informs it.”³⁸ And the inner dynamic to which the praxis of Christian ministry points is the underlying conviction that Christian ministry is, to borrow from Peter Hodgson, a participation in the praxis of God in which

God is present in specific shapes or patterns of praxis that have a configuring, transformative power within historical process, moving the process in a determinate direction, that of the creative unification of multiplicities of elements into new wholes, into creative syntheses that build human solidarity, enhance freedom, break systemic oppression, heal the injured and broken, and care for the natural.³⁹

This theological vision provides the evaluative criteria by which to gauge the authenticity of all actions typically associated with Christian ministry. “There are forms of action,” says Anderson, “that appear to be comforting and even reconciling, but if they do not reveal Christ, these ministries are not of God. That is, these ministries are not actions of God. For God has acted in Jesus Christ and continues to act in him. . . .”⁴⁰ In the light of this vision, the practice of *Christian ministry* is the practice of *participating in Christ’s ongoing ministry to the Father on behalf of the world*. The question that D.Min. educators must address is not merely one of practice—e.g., “What skills and competencies are required of ‘good pastors’ or ‘effective leaders,’ and how might D.Min. education enhance these?”—but one of *praxis*: “What is the nature and shape of Christian ministry as the participation of God’s praxis in the world, and how might D.Min. education serve the church and its leaders in the actualization of this vision?”

Summary and conclusion

Those of us who teach in D.Min. programs do our job best when we bring together the two extremes of the *Wissenschaft* model in a praxis-centered curriculum. In this article, I suggested that the way forward is first to become aware of how the bifurcating influences of this pedagogical system most likely affected *us*. I observed that while classical disciplines such as biblical studies, church history, and systematic theology were often taught without much consideration given to their convergence with the practical realities of churchly life, so-called clerical disciplines, such as pastoral care, homiletics, and liturgics were taught solely to hone the pastor's professional competencies in each of these areas. The net result was an identity crisis due to the loss of the praxis-centered orientation proper to theological education and the "profession" (pastoral ministry) to which it is directed. Then I recommended that we look to the tried-and-proven praxis-centered model of professional doctoral education to clarify how best to overcome *Wissenschaft's* two extremes, and argued that ATS clearly describes the D.Min. as a professional doctorate. This exercise brought to light a model of praxis-centered learning that effectively engages both theory and practice. In each instance, the evaluative criteria by which to determine whether praxis is effective or ineffective toward a given professional end arise from the specific context in which such praxis occurs. In the end, the distinguishing criterion that guides D.Min. education in its task is the unique theological vision that informs Christian ministry as a whole—the participation in the praxis of God. When theological educators are guided by this vision, D.Min. education will be less prone to a *Wissenschaft*-induced identity crisis and more likely to incorporate pedagogical strategies that engage students in the creative, dynamic interplay between theory and practice.

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ENDNOTES

1. M. Gregory, "Implications of the Introduction of the Doctor of Education Degree in British Universities: Can the Ed.D. Reach Parts the Ph.D. Cannot?" *Vocational Aspect of Higher Education*, 47 (1995):177-88.
2. D. Fallon, *The German University* (Boulder: Associated University Press, 1980), 52.
3. P. J. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998), 62.
4. P. J. Palmer, *To Know as we are Known: A Spirituality of Education* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, San Francisco, 1983), 34, 35.
5. *Ibid.*, 37.
6. Similarly, Susan Hanley, drawing upon M. W. Caprio's work, observes: "The current American classroom, whether grade school or college level, tends to resemble a one-person show with a captive but often comatose audience. Classes are usually driven by 'teacher-talk' and depend heavily on textbooks for the structure of the course. There is the idea that there is a fixed world of knowledge that the student must come to know. Information is divided into parts and built into a whole concept. Teachers serve as pipelines and seek to transfer their thoughts and meanings to the passive student. There is little room for student-initiated questions, independent thought, or interaction between students. The goal of the learner is to regurgitate the accepted explanation or methodology expostulated by the teacher." S. Hanley, "On Constructivism," Maryland Collaborative for Teacher Preparation (1994), [document online] (accessed June 9, 2003); available from: <http://www.inform.umd.edu/UMS+State/UMD-Projects/MCTP/Essays/Constructivism.txt>. Cf. also M. W. Caprio, "Easing into Constructivism: Connecting Meaningful Learning with Student Experience," *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 23:4 (1994): 210-12.
7. In this regard, it could be said that to whatever extent Schleiermacher's turn to the subject is observed in subsequent approaches to theology, it is largely an extension of the epistemological move made by Kant. Cf. A. C. McGiffert, *Protestant Thought Before Kant* (New York: Harper, 1961), who sees Kant's contribution as a watershed in the development of Protestant thought.
8. D. H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 15.
9. F. Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline on the Study of Theology*, trans. T. N. Tice (Atlanta: John Knox, 1966 [1830]).
10. E. Farley, "Theology and Practice Outside the Clerical Paradigm," in *Practical Theology: The Emerging Field in Theology, Church, and World*, D. S. Browning, ed. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, San Francisco, 1983), 21-41.
11. *Ibid.*, 27.
12. *Ibid.*, 32.
13. *Ibid.*, 33.
14. *Ibid.*, 33, 34.
15. D. S. Browning, ed., *Practical Theology: The Emerging Field in Theology, Church, and World* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, San Francisco, 1983), 10.
16. Cf. for example the study conducted by Trudy J. Haman and Chester H. McCall. They developed a questionnaire-survey, which was completed by 400 senior pastors of mainline denominational churches in California. The findings indicated that seminary education failed adequately to prepare these persons to engage in the 15 skills judged

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to be essential for senior pastoral parish ministry. T. J. Haman and C. H. McCall, "Pastoring the Church into the Twenty-First Century," American Educational Research Association, 1999 Annual Meeting (Montreal, Canada, April 21, 1999). Cf. also J. F. Fishburn and N. Q. Hamilton, "Seminary Education Tested by Praxis," *Christian Century* (February 1-8, 1984).

17. R. S. Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 47.

18. *Ibid.*, 47, 48.

19. *Ibid.*, 48, 49 (emphasis added).

20. K. Noble, *Changing Doctoral Degrees: An International Perspective* (Buckingham, UK: Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press, 1994).

21. T. Bourner, R. Bowden, S. Laing, "Professional Doctorates in England," *Studies in Higher Education*, 26:1 (2001): 65-83.

22. The National Science Foundation, The National Institutes of Health, The National Endowment for the Humanities, The U.S. Department of Education, The U.S. Department of Agriculture, and The National Aeronautics and Space Administration, sponsors, "Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities: Summary Report 2001, [document online] (accessed June 30, 2003); available from: <http://www.norc.uchicago.edu/issues/sed-2001.pdf>.

23. The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, *Bulletin* 45, Part 1 (2002), 114.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*, 114, 115.

26. "Professional Doctorate," Central Queens University Website, [document online] (accessed July 3, 2003); available from: <http://www.profdoc.cqu.edu.au/index2.htm>.

27. S. Hoddell, "The Professional Doctorate and the PhD—Converging or Diverging Lines," A Presentation to the Annual Conference of SRHE, University of Leicester, 21 December 2000.

28. Bourner, et al., 65.

29. *Ibid.*, 71 (emphasis added).

30. *Ibid.*, 72. These descriptors comport nicely with the "varied kinds of learning" experiences called for in the ATS D.Min. degree program standards:

Peer learning and evaluation as well as self-directed learning experiences;

Significant integrative and interdisciplinary activities involving the various theological disciplines and careful use of the student's experience and ministerial context as a learning environment;

Various opportunities for learning and using the disciplines and skills necessary for the D.Min. project including sustained opportunities for study and research on the campus of the institution offering the degree; and

Opportunities for personal and spiritual growth. *ATS Bulletin*, 115.

31. Both the appropriate master's degree and professional experience are stated by ATS as admission requirements for the D.Min. degree:

Admission to the D.Min. program requires the possession of an ATS-approved M.Div. degree or its educational equivalent. Ministerial

experience is not considered the equivalent of or a substitute for the M.Div. degree.

Because the achievement of a new level of competence in the practice of ministry is a program goal, requirements for admission also include at least three years of experience in ministry subsequent to their first graduate theological degree, and evidence of capacity for an advanced level of competence and reflection. *ATS Bulletin*, 116.

32. "Policies and Procedures," University of Canberra Website, [document online] (accessed July 3, 2003); available from: <http://www.canberra.edu.au/us/policies/acad/courseword-B.html>.
33. "Professional Doctoral Program," The University of Queensland Website, [document online] (accessed February 4, 2004); available from <http://www.uq.edu.au/study/index.html?page=978&pid=4303>
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid. My emphasis.
36. J. Will, *A Christology of Peace* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1989), 25.
37. *ATS Bulletin*, 114 (emphasis added).
38. P. Ballard and J. Pritchard, *Practical Theology in Action: Christian Thinking in the Service of Church and Society* (London, UK: SPCK, 1996), 81.
39. P. Hodgson, *God in History* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), 205. Cf. also J. W. Fowler, *Faithful Change: The Personal and Public Challenges of Postmodern Life* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 191-201.
40. Ibid., 54.

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Getting Them through the Doctor of Ministry Dissertation

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ABSTRACT: This study begins with an analysis of the challenges facing Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) programs when it comes to helping students complete the dissertation. It moves to the discussion of a helpful model by Vincent Tinto for understanding the phenomenon of student dropout. Finally, after explaining the structure of the D.Min. program at George Fox Evangelical Seminary and in the light of the model proposed by Tinto, the author offers a series of strategies to help D.Min. students complete the dissertation.¹

Introduction: the problem

Like all doctoral programs in America, the Doctor of Ministry program faces a number of serious challenges for several reasons when it comes to student success.

First, in the United States, doctoral programs in any field are relatively new as an educational enterprise and have experienced rapid growth in the late twentieth century. The first doctorate in the United States was granted in 1861 at Yale University.² By 1920, there were only fourteen doctoral-granting institutions that, combined, granted fewer than 600 doctorates.³ By 1960, the number of doctorates had grown to 10,000, and by 1970, to 30,000. In 1988, 350 institutions granted 33,456 doctorates⁴ and by 1994, more than 400 universities granted 43,863 doctorates.⁵ The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) authorized the granting of the D.Min. degree in 1970 and by 2002, 125 ATS schools⁶ had 9,208 students involved in doctoral programs.⁷ The growth of the D.Min. degree has been impressive,⁸ but it has developed along lines different from those first envisioned. Jackson W. Carroll explains:

When ATS authorized the awarding of the D.Min. in 1970, schools could offer both the "in-sequence" D.Min., awarded as a first seminary degree after four years of study, and the "in-ministry" degree, based on a continuing education program for clergy already in ministry. Many assumed that the former type would become the rule, and that the latter was merely an interim measure to give clergy with B.D. or M.Div. degrees the opportunity to secure the doctorate. However, the opposite proved to be the case; the in-sequence D.Min. did not become popular but the in-ministry degree did, and in a large way.⁹

Like all doctoral programs in the United States, the D.Min. is a relatively young degree program that has been pressed by rapid growth and is still in an early developmental stage.

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Second, the completion rates in doctoral programs are lower than anyone would like. Barbara E. Lovitts cites eight studies between 1960 and 1996 that all point to a completion rate of 50 percent.¹⁰ Worst of all, the problem is not widely acknowledged because on the one hand, “no hardcore national data exist.”¹¹ On the other hand, individual schools do not keep thorough statistics from which student dropout and noncompletion rates can be extracted. The *ATS Fact Book* is a case in point, offering only enrollment, head count, and completion statistics, from which no reliable conclusions about dropout and noncompletion rates in the D.Min. programs can be drawn. For women and minorities, the noncompletion rates are considerably higher.¹² The best estimates available to me, at this time, suggest that completion rates in ATS D.Min. programs average about the same as in other doctoral programs—approximately 50 percent.¹³

Students drop out of doctoral programs at various stages of the process. Bowen and Rudenstine found that 13 percent drop out before the second year of class work, another 17 percent drop out between the time they begin the second year of study and the time they reach the ABD (“all but dissertation”) stage. A final 15 to 25 percent of students never complete the dissertation phase. I know of no reason to suspect that D.Min. programs do not share this common pattern. The experience of our school’s first two cohorts (totaling twenty-nine students) is not significantly outside this range: 24.2 percent dropped out by the time the ABD stage was reached; only 55.7 percent of those who began have graduated thus far. We still hold out hope for six ABD students from these cohorts to finish. If four of them were to do so, this would bring our completion rate for those two cohorts to 68.9 percent.

A recent study of completion rates at several Canadian universities revealed statistics that were not dissimilar to those in the U.S.: “the graduation rates vary sharply, from a low of 34.4 percent in the humanities at one institution to a high of 92 percent in the life sciences at one institution.” The general averages were “45.6 percent for humanities and 55.1 percent for social sciences.”¹⁴

Third, doctoral students’ time to completion is longer than we would like, and the time to completion is rising, not falling. One study showed that between 1960 and 1995, the time to completion rose from an average of 6.5 years to 8.2 years.¹⁵ Another large study of the University of California system indicated that between 1968 and 1988 the time to completion rose from 5.4 to 6.7 years and that completion rates vary by discipline. A detailed analysis of students entering doctoral programs at UC Berkeley between 1975 and 1977 showed that:

... only 31 percent of the humanities students and 45 percent of the social science students had completed doctorates after eleven, twelve, and thirteen years (as of May 1988). In comparison, the completion rates for biological and physical science doctoral students were 69 percent and 67 percent, respectively.¹⁶

One of the significant factors affecting these statistics is the sources of funding support for doctoral students. Those students who had to rely on their own or their spouse’s earnings took the longest to graduate (eleven years). Those who took out loans spent 9.4 years. Those with teaching assistantships took 8.3 years. Those with the shortest time to completion were supported by fellowships

(7.9 years) and research assistantships (7.0 years).¹⁷ These statistics do not bode well for humanities-based D.Min. programs where most students pay their own way.

Fourth, various studies have shown that, for most students, the dissertation writing process is an experience in life unlike any faced before and is plagued by a vast list of potential barriers. One study identified thirty-nine variables that can affect dissertation completion adversely. Leading causes of delayed dissertation completion were identified as isolation, financial problems, the press of outside responsibilities, negative personality traits, research difficulties, and adverse committee dynamics.¹⁸ This study made a helpful distinction between the two forms that isolation takes: physical distance and “psychological distance” from the program. The latter has more to do with a sense of disconnection from the faculty members and student peers in the research and writing process.

Another study listed forty-five potential barriers and had graduates and current students identify which were the greatest hindrances or help to them.¹⁹ Those listed as most debilitating were job-related pressures, difficulty in setting aside time for dissertation, delay in starting after comprehensive exams, isolation from other students, and the dissertation process lacking structure. Another study underscored the challenges posed by the isolation of the student during the dissertation writing phase, the tendency to delay selection of the dissertation topic until after completion of all coursework, and the challenges posed by students’ own perfectionism.²⁰ Though a problem for all students, statistics show that perfectionism plagues female students even more than their male counterparts. At least one study shows that differences in a student’s learning style can have a profound impact on completion rates.²¹ In 1991, the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States underscored the difficulty facing students in selecting a dissertation topic, especially in the fields of humanities and social sciences where, they said, there is minimal faculty assistance with this important task. Judging by our experience, D.Min. students seem no less susceptible to these challenges than other doctoral students.

Finally, the D.Min. program, along with other professional doctoral programs, suffers a lack of respect from some quarters that leads to a confusing set of mixed messages for the D.Min. student. Ironically, some faculty members and administrators simultaneously demand that the most rigorous academic standards possible be applied to the D.Min. dissertation and, at the same time, summarily remove D.Min. degree holders from any academic search process carried out by the institution. Some would deny the term “dissertation” to the D.Min. final project claiming that it does not deserve the title. In an article in *Theological Education* in 1999, Timothy Lincoln documents well the confusion and conflicting visions that surround the D.Min. dissertation.²² He advocates an understanding of the D.Min. dissertation as “practical Christian wisdom.” Another writer characterizes it as “an exercise in practical theology.”²³ Often, advocates of differing views work in the same D.Min. program—some as teachers, some as dissertation advisors. It is not uncommon for students to find themselves caught between differing expectations about the nature of the dissertation.

Taken together, these problems pose serious challenges both for the D.Min. student and for those attempting to construct and administer such a program. It is no wonder, then, that various factors would converge to cause students to drop out of a program, and yet, student dropout is never a routine or merely statistical occurrence. Where a student has poured some months or years of their life into a program and then is forced to withdraw, the event can have much the same force as a suicide. In fact, the most helpful model I know of for understanding the phenomenon of student dropout is one grounded on Emile Durkheim's theory of suicide. In 1975, Vincent Tinto, published a study entitled, "Dropout from Higher Education: A Theoretical Synthesis of Recent Research."²⁴ A full explication of this model is not possible here, but an overview of some of its main features will provide a very helpful theoretical framework for the discussion to follow.

A helpful conceptual model for understanding doctoral student dropout

Tinto was looking for a model that could do more than just describe the phenomenon of student dropout; he wanted to be able to explain it. Tinto found his explanatory model in Durkheim's contention that "the likelihood of suicide in society increases when two types of integration are lacking—namely, insufficient moral (value) integration and insufficient collective affiliation."²⁵ Tinto posited that the basic dynamics of student dropout are analogous: "insufficient interactions with others in the college and insufficient congruency with the prevailing value patterns of the college collectivity" would lead to cases of student dropout. Tinto identified two domains in which the malintegration could take place: the one centering in the academic domain of the institution and the other centering in the social domain. He noted that it is quite possible to achieve integration in one area and fail in the other.

Tinto describes the theory in this way:

"this theoretical model of dropout . . . argues that the process of dropout from [a program] can be viewed as a longitudinal process of interactions between the individual and the academic and social systems of the [institution] during which a person's experiences in those systems (as measured by his normative and structural integration) continually modify his goal and institutional commitments in ways which lead to persistence and/or to varying forms of dropout."²⁶

There can be no doubt that individuals bring a number of traits, dispositions, and experiences to the relationship that affect their ability and desire to persist. Models before Tinto's work tended to focus on these intellectual and psychological traits of the student as the key factors in persistence.²⁷ What Tinto shows is that these models leave institutional characteristics out of the equation and fail to grasp that the key is to be found in the satisfying or unsatisfying interactions that occur in the give and take between student and institution. Thus, the student's family background, individual attributes, and other educational experiences all play a role in forming the capacities and traits that

a student brings—their endowment, so to speak.²⁸ These go a long way toward establishing the student's level (high or low) of goal commitment. On the other hand, life in the program offers a number of experiences to the student—interactions with fellow students and with faculty and other members of the institution. Where these experiences are vibrant and positive, the student experiences increased levels of integration, socially and academically. To the extent that students believe these positive experiences are contributing toward the achievement of their goals, they will develop an ever greater commitment to the institution as the place best suited to the pursuit of their goals.

So, once the student enrolls in a program, it is the day-to-day interactions with the social and academic structures of the institution—and the nature of those interactions—that lead to decisions as to whether or not the student should persist in the program or leave. Tinto says, “In the final analysis, it is the interplay between the individual's commitment to the goal of [program] completion and his [sic] commitment to the institution that determines whether or not the individual decides to drop out from [the program] and the forms of dropout behavior the individual adopts.”

This is true even when the student is faced with a life crisis from some source completely external to the institutional setting. In the end, Tinto contends that students perform—whether formally or informally—a cost-benefit analysis and decide whether the demands of the crisis outstrip the value that staying in the program would offer, or whether staying in the program is the more valued option for them in spite of the crisis. Probably every D.Min. program has stories like ours where even students facing unexpected terminal illnesses decide that continuation in the program offers them the most supportive and meaningful venue in which to spend the life energies they have. Many others will decide to withdraw, and for perfectly understandable reasons. The point is that in every case, the students have performed their own cost-benefit analysis of their options and come to their own conclusions.

In the end, participation in the institution offers to the student an opportunity for integration—on a social level and on an academic level—with other members of the academic community. The higher the level of integration experienced by the student, the greater is the perceived value of the experience to the student and the greater is the commitment to remain in the program. Conversely, where there is a lack of integration or a “malintegration,” as Tinto calls it, the student will perceive less value in the experience and stands a greater chance of dropping out.

Tinto is careful to distinguish between dropout (a student-initiated decision) and dismissal (a faculty-initiated decision). These very different phenomena are often grouped together in an institution's “non-completion” statistics. The latter is a difficult, but sometimes necessary, response to a student who lacks either the intellectual skills, social skills, or the goal commitment necessary to perform satisfactorily in the program.²⁹ In a perfect world, we would be able to spot these inadequacies before the student is accepted into the program. In the real world, though, these difficult truths often do not become clear until we have experience with the student in the program. Surely it is better for everyone concerned if the institution has processes in place that can identify the academic problem earlier

rather than later, and take steps to dismiss students before they have spent a lot of time wasted in a program they cannot complete. Tinto shows that this process of dismissal may be necessary even if a student is experiencing success at the level of integration into the social life of the institution.

According to Tinto, academic integration expresses itself both in grade performance (“meeting of certain explicit standards of the academic system”) and intellectual development (“the individual’s identification with the norms of the academic system”).³⁰ The former indicates the students’ performance in the program, the latter indicates the level to which they are internalizing and adopting the means and ends of the field of discipline as part of their own identity and *modus operandi*.

Probably no single piece of Tinto’s model will come as news to theological educators. We all know the importance of a student’s background, the necessity of positive social and academic experiences, and the pain attendant with dismissal and/or withdrawal, but what I find extremely helpful in Tinto’s model is the way in which these factors are brought together into a plausible set of cause-and-effect relationships.

Below, I would like to show how this model helps us to understand what makes for a well-designed dissertation process—one in which we do everything possible to improve the chances of students completing the program. Before I detail the lessons we are learning and the strategies we are employing to help D.Min. students complete their dissertations, I need to describe the nature of the delivery system we use for the program.

The D.Min. program at George Fox Evangelical Seminary

Like many D.Min. programs, ours calls for a two-year period of coursework followed by the writing of a dissertation. The sixteen classes that make up the coursework for the program are offered in four modules, each with four classes. They begin with ten weeks of “ramp up” work, continue through two weeks on campus, and finish with another ten weeks of “ramp down” work. Each module lasts for approximately twenty-two weeks.

Assignments for each week of the ramp up and ramp down are found on the cohort website. Each course is allotted anywhere from one to three weeks of ramp up and ramp down work, depending on how much time is devoted to the course during the on-campus stay. Each weekly assignment is calculated to require about ten hours. Typically, a small portion of the assignment calls for students to post some of their work to the threaded discussion area. This allows for a dimension of student-to-student interaction to take place during the ramp up and ramp down phases.

Several benefits flow out of the use of our course management system (WebCT) for ramp up and ramp down work.

1. Most importantly, we are able to establish and maintain a “myth of community” surrounding the work of the cohort. Though separated by great distances and able to see one another only at six-month intervals, the students nevertheless comprise an ongoing community of inquiry around their work together. The personality of each cohort is distinct. Some take to this very well while others rarely participate beyond the required amount, but the website

offers a possibility for maintaining a sense of community that was not available before.

2. Students have anytime/anywhere access to the cohort virtual space.
3. Through adherence to the common schedule and through asynchronous interaction in the threaded discussion area, students have a sense that they are moving together as a cohort through the work. Students are less likely to become isolated and completely lose touch with their work if they are in regular contact with their fellow members of the cohort around the work they are doing in common.
4. Students are provided with clear directions for their work. Faculty members are asked to provide a set of step-by-step instructions for the ten hours of work due each week for their class.
5. The total work load for each course is broken down into ten-hour increments which are manageable.
6. The amount of assigned work from class to class tends to be more uniform, since faculty members are asked to work within the timeframes laid out for the program.
7. Course, module, and program information is readily available on the website. This includes syllabi, book lists, calendars, and information packets about the dissertation and other aspects of the program.
8. By attaching electronic copies of all current drafts of their dissertation work to discussion postings, the website functions as something of a cohort file cabinet in which the student, the students' advisors, and any other faculty member can get access to current drafts of the student's work.

The lessons we are learning

Ours is a young program, having welcomed the first cohort a mere five years ago. For this reason alone, any wisdom we purport to offer might be deemed premature until we can demonstrate its effectiveness through decadal longitudinal studies. However, those who study system efficiencies know that in addition to outcome and following indicators, there are also the so-called leading indicators. These are the indicators that give early clues to system performance. As an example of negative leading indicators, we might observe that if students regularly fall asleep in class or don't show up or if the entire class gets failing grades on exams, one does not have to wait for student evaluations at the end of the semester to draw the conclusion that they are not being engaged by the course. On the other hand, there are positive leading indicators that suggest that systems are working well. We believe some of these in our D.Min. program are: (1) the presence of a very high level of student satisfaction with the courses devoted to dissertation research; (2) increasing clarity about the scope and direction of the dissertation by students at relatively early stages in their programs and (3) a consonance between student and advisor about the scope and direction of the dissertation well before the end of the completion of classwork. We believe these patterns flow directly into the formal dissertation writing phase, bode well for successful completion, and are providing significant momentum for students.

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In what follows, we will share the lessons we are learning about how to help students surmount a number of the most significant barriers to completion of the D.Min. dissertation. We have taken particular account of those barriers to completion that are identified in the literature and which Tinto would call institutional elements in the relationship. These are issues over which we have control and for which we must take responsibility. We address the following significant obstacles facing Doctor of Ministry dissertation writers: (1) the dissertation process lacking structure; (2) the delay in selecting a topic for the dissertation; (3) lack of clarity about the nature of the dissertation; (4) the physical and psychological isolation of the dissertation process; (5) the challenge of learning research methods; (6) the difficulty of grounding the research problem in the context of pastoral ministry; (7) ensuring that the thesis is informed by relevant biblical and theological materials; (8) meeting the academic standards of the dissertation; (9) achieving coherence in the dissertation; (10) the need for effective time management strategies in dealing with the press of outside concerns; (11) advisor problems; and (12) perfectionism.

1. *We have brought structure to the dissertation writing process and begin that process early in the program.* Early in the design of our Doctor of Ministry program, we decided to devote one one-credit course every module to helping students work on their dissertations. It will take a few paragraphs, but let me sketch out how we approach the four courses. It should be clear that one of the main benefits of our approach is that it starts the dissertation process early and brings a great deal of structure to the experience.

In the first module, the dissertation course focuses on two objectives: (1) helping students identify the general area in which they will do their dissertation and (2) introducing them to research methods. To accomplish the former, we give them time in an individual writing lab to produce a brief (one-page) description of the general topic area in which they would like to specialize in their dissertation work. In the second part of the course, we give students their first orientation to advanced research methods, using their topics as the target of their research. During the ramp down portion of the course, we ask them to produce a "topic overview." In order to do this successfully, they must be able to identify the key scholars and writers in that field, the works generally acknowledged to be the most important in that field, and the state of the discussion going on among those writers. At this stage, the student is only expected to carry out this study at a general and basic level, but this work will lay the foundation for more advanced study.

In the ramp up to the second module, we have students write a story that will introduce the reader to the problem that they will address in their dissertations. William Myers's *Research in Ministry* has a helpful discussion of how to conceive and write such a piece.³¹ Myers lays out four categories that help students to analyze the context of the ministry problem: (a) demographics, (b) structures, (c) timelines, and (d) symbols. We have students write a (semi-) fictional account using a set of characters to illustrate the problem.

When students come for the on-site portion of module two, we have them self-select into small (three-person), peer editing groups. In these groups, they read their stories and listen to feedback from their peers as to what their writing

actually communicated. Then they edit their story, incorporating the feedback from their peers.

The next part of the class session for module two is given to helping students write a 300-word dissertation abstract. In our experience, the single characteristic most difficult for dissertation writers to achieve is coherence. This exercise is more an exercise in coherence than it is in mapping out what the dissertation will ultimately contain. Students are shown several examples of abstracts from successful dissertations. They begin to learn the structure and flow and coherence of a dissertation, even while they are in the process of conceiving theirs for the first time. We tell them that they are writing fiction at this stage, but that as they re-write the abstract at several points along the way, it will slowly become the work they finally produce in their dissertation.

A third component of this course in module two involves introducing students to Citation, the bibliographic management software we use in the program. As we review research methods with the students and help them as they begin to gather materials for reading, we have them use Citation to manage the information.

Finally, it is at this point in the program—between the second and third modules—that we pair up students with dissertation advisors. The director of the program orchestrates this pairing, in part, based on the information that the students give in their abstracts. Students are then put in contact with their advisor. Their ramp down assignment has them sending the three pieces they have thus far (story, abstract, and working bibliography) to the advisor.

In module three, we help students clarify the major argument and logical flow of their dissertations. We use the chapter on “Claims and Warrants” from Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph Williams’s *The Craft of Research*³² to analyze and illustrate the logic and argumentation of the dissertation. Out of this exercise, they must write a 1500-word version of their abstract in which they identify the major claims and supporting evidence they will use and begin to probe the warrants that hold the two together. The process of writing this out has the effect of clarifying for students where they are weak and what work needs specially to be done. Once more, we facilitate a discussion between advisors and students around this expanded abstract.

During the ramp up to module four, students are asked to write a time management plan detailing where and when they intend to write, what agreements they intend to broker with their churches about time away, etc., and what they will do in the event that their first plan fails to work. Students must read these plans to their fellows in peer evaluation groups and give input to one another about the believability of the plans. The plans are then rewritten.

In this final module, we also have students produce a list of “my ten projects.” Essentially, this list is the list of the ten small papers they must write to complete the one dissertation. The sheer magnitude of the dissertation can be overwhelming to students. By helping them to break down the dissertation into “bite-size pieces,” we help them to visualize the project as doable. Again, we have students send this list to their dissertation advisors, getting their input on whether anything has been overlooked.

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With regard to Tinto's model, it is clear that these experiences are the primary opportunities in the program to carry out the work of integration for the student, both on a social and an academic level. If Tinto's model teaches us anything, it teaches us that, in terms of successful completion, the content of the program is merely a vehicle for social and academic integration.

2. *It is important to work continuously for clarity about the nature of the dissertation.* We have spent no small amount of energy in the first years of our program working out the issues—abstract and concrete—relating to the dissertation. The questions involved in these discussions could, on their own, consume all the space available to this article. In the end, we call it a dissertation. It is the most complex and far-ranging piece of work required of students in this, the terminal degree program for those in the area of ministry. In every field this piece is known as a dissertation. By adding the name of the field to the term "dissertation," one qualifies the nature of the dissertation by the nature of the field of inquiry, with all of the standards and norms attendant to that field. A dissertation in the field of biology is different from one in philosophy; both of these are different from one in sociology or in education. Calling it a dissertation gives it the respect it deserves and, at the same time, calls the program to strive for the highest standards possible.

The nature of the discipline of theological education and of the training both faculty and students have received makes it inappropriate to think of the dissertation as an exercise in quantitative analysis. It addresses problems that are grounded in the context of pastoral ministry, but it does so by engaging in significant reflection on materials from the Christian Scriptures and from Christian history and thought. In addition, it marshals wisdom from other external fields of study that are relevant to the problem under discussion (e.g., sociological or psychological theory), but it does so at a level and to the standards in keeping with the norms of general theological education, not to those of the external field. All of this research is aimed at the construction of a solution for a practical problem.

Tinto's model helps us to understand that when we send mixed messages to students about the importance and nature of the dissertation process, we are posing a nearly insurmountable integration challenge for them. They feel caught underneath forces that are being played out above them and over which they have little control. In almost every case such examples of mixed or conflicting messages have the effect of causing the student to wonder if they are measuring up to the academic standards of the program, or even if the academic standards are achievable. This can only produce an inchoate sense of anxiety that has little benefit for the student or the institution.

3. *Student dissertation topics need to be decided early; yet revised and shaped through an iterative process.* In the past it seems like the norm has been for students to select a dissertation topic very near the end or completely after their course work is finished. By starting the dissertation process early and embedding its formative stages within the coursework of the program, we are making the primary structural opportunities in the program for social and academic interaction available to the dissertation process.

4. *Multiple strategies are available to ward off student isolation.* We are finding several structures and techniques especially useful in warding off student isolation in the dissertation process and at other times in the program. As we mentioned above, the use of the cohort website as an asynchronous virtual meeting place is especially helpful in this regard, particularly when we use the threaded discussion board as a means for students to engage one another's work and ideas. When on campus, the peer evaluation groups may seem like an extravagant expenditure of time when this is the only time that faculty have students "for class," and yet, these processes are deeply integrative experiences for the students. When we have them share their writing plans with one another, they are preparing not just to become a solitary writer, but a member of a cohort of students working individually, but interactively, on their dissertations.

5. *To be most effective, research methods must be taught and practiced in the context of actual research on the dissertation.* Librarians and IT folks refer to this as "just in time" training as opposed to "just in case" training. Armed with a meaningful dissertation topic and oriented to the mysteries of electronic library interfaces and licensed databases, students engage in searches for materials in lab settings in every module of the program. By sharing best practices with one another at the end of the lab times, they construct a sense of professional community, a necessary piece in the intellectual development of the student.

6. *Helping students meet and take on the various standards of the dissertation is best accomplished in a structured and interactive process.* We carry out this process in several formal stages of the program. We do it in the first module when we introduce them into the theological rationale for engaging in research methods (humility is at the base of it!). We do it in the second module when we use a three-stage writing process to ensure that the research problem is adequately grounded in the context of pastoral ministry. We do it in the third module when we have them construct an expanded abstract to ensure that they are forming a thesis informed by biblical and theological and other relevant materials, and when we school them in the fine points of argumentation with claims and warrants, and when we teach them to use bibliographic management software to ensure adherence to proper form. We do it in the fourth module when we guide them through processes aimed at gaining a clear vision of the audience and the selection of an effective voice for that audience. Alongside these formal processes are a host of the unstructured interactions of both a social and academic sort. Tinto's model helps us to see that, in the end, meeting the academic standards of the program will help the student get good grades, but it is in helping students to understand and internalize these standards that we will help them achieve the more important goal: their intellectual development.

7. *One powerful antidote to perfectionism is a forced subjugation of the idiosyncratic self to the norms of the group.* Perfectionism is vigilance without humility. In a vacuum, students have no other standard of performance than their own imagination. Even in a vacuum, the reasonable student will think to ask, "I wonder how thoroughly others go at this?" Perfectionism takes over when we don't think to ask this question, or when we discover that our imaginations have led us to adopt a level of vigilance that is beyond the norm and we can't bring ourselves to let go of our idiosyncratic vision of the standard. Then perfectionism

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has banished humility. In the end, it is certain that every individual must address the issue of perfectionism, but there are some things we can do that either feed an unbridled perfectionism or things that call it to answer to humility.

It simply is not possible to be in our D.Min. program and not be working on the dissertation in the first two years of class work. We do not allow students simply to take notes so that when they decide on a topic, they will know what to do. They have to jump in and make decisions, lots of decisions, and in almost every case, they feel inadequate to the task. They feel—and often justifiably so—that they are not fully ready to make this or that decision. Nevertheless, they have to make decisions, and then they have to learn to deal with the decisions they have made by refining and changing them along the way. Our hope is that by requiring a tendency toward decisiveness at countless points along the way, the students will stay in that mode and maintain their forward motion, making decisions before they feel completely ready but also knowing how to go back and revise and improve what they have done.

It would help all of us involved in the design and implementation of D.Min. programs to have accurate information regarding D.Min. completion rates, dropout rates, dropout points (i.e., at what stage of the program the dropouts occur), time to completion, and clear distinction between dismissal rates, dropout rates, and transfer rates, etc. We could begin to name the problem and establish its magnitude more precisely. In the meantime, we have good reason to assume that our performance is little better than the norm for doctoral programs, and if this is true, we probably have some work to do as seminary faculty and administrations. The obstacles to improved dissertation completion rates and lowered time to completion are significant, but so are the reasons for trying.

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ENDNOTES

1. This article was written in the context of a writing workshop funded by a grant from the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning. Thanks are due to Lucinda Huffaker and Paul Myhre for their assistance in the grant-writing process. I also wish to express thanks to the colleagues with whom I participated in the workshop: Mary Kate Morse, Chuck Conniry, and Daniel Brunner. Their unflagging commitment to the goals of the workshop and their generous input for refining my article went a long way to helping me get the project completed. Finally, I wish to thank my dear and recently-retired colleague, Chuck Church, former director of the Portland Center library of George Fox University. Together, we taught all of the D.Min. research courses and refined the systems and procedures that are in use today.
2. Lester F. Goodchild and Margaret M. Miller, "The American Doctorate and Dissertation: Six Developmental Stages," in *Rethinking the Dissertation Process: Tackling Personal and Institutional Obstacles*, ed. Lester F. Goodchild, et. al., New Directions for Higher Education, 99 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), 17, lists Yale's start date as 1856. However, the Yale University website lists 1861 as the year "it issued the first Ph.D. degrees in the United States" (<http://www.yale.edu/opa/newsr/97-09-03-01.all.html>), viewed February 4, 2004).
3. Marcia K. Phelps, "Social Integration and Career Integration: Factors Associated with Degree Completion and Time-to-Degree in Doctoral Programs," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nebraska, 1996, 1.
4. Phelps, "Social Integration," 1, citing Bowen and Rudenstine, *In Pursuit of the Ph.D.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1991.
5. Lester F. Goodchild and Margaret M. Miller, "The American Doctorate," 17 and 31. Goodchild and Miller cite the last statistic from the Digest of Educational Statistics, U.S. Department of Education NCES 96-133 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office), 1996.
6. I.e., just over half of the 244 ATS schools reporting for that year.
7. This is the head count number of students in doctoral programs in ATS schools. ATS statistics are available on the website: www.ats.edu. Almost all of these doctoral programs and students are in U.S. schools, and most of the programs are for the Doctor of Ministry degree.
8. The head count of Doctor of Ministry students was 12.03 percent of the total head count for all programs of ATS schools (76,510) in 2002.
9. Jackson W. Carroll, "Why Is the D.Min. So Popular?" *Christian Century*, 105 (1988), 106.
10. Barbara E. Lovitts, *Leaving the Ivory Tower: The Causes and Consequences of Departure from Doctoral Study* (Lanham, Boulder, New York, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001), 17, n. 1. Darla Germeroth, "Lonely Days and Lonely Nights: Completing the Doctoral Dissertation," *ACA Bulletin*, 76 (1991), 60, cites D. Sternberg, *How to Complete and Survive a Doctoral Dissertation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981) who estimates that "60 percent of the 51,000 ABDs generated every year in the social sciences, education and humanities remain ABD." Among these would be Doctor of Ministry students.
11. Lovitts, *Leaving the Ivory Tower*, 1, where she cites the National Research Council 1996 study.
12. *Ibid.*, 2, cites another seven studies that have probed this phenomenon but notes that "the exact figure is unknown."

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13. Care must be taken in applying student completion statistics drawn from Ph.D. programs to D.Min. programs. There are enough dissimilarities between the two to make it impossible to draw simple and direct correlations between dropout rates in Ph.D. programs and those in D.Min. programs. Yet two considerations make it profitable to consider D.Min. student completion rates in the context of all doctoral programs, including Ph.D. programs in America. The first we have already mentioned. In the absence of dropout and time to completion rates for D.Min. programs, we have little else with which to work. But on a more fundamental level, all doctoral programs share a great deal in common: their students share the same general demographics, the programs represent the highest level of work in their field, and they place the highest level of expectation and demand on the student. Both my research of doctoral programs generally and my experience with D.Min. students in our program indicates that suggestive inferences can be drawn from the former for the latter. I am grateful to Nancy Merrill and one of the reviewers for helping to formulate this necessary caveat.
14. Peggy Berkowitz, "The Long Haul," *University Affairs* (February 2003), 8-9.
15. Catherine Gaffney Pinson, "Academic Speed Bumps: Time to Completion of the Dissertation," Ph.D. dissertation, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1997, 1. Pinson cites statistics from studies in 1990 and 1996 by the National Research Council. Similar statistics are cited in Maresi Nerad and Debra Sands Miller, "The Institution Cares: Berkeley's Efforts to Support Dissertation Writing in the Humanities and Social Sciences," in *Rethinking the Dissertation Process: Tackling Personal and Institutional Obstacles*, esp. 77ff.
16. Nerad and Miller, "The Institution Cares," 78.
17. *Ibid.*, 78.
18. Pinson, "Academic Speed Bumps: Time to Completion of the Dissertation," 2-7.
19. Raymond C. Kluever, "Students' Attitudes Toward the Responsibilities and Barriers in Doctoral Study," in *Rethinking the Dissertation Process: Tackling Personal and Institutional Obstacles*, 75-90. This study involved an N of 239 at the University of Denver's College of Education.
20. Marcia K. Phelps, "Social Integration," 20-21.
21. Steven R. Terrell, "The Effect of Learning Style on Doctoral Course Completion in a Web-Based Learning Environment," *The Internet and Higher Education* 5, no. 4 (2002): 345-53.
22. Timothy Lincoln, "Writing Practical Christian Wisdom: Genre and the Doctor of Ministry Dissertation," *Theological Education*, 36:1 (1999), 171-187. See also, J. Randall Nichols, "D.Min Projects: The Horrifying End," *Theological Education* 12:4 (1976), 264-270.
23. Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore and William R. Myers, "The Doctorate of Ministry as an Exercise in Practical Theology: Qualitative Research with Living Human Documents," *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry*, 11 (1989), 5-24.
24. *Review of Educational Research*, 45:1 (Winter, 1975), 89-125. Over the next few decades literally dozens of studies of student dropout were performed using Tinto's model as the primary theoretical framework. The theory is further developed in Tinto's *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition*, second edition (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), especially in section four, "A Theory of Individual Departure from Institutions of Higher Education," 84-137. Tinto's work focuses on college completion but seems to address well the essential dynamics involved in graduate completion. In what follows I edit a few of Tinto's quotes (in brackets) to generalize from college to graduate education.

25. Tinto, "Dropout from Higher Education," 91.
26. Ibid., 94.
27. See Tinto, *Leaving College*, 84ff. for a review of this literature.
28. Marcia K. Phelps, "Social Integration," 11, coins this use of the term in relation to this aspect of Tinto's theory.
29. In keeping with Tinto's analogical use of the term suicide, there may be some cases where what the institution views as euthanasia may be viewed by the student as murder!
30. Tinto, "Dropout from Higher Education," 104.
31. William Myers, *Research in Ministry* (Chicago: Exploration Press, 2000) 3-15.
32. Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 88-145.

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Thinking Again about the Reformed Tradition and Public Life¹

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ABSTRACT: Among the basic goals of the Master of Divinity degree, The Association of Theological Schools added in the 1996 redeveloped standards developing "a capacity for ministerial and public leadership." Long an educational goal within the Reformed tradition, the seminaries associated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) took this addition as an opportunity to think freshly about how to educate students toward public leadership. As one aspect of that project, the authors develop a vision of "The Responsible Congregation" and recommend several strategies for incorporating that vision into seminary curricula.

The challenge

The church is born public but everywhere made private.² This claim, while overly broad, nevertheless highlights a tension that twenty-first century U.S. churches will increasingly face; namely, that between the inward and outward expressions of their ministry. Nowhere is this more clearly the case than in those churches that stand within the Reformed tradition. After all, from Simon Peter's speech at Pentecost to John Calvin's activities in sixteenth-century Geneva to Jonathan Edwards's influence on New England thought during the colonization of America, the ecclesial history of the Reformed tradition is marked by its public origins and its distinctive mode of public engagement. In spite of their birth, however, Reformed churches now find themselves struggling to clarify their own public role in contemporary society, and while they may or may not wish to say or do the same things Peter, Calvin, and Edwards did, they nevertheless need to think again about how to engage the public witness of the church.

The current tension within U.S. Reformed churches (e.g., those in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Reformed Church in America, Cumberland Presbyterian Church, etc.) is not without historical precedent. Two streams of thought have always flowed together in these churches, sometimes peacefully

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and other times turbulently; call one “The Liberal Tradition” and the other “The Reformed Tradition.” From its origins, The Liberal Tradition within the United States has advocated the privatization of religion over against giving political power to religious leaders *qua* religious leaders. This privatizing drive, born of the twin convictions that people are less likely to kill each other if they are willing to tolerate differences of religion and that the best way to promote such tolerance is to keep civic power out of the hands of religion, has been a valuable component of American civil polity. It has also, however, stood in tension with The Reformed Tradition’s conviction that there is no way to separate public and private aspects of religious life. That this tension has not been more historically prominent may only point to the degree that Reformed theology has suffused American political life up to the twentieth century or the fact that Reformed churches have been fairly willing to accept the liberal position, given their place of relative political prominence. Looked at from a historical perspective and within the U.S. at least, the themes of public engagement within the Reformed tradition and the separation of ecclesiastical and civil control have not necessarily been viewed as contradictory.

Yet the times, as Bob Dylan reminds us, are a-changing, and as those times have changed, so has the Reformed church. Its prestige is diminished and with it the number of qualified candidates entering seminaries, graduating from them prepared for ministry, and then staying in ministry. Reformed churches and seminaries feel isolated from each other: churches accuse seminaries of not teaching what the churches need and seminaries accuse churches of disconnecting themselves from their historically important tradition of intellectual engagement. Numbers continue to decline, and most Reformed ministers have by-and-large surrendered their public roles in order to focus on the various problems within their individual churches and the denomination as a whole.

While the writers of this document certainly would not lay the responsibility of all these present ecclesial troubles at the feet of the Reformed church’s failure to emphasize the place of public leadership in its ministries, we suspect that the two are related. Confusions about or disregard of public roles at local and national levels have exacerbated these troubles. Focusing inward, Reformed churches are less publicly visible, appeal to fewer people who are not already participants in their congregations, and are less valued by those who wish to make a difference in the public sphere. It follows then, that carefully exploring and reincorporating the Reformed tradition of public leadership may contribute to redressing these problems. Such exploration and re-incorporation will be a challenge, given not only the present neglect of the public aspect of their ministries, but also the changing configurations of American society. However, it may also hold great promise.

Undoubtedly, as United States’ citizens increasingly recognize their growing cultural and intellectual diversity, the reasons that this country’s founders privatized religion seem more and more sensible. Regardless of the historical

accuracy of its initial claims, the liberal drive toward privatizing religion is worth considering as the variety of religious expressions in the U.S. grows and the potential sources of friction either between religions or between religion and secular politics also grows. Paradoxically, however, both the background conditions that made these initial liberal convictions seem so sensible and also those very convictions themselves have come under increasing critical scrutiny not only from Reformed theologians, but from secular communitarians, feminists, and others.

When Jean Jacques Rousseau penned, “Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains,” he concisely restated a conviction common to philosophers in the Age of Enlightenment: that human beings are unnecessarily and injuriously constrained by externally imposed authority from which they should escape. Among those damaging authorities, Rousseau and other Enlightenment philosophers would include traditional familial obligations and antiquated inheritance laws, the divine right of kings and the capriciously exercised might of nobility, and the consecrating powers of the Christian church and Scripture. In their place, they argued for self-creation, governance by the consent of the governed, and the separation of civil and religious power, all in an attempt to extend individual freedom through the use of pure reason.³ Recognizing that many human actions are not based on anything like pure reason, these Enlightenment thinkers nevertheless suggested that any actions that concern the public good must be accessible to that public through reason alone. As many religious convictions are not accessible in this manner, they cannot enter conversations about the public good without first being translated into non-religious terms. The political tradition of Western liberal thought matured under—indeed, was made viable by—such Enlightenment ideas.

Yet if the political centerpiece of Enlightenment thought has been the Western liberal tradition, the centerpiece of the liberal tradition has been the tendency to separate public and private concerns. Even other aspects of a liberal polity—a progressive experimentalism, a specific type of egalitarian impulse directed toward extending personal freedom, etc.—are all undergirded by this tendency. Indeed, the public/private distinction so marks the western liberal political tradition that contemporary philosophers as disparate as Jurgen Habermas, John Rawls, and Richard Rorty all fit within that tradition for no reason more than their idiomatic expressions of the public/private split.⁴ Certainly, this split has never been as historically practiced as it has been philosophically advocated by liberal political theorists. Equally certain, there are streams of thought within political theory that, while claiming to be liberal in orientation, have nevertheless moderated or qualified this split—indeed, the vision underlying this paper turns on one such approach. However, the liberal political tradition so leans into a conceptual distinction between public and private forms of reasoning that those who would moderate or qualify that distinction must begin by justifying their claims over against it.

Yet the liberal tradition is not the only vision that has guided civil polity in the United States. The Reformed tradition has also played a major role in the U.S.'s political development, supplying it with a theological anthropology that emphasizes both the dangers of human depravity and the possibilities of the sanctifying power of law. Thus, the system of checks and balances and the separation of powers in U.S. government, designed, in part, to prevent political power from pooling too deeply in one particular individual or group, can be traced from the Constitution of the United States of America back through its primary creator, James Madison, to his eighteenth-century professor and mentor, John Witherspoon—a Presbyterian minister. Or, as Michael Walzer has argued, Calvinist thought bore political fruit by pursuing the very vision of revolution that made the modern state possible; namely, a vision whose premise is a type of intellectual and moral discipline pursued by this-worldly saints organizing themselves into groups who labor toward the renewal of the polis.⁵

Because both Reformation and liberal thought profoundly affected American polity, thinking through the contemporary dilemmas of religion and public life requires that we recognize not only the Reformed tradition, but the Liberal tradition as well. Indeed, the tension between these two traditions sits at the crux of American religio-political life and, as the socio-political climate continues to change, this tension is becoming more acute. Religious and cultural pluralism, the increased transience of American culture, the globalization of society, the growing suspicion of pure reason, the mounting distrust of religious and political leaders: each of these marks the degree to which we stand in neither sixteenth-century Geneva nor eighteenth-century America and, therefore, why we cannot easily extrapolate from the answers of those times to address tensions in our own.

This increasingly acute tension also gives those of us who teach in western seminaries that associate themselves with the Reformed tradition the valuable opportunity to rethink the way we relate ourselves to that tradition in a society that is changing around us. What parts of our rich tradition have we let wither in a society that has historically served our interests and how might we reclaim those parts of the tradition even as we accede our social power? What contributions might those of us in the Reformed tradition make toward reinvigorating civil society? How might we spur ourselves to think through and live out the political implications of our ecclesial confessions? And how might we, as seminary professors, find ways to teach our students so that they might keep one eye toward the church and one eye on the broader public?

Toward one answer to these questions, we recommend a mode of pastoral-theological engagement that we describe as teaching toward The Responsible Congregation. It is responsible both in the sense that it accepts its larger public role and civic responsibilities as a central aspect of its own ecclesial life and also that, *a la* H. Richard Niebuhr, it is constantly in the process of responding to

God's activities in the world.⁶ In so doing, the church reaffirms its participation in the *missio Dei*. And it is congregational both in the sense that it is necessarily oriented around local concerns and also that its primary mode of expression is through lay-based rather than ordained leadership.⁷ If clergy within the Reformed tradition are true to the charge that has been placed upon them to equip the saints for their ministry, they must allow and promote those ministries rather than doing the saints' ministries on their behalf.

We invite conversation and disagreement around teaching toward the Responsible Congregation, recognizing that either is preferable to silence. Some of these conversations and disagreements will be with those who stand in theological traditions other than ours: although the three of us stand within the Reformed tradition, we presume neither that ours is the only nor the most important theological tradition to address these questions.⁸ Indeed, we intend this article to serve Christ's church and not simply those churches within our tradition. We recognize, however, that we tend to lean toward that tradition—and, indeed, toward our own denomination, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—in our social analysis. Given both this project's genesis and development and our own personal commitments, it would be very difficult for us to do otherwise. Nevertheless, we trust that those outside the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Reformed tradition more generally might glean something from this article just as we have learned much from others writing from within their own particular perspectives.

Others of these conversations and disagreements will be with those who stand in the same broad tradition in which we stand. As we will suggest shortly, we do not think of a tradition in singular or monolithic terms. Thus, the important perspectives of Korean, African-American, and Hispanic churches within our denomination and/or the Reformed tradition will, themselves, add variety and richness to conversations within the tradition (or rather, conversations that simply *are* the tradition, which has always included multiple perspectives). Indeed, we see these as important conversations that have, to this point, been inadequately pursued and still need to go on.

Above all, though, we simply hope this article helps stimulate new conversations and invigorate old ones among those of us who teach in theological schools. In a changing society—not to mention changing ATS standards requiring teaching public leadership—seminaries need to develop and incorporate public ministry and public leadership into their institutional vision and curricular goals. The time for such action is ripe.

From whence have we come?

Traditions are not monolithic, clearly defined, or universally agreed upon things. Instead, as Alasdair MacIntyre has argued, a tradition is not the development of any single idea but is rather a prolonged and recognizable

argument among many related ideas.⁹ The Reformed tradition, *qua* tradition, must therefore be thought of in just such argumentative terms; in this work, we advance certain arguments that are themselves based on earlier arguments, opposed by other visions within the tradition, and will almost certainly change as a result of future arguments. That is, we intend to treat neither the Reformed tradition nor its take on public leadership as singular entities. We believe, nevertheless, that there is some continuity and recognizability to the prolonged argument that springs from Calvin's understanding of sanctification and the "third use of the law"—and his conception of the ministry of the public magistrate that follows from it. This understanding, though constantly under revision, extends through the "federal theology" of Bullinger and its seventeenth-century developments (e.g., the "covenant of works" in the Westminster Confession) and the Calvinistic "natural theology" and concept of "civil society" in John Locke to the early American experiment combining yet separating theological and Enlightenment perspectives and all the way up to "civil society" thinking today. Any paper purporting to cover this much history is doomed to a degree of superficiality; we know much work on this history still awaits. Keeping an eye on our larger task, however, the experiment here is only to see if all these suggestive connections hold up so that we might then ask what to do with them.

A. Calvin and the third use of the law

John Calvin's writings, reflecting Augustine and Luther but also many other patristic and medieval authors, stand at the beginning of the distinctively "Reformed" vision.¹⁰ The familiar arguments concerning the public magistrate in the final chapter of *The Institutes* have conceptual roots at the heart of Calvin's understanding of the interactions of grace and law. Public magistracy is not simply a matter of expertise overseen by God's providence. Public magistracy can be a specifically Christian vocation. The foundations of this conviction are everywhere, in many forms, in *The Institutes*. We will mention only two: the so-called "third use of the law," and the priority Calvin gives to sanctification, expounding it in *The Institutes*, Book III, prior to the doctrine of justification.

One of Calvin's innovations was to understand the Law (or Torah) as having three rather than the customary two "uses." Law regulates not only private conduct. It is the basis of public community. By "law," Calvin undoubtedly meant first the Torah, but also the whole medieval tradition of civil law, thought conformable to Torah, in which he was trained at the University of Paris. Not only does the law serve as foundation for public order, restraining the potential sinner, and not only does it convict us of our inadequacy thus rendering us open to grace, but the law also serves as a guide to conduct for the redeemed sinner. The redeemed person finds a new relationship to the law. He or she is rendered by grace more able to keep the law because the law no longer

stands over against him or her as impossible demand.¹¹ This means, quite simply, that the gospel is relevant to the standards that regulate the public world. The gospel becomes directly relevant to citizenship.

A similar dynamic is at work in the sometimes-overlooked fact that in *The Institutes*, Book III, the exposition of “sanctification” precedes that of “justification.” Calvin believes the work of Christ’s death and resurrection, applied to our lives by the power of the Holy Spirit, is such to start us on the road to becoming better (or at least more pious) persons up to the point at which we gain the gift of realization that we could not be better persons if God had not already accepted us through justification by grace alone. Thus, true piety is a both a gift of God and a response to God, and it includes love of righteousness and other public virtues. God is working in and through us, but our way of life makes a difference to the world.

The upshot is that, for Calvin, grace is indirectly at work in making possible good conduct, and since our living is inevitably social, good conduct must have something to do with citizenship. It follows that the same grace is working through public magistrates *qua* magistrates because it is their responsibility to maintain a body politic in which citizenship is worked out. The final chapter of *The Institutes* is devoted to this issue. Calvin’s primary assertions are based largely on Romans 13. Clearly, he believes in a clear separation between ecclesiastical and civil government. Yet at the same time believes—at least so far as Geneva is concerned—in a form of establishment of Reformed Protestantism that would be prohibited by the U.S. Constitution. He regards civil government, and the civil magistracy, as a divinely ordained vocation, worthy of profound respect and obedience. Among other things such as keeping the peace, he says it is the duty of civil government to protect and promote the church and to help maintain Christian faith and morals as taught by the church. Civil magistrates enforce “both tables of the law,”¹² that is, those commandments having to do with religious duties as well as those having to do with civil behavior.

Calvin says that, “Civil authority is a calling, not only holy and lawful before God, but also the most sacred and by far the most honorable of all callings in the life of mortal men.”¹³ Magistrates are “ordained ministers of divine justice”; they are “vicars of God.”¹⁴ Whether administering punishment, waging war, or levying taxes, the magistrate “does nothing by himself, but carries out the very judgments of God.”¹⁵

There is room here, and even an obligation (although *The Institutes* lays down rather stringent conditions) for people to rise up and replace magistrates who are not ruling according to the high standards Calvin sets. We read that, “Sometimes (God) raises up open avengers from among his servants, and arms them with his command to punish the wicked government and deliver his people, oppressed in unjust ways from miserable calamity.”¹⁶ But even then, Calvin admonishes us that such rebellion must be led by notable persons, and

only after grave provocation. Indeed, Calvin does not offer much help to persecuted Protestants living in Roman Catholic jurisdictions (e.g., the Huguenots in France), for even Catholic magistrates in Calvin's view are presumably ministers of God.

If public authorities are already themselves "Ministers of God," then public leadership by pastors does not generally mean an entry into political life as such. It does have to do with admonishment of civil rulers, where necessary, as well as certain modes of public advocacy. The important insight, however, is that the notion of righteous life in the public sphere, for citizens as well as magistrates, depends for Calvin not only on political judgments as such, but also on an understanding of a "third use of the law."

B. "Federal theology" and seventeenth-century Calvinism

The "federal theology" (from the Latin *foedus*, or "covenant") of Bullinger and several of his successors can be interpreted as an extension of the just-named dynamic.¹⁷ These theologians saw the Bible and church history as one long story of God's relationship with the whole of humankind. One covenant only was involved, known by anticipation before Christ and by remembrance afterward. God willed to redeem those who fulfilled its terms, although God's grace made such fulfillment possible. The covenant clearly had social implications in a Christian society: covenant obligations of justice, as well as true worship (the two being intimately connected) would be met.

This theological position grew in influence in the course of the seventeenth century. One widely held variant held that a "covenant of works" was posited separately from and antecedently to the "covenant of grace." Accordingly, to this view, God made a covenant of works with Adam, the "federal head" of all humanity, enjoining obedience to perpetually binding moral law identified variously with the Ten Commandments or some compatible version of the law of nature. After Adam fell from innocence in the Garden, salvation was no longer available through the first covenant, so God established the covenant of grace, in which Christ fulfills the law and atones for it as breach, becoming the "Federal Head" of believers.

The "covenant of works" notion clearly influenced *The Westminster Confession of Faith*:

The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.

Man, by his Fall, having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace: wherein he freely offered unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ . . .¹⁸

Those who pursued this notion of a covenant of works argued that all human beings remain under the original "covenant of works" as a matter of obligation. The original covenant, that is, continues to be the basis of the human

community as such. Elect believers living within the “covenant of grace” likewise continue to confront the obligations of the “covenant of works,” but they are now able to see it as a pattern for a devout life possible for them by their redeemed state. Thus the “covenant of works” continues in the time of forgiveness and grace, and grace renders good citizenship a special obligation of redeemed sinners. The disciplined society that the Reformers, and later the Puritans, envisaged was rooted in obligations laid upon humankind, for which believers had special responsibility. Covenanting, both in a special and in a general sense, became applicable both to congregational and political life. Theological insight into the meanings of sin and grace thus added depth to the understanding of what upholding the law truly required: both outrage at what contravened it and mercy toward the sinner, both determination to root out evil and forgiveness to heal wounds. The model it entailed deeply influenced political philosophy, notably that of John Locke (1632-1704), and led to the conviction that Christians should as a matter of faith work for responsible democratic government.¹⁹ The seventeenth-century European idea of social contract was a rationalization and secularization of this originally religious formulation. Its biblical origin and intention were clearly visible, but with the development of modern social contract, the idea of covenant became available to those for whom the notion of making a covenant with God was not easily accepted or understood.

C. *The American experience*

What appears in Europe (and also in Puritan New England) as a homology of religious and secular notions comes apart *constitutionally* in America’s separation of church and state. As mandated by the First Amendment, “Congress shall make no law regarding an establishment of religions or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

The framers of the Constitution were, for the most part, *both* believing Christians of various sorts and believers in Enlightenment reason. The Calvinists among them thought that the church-state separation that Calvin taught could not be maintained if one Christian denomination had “establishment” status. Hence establishment had to go, and a non-sectarian civic space for political life needed to be created. That did not mean that individuals and groups could not bring religious motivations into their civic participation as citizens, even expressing their religious reasons in public, but it meant that public decisions, as made by Congress or the courts or local governments, could not officially make use of the reasoning of particular religious groups, needing instead to use arguments of a “public” type: lines of reasoning that everyone could follow whatever their private convictions.

Anything that can possibly be construed as government-sponsored religious establishment is also prohibited. The First Amendment was intended primarily to protect the freedom of religion and the activities of the churches

from interference by the government.²⁰ It has often been interpreted the opposite way: as if it meant protecting the government from the churches! The “Establishment Clause” does not prohibit the participation of individuals and congregations as such in the formation of public policy. Thomas Jefferson’s famous metaphor of the “wall of separation”²¹ between church and state has confused the issue, and given ammunition to those who want to make preachers “stick to the gospel” without seeing that the gospel has political implications. The issue is not whether some wall is breached, but whether the activity in question is establishmentarian in tendency.²²

The Constitution legally separates church and state; it does not separate faith from public action. Indeed, some scholars have advanced a strong argument that the legal separation of church and state actually allows persons of faith to engage in the public sphere by removing barriers to free speech and promoting their participation in civic matters, many of which are not so much related to establishing laws as to continually cultivating the mores and virtues that undergird the American democratic experiment.²³ Under the influence of the liberal tradition’s public/private split, however, the notion of separation has expanded well beyond matters of Constitutional legality. Culturally, religious language is often viewed as suspicious, naïve, or meaningless. Thus, public officials who make faith claims from the podium and ministers who express political convictions from the pulpit both come under fire from various members of their respective—though often opposed—constituencies who do not think that faith and politics should mix.

This is not to say that public religious discourse is increasingly unutterable in the contemporary United States. One need only think of the influence of the religious right on politics over the last twenty-five years or the continued impact of the civil rights movement to counter that claim! Instead, we are claiming three things. First, this type of discourse has increasingly become the subject of debate rather than simply one of the languages used in civil debates over other subjects. Second, this debate has not been especially productive, in large part because the language by which it might be contested is, itself, the issue, and third, the way out of this impasse is for those on all sides to reflect critically upon the traditions that have brought them to this point and to build creatively upon the foundations those traditions have provided.

For as important as being grounded in our traditions is, glances back in time will not be sufficient to face the challenges of the present and future. What, then, are we to do with religious thought and activity in the public sphere as we engage twenty-first-century America? Responding to our times will require more than slavishly attending to the answers of our past or blithely pursuing the latest cultural agendas. Instead, we must critically engage both in order to develop strategies for thinking about how to exert appropriate religious leadership in the public square. This may be one of the most important tasks before us at the beginning of the twenty-first century. As we approach this task,

a description of possible church-in-world models for answering the challenge of the private/public split will be useful.

Models for addressing private/public split

In general, one does what one can with what one has got. That is, churches today seek to match their traditions, or their moral formation, with perceived opportunities to create by combination a certain configuration of church-in-world. Moreover, there is a correlation between the kind of church-and-society strategy one adopts and the sort of education required of church leadership. In what follows, we name six strategies for bearing public witness and political effectiveness for churches in today's America. The typology of church-world paradigms that follows is not the famous one of H. Richard Niebuhr, but rather a range of contemporary strategies that may or may not correspond to the well-known Niebuhrian list.²⁴

A. Strategies for public witness

1. *Evangelical pre-millennialism or Dispensationalism.* This is the vision propounded in the Scofield Bible. There is little or no positive public strategy for this world implied in this position because the present world is seen as passing away, passing from one "dispensation" to the next. The millennium, and with it the reign of Christ, will mark the transformation of the social order by divine power. Hence the missionary strategy of Dispensationalism is to work for the salvation of individuals, by which they are saved from the passing order and from the conflagration to which it is headed. The Christian calling, then, is to prepare the world for Christ's coming, one person at a time. Persons captured by this vision may actually be pleased to see things going from bad to worse, because "wars and rumors of wars" will precede the coming-again of the Lord Jesus.

2. *A return to Christendom.* The assumption here is that we must return as far as possible to the (imagined) situation of "Christian America" (i.e., taking over the public order for Christian faith and getting believers elected to top positions where they belong). In short, the world cannot be won for Christ unless Christians run it. Indeed, the argument is that only with Christians in control can we have a good society. Under the present circumstances of religious pluralism, it is hard to imagine a strategy that could bring this about on a large scale, but it may be possible on the local scale in certain places. Hence, some ecclesial groups have supported candidates for school board and other local bodies who did not admit the way their religious perspective would drive their decisions until after they were elected (i.e., running as "stealth candidates").

3. *Seeking alliances to create a "Moral Majority."* This is the strategy of linking Christian forces to larger political enterprises to influence a certain national political agenda. The aim may be to capture the political body concerned by becoming indispensable to the party's electoral success. This is often a strategy of leaders who are able to "deliver" large numbers of votes, sometimes by coercion in exchange for party platforms that further the agendas of the leaders of the effort.

4. *Social analysis by experts; pronouncements by leaders.* This has been a typical strategy of Mainline Protestant denominations, including those in the Reformed tradition. In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), for example, the "social action curia" produces a mass amount of material each year, much of it high quality. The general assembly votes on it, usually with very little attention to detail. The stated clerk issues letters to public officials or makes public declarations that seek to carry forward the policies the assembly has enacted, but the weight of the received position is that which is given by those who receive it. Those making public policy decisions and the media often seem to pay little attention to pronouncements. Many congregations, absent very determined pastoral leadership, are as oblivious as public officials and the media of what the larger church says about public issues. Even more problematically, many local congregations may be composed predominantly of persons who oppose the position taken by denominational leaders; the result is an abiding suspicion of the national body by local congregations.

5. *The alternative polis.* This position is most famously articulated by Stanley Hauerwas and John Howard Yoder, though others might be included.²⁵ Here, the notion is of the "gathered church," a community of like-minded disciples who contrast their lives and their community with those of the wider population. Their point is that the gospel founds an entire alternative way of life that should not engage in shoring up the values of the secular world in return for a religious liberty accorded only so long as the religious people do not make trouble. Many such groups argue that the mere presence in society of such a counter-community makes a difference far exceeding what might be expected of such a community's small size. The point is to be "different" in a way so striking, so consistent, and so insistent that it has much greater impact than positions that accept publicly prevalent ideas with a Christian veneer. Many persons in the Reformed tradition have been increasingly attracted to this position as an ideal: it tends to attract doctrinally Orthodox people with somewhat leftist tendencies, and their attention to the early church serves as an important reminder to those of us whose vision of the church is marked by its long associations with state power. But is this vision of the church sociologically possible in our world, or only an illusion imprisoned within the pages of the books that advocate it?

6. *The congregation as a place of convening power.* This is a vision best articulated by the Reformed ethicist James Gustafson.²⁶ It is an attempt to make the most of what has been called the Church's "convening power," that is, its capacity to bring people together, both members and others for many purposes. In this model, the church becomes publicly effective because it can use its convening capacity to stage the great debates of the day in such a way as to clarify the moral dimensions of issues rather than taking a particular position on them, though at times, of course, taking a particular stand is the inevitable result of the moral clarifications. In this vision, the church functions as something akin to a surrogate society: a place within society where society's issues are re-framed for debate in a way that brings attention to bear on aspects of matters that may otherwise be publicly ignored. Such re-framing does not necessarily involve theological language as such. The conversation may be very "secular" in tone, but secular in a way that ordinary civic debate, for political or other reasons, does not quite achieve. The hope is to help everyone, and especially public officials, to see possibilities as well as concerns they might not see otherwise. Bringing this off at the level of the congregation requires great leadership skill. Poorly led, such dialogue may fail to illumine, or even demonstrate, the church's incompetence.

B. "All politics is local"

While Mainline denominations have tried all six models at one time or another, and while different members of these denominations undoubtedly favor different models, most of these denominations—particularly those in the Reformed tradition—typically follow the fourth one. Our impression is that the move Reformed denominations now need to make is to keep doing the high quality analysis that model four calls for—especially given the special resources available at and for denominational centers—but also to decisively enhance their capacity to follow model six. It is clear that congregations need the expertise that stands behind the denomination's current social witness polity, as well as the carefully crafted and tested procedures worked out over the years to ensure participation and fairness.²⁷ However, the capacity of our congregations to be publicly visible communities of moral discourse needs to be enhanced. This capacity stands at the center of what we mean by "the Responsible Congregation."

"All politics is local"—the phrase reflects a truth that can be hidden as social agendas make their way between local, regional, and national contexts. So while we continue to strongly support the work of denominational offices as they continue to guide their denominations' social visions and map out their denominations' futures, we also wish to strongly insist that the overwhelming number of social concerns faced by any particular church are local, rather than national or global. Moreover, as local concerns, they face myriad contextually specific variables that not only can complicate those concerns, but can clarify

appropriate responses to them, provided congregations are willing to invest the time and energy to discern how God is working at local levels.

While increased attention to the local may lead to even less attention to denomination-wide concerns, the latter does not necessarily follow from the former. On the one hand, maintaining ecclesial connections and a unifying vision may be undermined by disparate projects taken up at local levels. In an increasingly “post-denominational” society, churches often connect themselves more closely to other like-minded churches than to churches within their denomination. One result of this has been a movement on the part of congregations away from funding national and international projects in favor of projects they can work with directly. On the other hand, those congregations who have trained themselves to think theologically about social issues and, in the process, have mined the riches of their own tradition and denomination, may be better able to see connections between the local and the national. That is, it could be that greater attention to model number six may lead to greater effectiveness of model number four.

Whether this is the case or not may well turn—at least initially—on the quality of the pastors who serve local churches, guiding their congregations into new visions of moral discourse and responsibility. And this, in turn, means training pastors to be leaders of such discourse communities, which requires them to become, in a particular way, “organic intellectuals.”²⁸

The responsible congregation and its leaders

Congregations bring together myriad elements of shared human life. Their members bring with them specific genetic inheritances, cultural backgrounds, traits of character, education, habits of language, economic involvements, family ties, occupational perspectives, etc., and through their networks of relationships with others they represent still wider ranges of human experience. All these things are ingredients for the church community’s construal of the world. A faith community cannot be adequately understood solely by consulting its formal polity. It can only be understood as a gathering of persons who bring with them all these aspects of life and more; as a community that aims at configuring all this so as to represent the identity of Jesus Christ and thereby to articulate the shapes of God’s presence in the world through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Given the variety of gifts within our churches—many of them underutilized or unused by most contemporary mainline polities—responsible congregations, as we describe them, can and must do at least two things. First, they can become the very types of communities of moral discourse that Gustafson so helpfully described. That is, they can become locations where people with different understandings of the world come together to publicly discuss the important issues of the day and, in the process of that discussion, begin to

reframe those issues in new and hopefully productive ways. Second, however, they must be able to take those various gifts and use them to help move churches from public discussion to public action. A responsible congregation not only works to discern the nature of the problems it confronts; it works to solve them.

Just as Gustafson described communities of moral discourse as places where conversation may sound quite secular, so we would argue that the solutions that responsible congregations work toward may—perhaps even must—also be publicly accessible. This distinguishes our concept of the Responsible Congregation from alternatives five (“alternative polis”) and three (“moral majority”) described in the previous section. For while the gifts that coalesce within congregations may be quite idiomatic and their discussions may or may not be publicly accessible, responsible congregations recognize that God is at work both in their midst and outside their bounds. Thus, they cannot move from discussion to action in a triumphalistic manner, but rather in a way that admits their solution to review and adaptation by the broader public in whom God is working—whether that broader public recognized God’s actions in its actions or not.

On its face, the proposal that solutions need to be publicly accessible throws us back into the arms of liberal tradition; after all, accessibility is the distinguishing characteristic of public speech within that tradition. Yet our quarrel with that tradition has less to do with publicity per se than the breadth of those forms of speech and actions recognized as publicly coherent. Therefore, a brief prolegomena on what we mean by “publicly accessible solutions” may be in order.

A. Coherence and accessibility in religious speech

Within the liberal tradition, publicly coherent speech and actions must be based on and grow out of universally accessible (read: “secular”) forms of reasoning. Whether constructed from a Kantian framework of *a priori* reasoning, a Lockean social contract, logical positivism, or some other basis for such reasoning, this notion of universal accessibility is premised on the convictions that: (a) the possibilities of such reasoning exists and (b) that such reasoning is a necessary foundation for liberal political thought. The first premise is primarily epistemological, and since at least the middle of the last century, it has been the subject of protracted debate by philosophers and theologians of all stripes. Doubting our ability to resolve such debates—or even contribute meaningfully to them in this brief paper—we will not discuss it further here.

The second premise, however, is primarily moral and political, and it deserves further inquiry, for it goes to the heart of this paper. For if the premise is true, then we cannot simultaneously defend the existence of some form of liberal society and advocate a stronger role for Reformed thought and action on public issues. We, however, do not believe it is true.

Implicit within the premise is the belief that there are two sorts of political/moral language. One sort might be described as a set of very circumscribed universal attitudes toward which everyone (or almost everyone) feels sympathetic agreement. The other sort are sets that incorporate the specific goods, goal, and practices of specific groups of people within a society. Michael Walzer has named these “thin” and “thick” accounts of morality, respectively.²⁹ Within the classical liberal tradition, the thin account of morality serves as basis for and judges over the various thick accounts, like a foundational set of beliefs or assumptions upon which cultures then build their unique and often conflicting ethical superstructures.

Following Walzer, however, we would argue that morality is “thick from the beginning, culturally integrated, fully resonant, and revealing itself thinly only on special occasions, when moral language is turned to specific purposes.”³⁰ For Walzer, moral minimums do not exist alone nor can maximal morality be pared down to just the minimums because the very act of paring down is an expression of maximal morality. Moral minimums can serve a purpose (e.g., as the consensus on a set of standards by which all societies should abide). However, such standards grow out of and are only coherent and expressible in morally maximal language. Thus, different groups within a society or across societies do not identify with one another through appeals to a shared theory or epistemology from which each group might derive common morals. Instead, one group appeals either to the experiences or sympathies of the other group. So understood, one group’s appeal to another group’s moral sense is not an act of derivation, but one of imagination.

How does this excursus on Walzer matter to the current project? In at least the following two ways. First, if Walzer is read as arguing that thin accounts of morality are only useful because they arise out of thick ones, it follows that only those accounts that are sufficiently thick to cope with the moral complexity of the world—that is to say, quite thick accounts indeed—can give birth to helpful thin accounts. Read this way, turning to the Reformed tradition and its morally thick language of divine sovereignty and public obligation does not so much inhibit public discourse as help to constitute it. This is not to say that the Reformed tradition ought to have a place of special honor or power within a liberal society; just that it ought not be excluded from having a place within discussions on polity within that society.

Second, if one group’s appeal to another group’s moral sense is an act of imagination rather than derivation, it follows that the range of arguments that may be admitted into public conversation is considerably larger than the classic liberal tradition has allowed. That is, we believe that those solutions to public problems can be accessible to the broader public not so much because they conform to a stringent set of limits about what counts as publicly accessible, but because we think that given sufficient imagination on all our parts, the broader public can understand those solutions as they are expressed

within the language of the Reformed tradition or almost any other thick language. Again, this is not to say that such conversations will be easy; just that they are more possible than a traditional liberal polity admits.

Given such a process, how are congregations to function as interpreters of problems (communities of moral discourse) and as those who work toward their solution? Several aspects to this answer are clear. First, congregations are called to create spaces for people to gather and discuss community problems. In a society that suffers from a growing lack of comfortable civic space, churches can provide hospitality where little is being offered. Second, congregations are called to live out what the communities surrounding them need in order to maintain spaces of civility against the pressures of economy and state: a vision in which political will is informed by higher covenants. Thus, the hospitality role is matched by a prophetic one.

A responsible congregation requires skillful leadership. Moreover, such leadership requires more than just a knowledge of public issues, although that is indispensable. It requires a sensitivity to what the people understand to be the moral questions that link their personal faith to what goes on in the public sphere. Hence, we advance the idea of the pastor as “organic intellectual,” meaning one who is able to discern where the people are, to reflect their faith back to them deepened and enlarged, with its implications and possibilities of witness drawn out. This not only means making use of the best of social analysis and guidance that the wider church can give, but listening to where the people are and leading them by being a more reflective and articulate companion on the journey of faith.

We are not focusing on ordained persons who want to serve the church as specialists and activists—such careers are open to talent—rather, we concentrate on what the average pastor and congregations can do as churches in the Reformed tradition. The Reformed pastor we envision is one who not only knows her congregation, but also has a substantial grasp of what the various members of her congregation do. She is not only aware of the concerns of the surrounding neighborhood, but can identify how those concerns came into existence as well as the sources of power which created them or are available for their solution. She is not only familiar with our tradition’s long history of social involvement, but teaches out of it such that laity might share it with her. She is not only aware of how God has acted in history, but seeks to see how God is currently acting in the world around her. Said differently, the pastor we envision swims simultaneously in the waters of her tradition, her local culture, her piety, and congregational politics in order to better equip her congregation to swim in those same waters so that together they might participate in God’s work in the world.

Undoubtedly, we are asking a great deal of pastors when we suggest that their ministries need to be directed by such a vision. Attached to such a vision, after all, are demands upon their time; their continued intellectual develop-

ment; their ability to seek out pertinent resources within the congregation; the community and the academy; their talents as teachers; their willingness to continually explore how their ministries relate to those outside of the church; and their ability to lead their congregations into places where they often resist going.

Yet in the face of such demands, we would at least make the following claims. First, very few pastors are called to move beyond their local contexts as they engage in the development of responsible congregations. Matters of national and international concern, although important for understanding local contexts, are not the primary locus for response by congregations. The Responsible Congregation ignores neither the larger concerns nor the connective system that allows the denomination as a whole to respond to significant events. However, the mission of a responsible congregation ought not be principally directed by denomination-wide strategies, lest mission turn primarily into sending monetary support to larger ecclesial bodies before it is dispersed. Indeed, a responsible congregation may discover or create otherwise latent resources that are valuable to the denomination by engaging in mission that extends first into local contexts.

Second, we would suggest that pastors already face an almost overwhelming number of demands upon them, many of which are congruent with the demands of developing responsible congregations. As such, pastors understand the burdens of multiple demands, but we are not suggesting that pastors take more burdens upon themselves. Instead, we would suggest that they refocus their ministries such that they attend to those tasks for which they are specifically suited and trained rather than tasks that are more appropriate for laity.

Implicit within this process of refocusing is the imperative that those of us who are privileged to teach in denominational seminaries need to rethink our current curriculums. We teach our students to read Scripture critically and devotionally. Do we teach them to teach Scripture critically and devotionally? We teach them to provide pastoral care to persons. Do we teach them to provide pastoral care to communities? We teach them church history and theology. Do we teach them to apply the lessons of church history and theology to the church's mission? We teach them the polity of their various ecclesial bodies. Do we teach them how to read and engage in civil politics? In teaching differently, we may significantly help pastors of responsible congregations take on the burdens of their calling. Indeed, the concluding section of this article is a series of concrete suggestions about how to teach toward the Responsible Congregation.

Finally, we would suggest that neither responsible congregations nor those who lead them are called to do so in order to solve all the problems they face. Such a notion would be politically impossible and theologically problematic. A responsible congregation is not so much driven by the need to make

everything right as by a recognition that God is acting in the world, and that one of the ways God is acting is by calling them to participate in God's larger project of making all things new. That is, in response to God, the Responsible Congregation goes out to find how God is already at work, and to "pitch in" as they are commanded and enabled. This relieves both laity and their leaders of the primary burden that they may feel as they adjust their mission toward becoming responsible congregations; namely, the anxieties about success and failure that will lead to either quietism or despair. Responsible congregations are constantly in the process of becoming responsible congregations not only because they are constantly learning how to think about and respond to problems, but because God is constantly at work in them and around them, changing them and helping them grow into their mission.

Teaching principles for consideration

The Responsible Congregation accepts its larger and civic responsibilities as a central aspect of its own ecclesial life and is constantly in the process of responding to God's activity in the world. From a Reformed perspective, training leadership for the Responsible Congregation may be another way of stating the ATS description of the primary goals of M.Div. programs: "The goals an institution adopts for an M.Div. degree should take into account: knowledge of the religious heritage; understanding of the cultural context; growth in spiritual depth and moral integrity; and capacity for ministerial and public leadership."³¹

What might teaching toward the Responsible Congregation look like? Obviously, it will not look like one thing for all seminaries. Thus, instead of offering a single large vision of such teaching, we conclude with several concrete suggestions from projects currently underway in various seminaries. We imagine most seminaries are already engaging some of these suggestions, but perhaps this list may trigger new ideas as well as reaffirming current ones. We invite faculties to adopt and adapt these as they wish.

1. Teaching toward the Responsible Congregation will engage the whole curriculum. It will be infused into many classes across disciplines. For example, a spirituality class might include communicating with public officials about an issue in which it has discerned that God wants the church to be active as one activity. In that context, concrete advocacy skills are also taught.

2. The process of teaching toward the Responsible Congregation is as important as what is taught. Persons who accept civic responsibility as part of their call of faith and are constantly responding to God's activity in the world will be most useful in teaching others. Some seminaries treat civic engagement by faculty members as one piece of their job responsibilities.

3. Teaching toward the Responsible Congregation connects the seminary to the wider church and world. Seminaries ought to invite scholars—including

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those from disciplines outside of those usually represented in the faculty—to provide an opportunity for looking at the world and church through new eyes.

4. Teaching toward the Responsible Congregation involves finding ways of bringing into public consciousness what is happening in the wider community. Invite public officials to campus for conversation. Involve seminary communities in service outreach efforts. Use campuses as places of moral discourse. Place students in settings such as legislatures and public offices for independent studies.

5. The pursuit of the Responsible Congregation is a life-long learning process. Seminaries can intentionally include teaching toward the types of skills commended here among their continuing education and advanced degree programs. Indeed, some seminaries have public leadership tracks in advanced degree programs to promote that very goal.

6. Teaching toward the Responsible Congregation involves different ways of teaching and an acknowledgement that there are different styles of leadership within the congregation. Many seminaries include classes not only on how to teach laity, but how to discern different learning styles among the laity and how to encourage and enable laity to become teachers themselves.

7. Teaching toward the Responsible Congregation may involve designating a person or persons to help foster cross-discipline cooperation and engage the seminary in public matters. Most institutions suffer from some degree of inertia. Often, a person or small team of persons who have specific responsibilities can provide the energy necessary to overcome inertia.

8. Teaching toward the Responsible Congregation understands the primary role of seminary teacher as theologically pursuing the work of the church in the world and attempting to discern God's work in the world. That is their expertise. The teacher is not expected to know everything about everything. It follows that teaching toward the Responsible Congregation not only engages the whole curriculum, but encourages teachers to develop interdisciplinary courses so that they might learn from one another.

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ENDNOTES

1. In 1999, a group of Presbyterian scholars interested in how the church engages matters of public leadership began a series of yearly meetings held under the auspices of a grant provided by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. In 2000, this article's authors were commissioned to write a "think-piece" based on the group's work that would be distributed to those seminaries associated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in order to stimulate discussions of these matters in the various schools. This paper re-works that think piece based on the results of those discussions, suggestions by anonymous reviewers, and further reflection by the authors. In the whole process, many persons have contributed to the ideas represented here and many others have contributed ideas that should have been represented but are not. Able to claim almost none of whatever brilliance shows through this article, the authors nevertheless admit that its errors are, for the most part, theirs.
2. This sentence intentionally mirrors the famous introductory sentence to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *On the Social Contract*: "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains." The reasons for mirroring his sentence are manifold and will be developed later in this paper. For the time being, keep the fact that we are simultaneously mirroring and telling a different story than the one given by one of the principal progenitors of a liberal tradition that has so formed culture in the United States. See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, trans. Donald A. Cross (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987), 17.
3. See, e.g., Jeffrey Stout, *The Flight from Authority: Religion, Morality, and the Quest for Autonomy* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981).
4. An important contemporary expression of such thought is John Rawls's recent work *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994). For two different alternative readings of the history of religious disputes and their relation to the development of liberalism, see William T. Cavanaugh, "'A Fire Strong Enough to Consume the House': The Wars of Religion and the Rise of the State," *Modern Theology* 11.4 (Oct. 1995): 397-420 and R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation* (Boston: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000).
5. See Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965).
6. See H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Responsible Self* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1963).
7. This emphasis on local, lay-driven public ministry is not intended to dismiss the indispensable role that larger ecclesial bodies (e.g., regional groups, ecumenical ministries, denominational offices, etc.) can and do play in public ministry. It is our experience, however, that many local churches find it easier to let these larger ecclesial bodies do public ministry and act as public leaders for them rather than actively participating in that work themselves—and that this problem is reinforced by the way we teach (or don't teach) about such things in seminaries. Thus, we are arguing that public leadership and public ministry be engaged primarily at the congregational level and then, secondarily, at larger ecclesial levels, and that this change in perspective will require seminaries to re-think their curricula.
8. So, for example, some Lutherans might question the connections between civil and ecclesial concerns that we make. (See, e.g., John R. Stumme and Robert W. Tuttle, eds., *Church and State: Lutheran Perspectives* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003). So, for that matter, might some Roman Catholics—particularly those influenced by John Courtney

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Murray's claim that the natural law as rooted in Greco-Roman and Roman Catholic thought is both a primary source for American public life and a cure for its ills—disagree with our claims about the two streams of thought that constitute American civic life. (See, e.g., Murray, *We Hold These Truths: Reflections on the American Proposition* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1960.) We take it, though, that disagreements about such matters are the types of things that different traditions ought to have and discuss in public. Given the limitations of time and space, though, we leave such disagreements for some occasion other than this article.

9. See Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, Second Edition (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 222.

10. It is common to contrast Calvin's position with Luther's doctrine of the "two kingdoms." Caution is in order. We know that Luther spoke of the two "hands" of God, right and left. The right hand of God has to do with the grace in which, by faith, we have our salvation. Salvation takes place for persons in the realm of the church. Bringing human beings to God's throne of grace is the church's business, and the work of grace has nothing directly to do with those public matters reserved to the state. God's left hand, by contrast represents God's providential care for the public realm. Here the conditions of salvation do not operate. Rather, expertise in matters of state is the criterion of service. Luther is noted for having spoken to the effect that he would rather be ruled by an intelligent Turk (i.e., Moslem) than by an incompetent Christian. It is not that public matters are outside God's concern. It is just that God deals with these matters in a different way from the way God brings human beings to saving grace.

11. This understanding of the believer's new relationship to the law does not so much begin with Calvin as it is foregrounded by him. Indeed, contemporary work on the Pauline epistles reinforces such notions. See, e.g., J. Louis Martyn, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997).

12. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, Library of Christian Classics (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), IV.20.9

13. Calvin, IV.20.4.

14. Calvin, IV.20.6.

15. Calvin, IV.20.10.

16. Calvin, IV.20.30.

17. The account of federal theology follows the article on this subject by Dewey D. Wallace, Jr. in the *Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 136ff.

18. "The Westminster Confession of Faith," VII, 2-3.

19. In many ways a tension within John Locke serves as an analogy to the tension described in this paper. On the one hand, Locke is clearly the type of Enlightenment thinker we have named in this article, as he demonstrates in his "Letter Concerning Toleration": "It is not my business to inquire here into the original of the power or dignity of the clergy. This only I say, that whencesoever their authority be sprung, since it is ecclesiastical, it ought to be confined within the bounds of the church, nor can it in any manner be extended to civil affairs; because the church itself is a thing absolutely separate and distinct from the commonwealth. The boundaries on both sides are fixed and immoveable. He jumbles heaven and earth together, the things most remote and opposite, who mixes these societies; which are in their original, end, business, and in everything, perfectly distinct, and infinitely different from each other." (John Locke, "A

Letter Concerning Toleration" in *Locke on Politics, Religion, and Education*, ed. Maurice Cranston (New York: Collier Books, 1965), 117.

On the other hand, Locke may have been deeply influenced by the version of Reformed thought as it was expressed by the Levelers with whom Locke lived while in exile in Holland. (See, Richard Ashcraft, *Revolutionary Politics and Locke's "Two Treatises of Government"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986). If nothing else, Locke's complicated thought demonstrates just how complex the relationship between what we have called "The Reformed Tradition" and "The Liberal Tradition" can become.

20. See, e.g., William Lee Miller, *The First Liberty: Religion and the American Republic* (New York: Paragon House, 1985).

21. Jefferson's metaphor springs not from any official government document, but from a letter he sent to a group of Baptists in Danbury, Connecticut. For a history of Jefferson's thoughts on separation as well as an insightful reading of the origins of church-state relations in the United States, see Miller.

22. As always, history is messier than theory. In spite of the constitutional ban on established religion, many early states continued to maintain established churches, and much of the jurisprudential work done on this part of the First Amendment is comparatively recent—perhaps the last sixty years. The principles, if not the practices, however, are in place once the Constitution and Bill of Rights are established.

23. See, e.g., much of the work of James Luther Adams, including *Voluntary Associations in Socio-Cultural Analysis and Theological Interpretation*, ed. J. Ronald Engel (Chicago: Exploration Press, 1986).

24. See H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1951).

25. See, e.g., Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981) or John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus: Vicit Agnus Noster* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1972).

26. See James M. Gustafson, "Patterns of Christian Social Action," *Theology Today* (July, 1961): 159-171 and *The Church as Moral Decision Maker* (Philadelphia: Pilgrim, 1970), esp. 83-95.

27. As an example of such a process, see the procedures currently in place for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as they were adopted by the denomination's 205th General Assembly in 1993. These are stated in detail in the booklet, *Why and How the Church Makes a Social Policy Witness*, copyright 1994 by the Office of the General Assembly.

28. A phrase traced to Antonio Gramsci, but most distinctively employed by Cornell West, a Baptist minister who is also a professor at Princeton University. The phrase points to a thinker who lives within and articulates the perceptions and aspirations of a particular cultural, religious, or economic community, putting into words what that community wishes to say to the world about the meaning of its existence. See Cornell West, *Prophesy Deliverance!* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1982).

29. Michael Walzer, *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

30. Walzer, 4.

31. The Association of Theological Schools, "Degree Program Standards," A.2.0.

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6. Add a short (2-3 sentence) paragraph at the end of the article identifying the author(s), institution or relationship to the project/topic, position held, and/or other information relevant to the experience of the writer(s).
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