

Theological Education

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ISSUE FOCUS

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Theme Introduction

Robin W. Lovin and Richard J. Mouw

Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto

Jeffrey P. Greenman and Yau Man Siew

Educating for Public Ministry: Models and Strategies for Mainline Seminaries

Elizabeth Nordbeck and Douglas Ottati

From the Margins to the Center: Exploring the Seminary's Leadership Role in Developing the Public Presence of Pentecostalism

Cheryl Bridges Johns

A Public Voice: Preaching on Justice Issues

Ray John Marek, OMI, and Daniel E. Harris, CM

Making Connections: Faith in the Public Square

Daniel McLellan, OFM

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Donald C. Guthrie and James A. Meek

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Phyllis D. Airhart and Roger C. Hutchinson

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Introduction <i>Jeremiah J. McCarthy</i>	iii
ISSUE FOCUS <i>Public Character in Action: Patterns and Possibilities</i>	
Theme Introduction <i>Robin W. Lovin and Richard J. Mouw</i>	v
Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto <i>Jeffrey P. Greenman and Yau Man Siew</i>	1
Educating for Public Ministry: Models and Strategies for Mainline Seminaries <i>Elizabeth Nordbeck and Douglas Ottati</i>	21
From the Margins to the Center: Exploring the Seminary's Leadership Role in Developing the Public Presence of Pentecostalism <i>Cheryl Bridges Johns</i>	33
A Public Voice: Preaching on Justice Issues <i>Ray John Marek, OMI, and Daniel E. Harris, CM</i>	47
Making Connections: Faith in the Public Square <i>Daniel McLellan, OFM</i>	61
Connecting Faith and Vocational Discipleship at Covenant Theological Seminary <i>Donald C. Guthrie and James A. Meek</i>	73
Responsibility, Repentance, and Right Relations <i>Phyllis D. Airhart and Roger C. Hutchinson</i>	83
Geographies of Memory: Theological Reflections on Racial Reconciliation in South Africa and the United States <i>L. Gregory Jones and Willie James Jennings</i>	91
OPEN FORUM	
The Seminary Chapel Building as Spiritual Formation <i>James F. White</i>	101
Technology and Educational Practices <i>Louis Charles Willard</i>	111

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

Jeremiah J. McCarthy

The Broadway comedy and film, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, featuring Zero Mostel and companions cavorting in togas while pursuing outrageous schemes, forever “deconstructed” the chaste decorum of the Roman “forum” so carefully nurtured in my high school Latin classes. Far from being an enclave for the elite, the “forum” or “public square” was a robust center for a wide range of human activities, including not only market transactions, but also redress of conflicting interests and debate about competing visions of the qualities essential to human flourishing. As an intersection of vital energies, the forum has served as a metaphor to capture the particular challenges of negotiating these contrasting, competing, and at times, conflicting understandings of the common good. The distinctly modern creation of the separation of the spheres of the “secular” and the “sacred” has come under intense scrutiny by a host of thinkers and commentators. Richard Neuhaus early on alerted us to the implications of this modern bifurcation in his still timely book, *The Naked Public Square*. The burden of the Neuhaus work was to remind us that there are many stakeholders, including religious stakeholders, who need to be welcomed into the arena of discourse about society’s ultimate meaning and purposes. The public square is impoverished when it arbitrarily deprives or marginalizes the religious voice, a theme echoed in a more recent work by Yale law professor Stephen Carter, *The Culture of Disbelief*. To the voices of Neuhaus and Carter have been added calls from the theological academy to reexamine the wall of separation erected between religion and public life. This reexamination is particularly evident in the careful attention given to the particular locations and contexts that shape critical theology in Canada and the United States. Woven into this theological tapestry is the distinctive witness of many diverse voices.

Broadly speaking, at least one manifestation of this conversation is expressed in contrasting perspectives that have emerged in the divinity schools of Yale and Chicago. The “Chicago School” takes intellectual and religious pluralism seriously and sees the task of theology as serving as a necessary critic of and partner in the search for truth, but whose claims need to be expressed in warrants that are publicly defensible. The “Yale School” prizes the inescapable particularity of the Christian claim, realized in distinctive and irreducible communities of faith and life. This perspective argues that all accounts of the purposes of society, including the purportedly “neutral” story of modernity are “narrative-dependent” and that secularity’s claim to intellectual and moral hegemony is illusory. Linking these contrasting perspectives and responses to the challenge of contemporary culture is the context of the collapse of the barrier separating religion from the realm of the “public square.” The church

and, by extension, the theological school are no longer relegated to the sidelines, but must now reclaim their rightful place as participants in the contentious public forum.

The flavor of this theological and cultural engagement with the “public square” is the context for this issue of *Theological Education*. Robin Lovin and Richard Mouw, co-directors of the ATS Public Character of Theological Education project, have provided a masterful overview of the latest installment of this Lilly Endowment-funded conversation about the “public character” of theological education. The first series of essays (published in this journal in autumn 2000), and representing the diverse theological constituencies of ATS, established theological moorings for the challenge presented in the ATS Standards of Accreditation, that theological schools engage “a diverse and manifold set of publics” in ways that are congruent with their stated mission and goals. The word “public” is multifaceted and sufficiently flexible to encompass a diversity of audiences, not just the “political” or “media” venues of social communication with which it is most commonly associated. Phase two of the project and the focus of this issue of the journal addresses “Public Character in Action: Patterns and Possibilities.” In this discussion, yet another “divide” has been crossed, not simply the “public/private” split of the public square debate, but the bifurcation between theory and praxis. The understandings and learning of phase one of the project have taken flesh in concrete activities designed to demonstrate public character in action. I think that readers will find in these essays creative and challenging applications of public character that will provoke even more thoughtful engagement with the “forum” of our common life together.

If our traditional boundaries regarding the shape and contour of the public forum have been extended by these reflections on the public character of theological schools, a similar extension of our horizons can be seen in the essays by James F. White and Louis Charles Willard. James White redirects our conceptualization of sacred space by showing how the seminary chapel informs and shapes our theological imagination about the character of God. Louis Charles Willard, currently serving as a member of the ATS staff after a long and distinguished career as a theological librarian, reshapes and expands our understanding of the library, and of education more broadly, in the light of burgeoning technologies. The purpose or “function” of the library may no longer be confined to the limitations of physical space and print format, but its central task of “mediating” the needs of inquirers remains ever present and pertinent. Assessing the contributions of new information technologies to achieve the purposes of theological education is a particular challenge of accreditation. This task will require the ongoing, critical reflection of the ATS about the practices that support quality theological teaching and learning.

I hope that you will find these essays invigorating and provocative and that you will be moved to share your thoughts as part of “Continuing the Conversation,” that is now a regular feature of *Theological Education*. I look forward to hearing from you.

Theme Introduction

Public Character in Action: Patterns and Possibilities

Robin W. Lovin and Richard J. Mouw

This issue of *Theological Education* is the second to present work from the ATS project on the Public Character of Theological Education. In the Autumn 2000 issue, we published reports from working groups that explored the public presence of four different types of theological school: Roman Catholic, Evangelical Protestant, Mainline Protestant, and University-related. Here, we offer the results of the final phase of the Public Character project, in the form of a series of reports on special projects designed to explore further the relationship of ATS schools to public life. Each of these projects was based in an individual ATS member school. Funding was provided on the basis of proposals evaluated by the Advisory Committee of the Public Character project, using resources from the Lilly Endowment grant, which has supported the work of the project as a whole. Members of the original four working groups were key participants in the demonstration projects, but the resources of the host schools and the leadership of other members of their faculties were essential to the success of the eight projects we present in this issue.

Theological scholarship requires, as the language of the ATS standards expresses it, “engagement with a diverse and manifold set of publics Member schools shall assume responsibility for relating to the church, the academic community, and the broader public” (Statement 3.2.3.1). That somewhat vague reference to a “broader public” points theological education to essential relationships beyond the obvious connections to church and academy. These relationships are important to the schools for support and identity in a wider civic community, and they provide forums in which the commitments to justice and social welfare that are part of many schools’ mission statements can be realized in concrete, practical ways.

Often, however, this relationship to the “broader public” is the weakest point in a theological school’s outreach. The project on the Public Character of Theological Education began with the general observation that theological schools today often seem invisible to the wider public. Those outside the community of study and worship are unaware of their presence, even when they are near neighbors to a theological school. Faculty members are seldom sought for comment on public issues. Theological schools have little impact on their cities or their regions, despite the emphasis on social context that is now a part of most theological curriculums.

Theme Introduction

What we learned in the first phase of the Public Character project, however, was that this widely shared concern about the visibility and social impact of theological schools is refracted through quite different missions found in different types of school. The public presence of religion's intellectual leadership is often equated with the creation of a "public theology" that can articulate what is at stake theologically in the issues of the day, and this form of public presence is especially important to university-related divinity schools. But theological education also has a public presence in the life of North American denominations. Mainline Protestant theological schools devote a good deal of time to understanding how the ethos that supports public witness can be sustained in their denominations. Evangelical schools may be equally concerned with questions about whether such an ethos exists in their denominations or other constituencies, and about whether it can or should be created. Roman Catholic theological schools, both diocesan seminaries and those administered by religious orders, must interpret their public presence against the background of an ecclesiastical magisterium that makes authoritative statements on issues of public concern, both local and global.

The eight projects presented in the theme focus section reflect on these issues and contribute further to our understanding of this diversity among the ATS member schools. The projects often addressed quite specific concerns in the host schools, but wider implications for theological education are apparent in each of them. The articles that follow also give detailed accounts of project programs and activities, many of which could appropriately be replicated in other ATS member schools.

Two of the projects made direct studies of connections between religion and public life in different theological schools. Tyndale Seminary, under the leadership of Yau Man Siew and Jeffrey Greenman, developed a survey research method to identify the beliefs and attitudes of seminarians concerning spirituality and its connection to public life. They then tested the method at several ATS member institutions in Toronto, which provided a variety of denominational affiliations and diverse student bodies against which to develop a more general picture of how today's students and their teachers understand the connections between spiritual life and issues in the wider society. The results provide interesting pictures of student attitudes about spirituality and expectations for ministry, and other schools or clusters may wish to compare the students in this study with their own student bodies. Some generalizations also emerge regarding the role of faculty and curriculum in connecting spiritual formation and public presence.

A project coordinated by Elizabeth Nordbeck of Andover Newton Theological School and Douglas Ottati of Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education focused specifically on the relationship between faith and public life in mainline Protestant seminaries. This project was an intentional continuation of the mainline Protestant working group's

effort that was reported in *Theological Education* in Autumn 2000. The aim was to include a wider range of denominations and also a more diverse group of faculty in the conversation. The discussions reported in this issue demonstrate again the importance of the Civil Rights Movement as a formative event in shaping the understanding of public life among mainline Protestant leadership, but the wider conversation also made clear how far the mainline Protestant theological schools have moved from identifying themselves with the central, established values in North American society to seeing themselves as a voice for the stranger, the marginalized, and the oppressed in that social context.

If concern for social issues is part of the ethos of mainline Protestant theological education, its place is still in question in many evangelical settings. Cheryl Bridges Johns and the faculty of the Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland, Tennessee, joined in an exploration of the school's public role in its local community and the public presence of Pentecostalism more generally. Their project gave the faculty opportunity not only to understand their institution's role in their relatively small city, but also to reflect on the creation of a body of social teaching appropriate to the growing public role of Pentecostalism, especially in Latin America. The results will be of special interest to readers seeking to know more about the developing role of Pentecostalism in public life, and the project design may well be useful to other schools with similar questions across a wide theological spectrum.

Ray John Marek and Daniel E. Harris focused on the connections between a central aspect of seminary education and the public witness of the churches. In a project carried out at Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas, and Saint John's Seminary in Camarillo, California, they worked on a pedagogy for preaching on justice issues that included both biblical exegesis and interpretation of the social context. The instructional model, which is presented in some detail in their article in this issue, emphasizes both a theology of justice that stands in some tension with secular understandings and a spirituality that focuses on integrating a commitment to justice into the vocation of the preacher. The resources reported here are still in process of development and testing, but other schools may be able to make immediate use of some of the ideas presented in the article.

Washington Theological Union developed a project that addressed the unique challenges and opportunities of public presence at their location in Washington, DC. Jim Nolan and Kevin O'Neil attempted to create a forum that would set key theological themes before policy-makers and expand awareness of Christian social teaching among political leadership. Following a familiar model for legislative lobbying, they developed a series of four breakfast meetings on key issues and sought the participation of legislators and congressional staff in the discussion. The results reported in Daniel McLellan's article in this issue point up the difficulties of this sort of public presence, which

Theme Introduction

requires a good deal of energy and commitment on the part of the theological school. The theological educators had to learn the intricacies of a complex legislative culture and cast their program in terms that fit its requirements. They also had to begin to identify specific ways that their program could meet the needs of their intended audience in order to capture some attention in this highly competitive environment. Their report suggests lessons for all theological schools who seek more public audiences, and it points toward future possibilities for this school in its unique setting.

Covenant Theological Seminary was concerned with similar issues relating the theological school to publics who may have quite different cultures and priorities. In this case, Donald Guthrie and James Meek were concerned with the wide variety of vocational settings in which church members work on a daily basis and with the distance that sometimes develops between those settings and the religious environment in which these same people form their spiritual values and commitments. Guthrie and Meek designed an initiative to acquaint Covenant students with models of ministry that are directed toward a number of different vocational settings. The aim of the program is to educate clergy who are prepared to lead their congregations in thinking about “vocational discipleship” and who are alert to the problems of communication and context that often stand in the way of that sort of pastoral leadership.

Two other projects from university-related theological schools had a more familiar academic format and demonstrated again the importance of the university itself as a public for theological schools that are located in a university setting. Emmanuel College of Victoria University in Toronto developed a series of programs under the leadership of Phyllis Airhart and Roger Hutchinson to address the residential schools issue and the response of the Canadian churches. In this case, the theological school sought wide participation from the university across the usual lines that separate disciplines and faculties, but they also took particular responsibility for including aboriginal voices in the university-based discussion. Duke University Divinity School, with the leadership of Willie James Jennings and L. Gregory Jones, developed a program on racial reconciliation focused on South Africa’s recent past and its lessons for North America and other parts of the world. In both the Duke and Emmanuel programs, the overarching goal was to structure a discussion in which key theological categories—reconciliation, repentance, restitution—could be understood and provide moral direction in relation to a larger public discussion.

The articles in this theme focus on the Public Character of Theological Education thus report on a wide range of projects. Each has its own particular learnings about specific social questions, about the formation of theology for the public, and about the theological curriculum. Each will repay detailed study and consideration of its relevance for the reader’s own situation. Taken together, the reports also suggest some general reflections on the problem with

which we began—the public character of theological education and the lack of connection between theological schools and the broader public. What can we learn from these projects about how ATS member schools can assume the responsibility for this relationship that their accreditation standards require? What would the characteristics of a responsible relationship to the broader public be?

First, we note that the public that a theological school serves is a function of its social location. The projects presented here reinforce the conclusions of the first phase of the Public Character project, which delineated four rather different types of public presence found among four different types of theological school. The projects likewise suggest that there is no one formula for this part of the task of theological scholarship. What a school can do to preserve or strengthen its ties to the public will depend on its denominational heritage and on the things that other schools like it have done well, or not so well, in the past. The project on preaching social justice directed by Marek and Harris reflect the biblical theology of justice articulated in recent Catholic pastoral letters, and their choice to center the project on preaching began with their assessment that this has generally been a weak point in the pastoral implementation of Catholic social teaching. By contrast, few students in mainline Protestant theological schools will not have experienced some examples of prophetic social teaching. The discussions of Nordbeck and Ottati with mainline faculty and church leaders suggest that their problem may be moving beyond the formative experience of the Civil Rights Movement to find prophetic models that relate in equally compelling ways to present social realities.

How a theological school relates to public issues depends in part, as the studies of Siew and Greenman suggest, on the understandings of spirituality and society that its students and faculty bring to the task. Student perceptions are shaped in part by their seminary experience and should be enlarged by the diversity within the student body. Faculty presumably begin with a broader experience, and if their commitments to particular forms of public theology and witness are more settled, they may also have a more nuanced appreciation of the alternatives. Nevertheless, everyone who participates in the theological school's relationship to the broader public begins with his or her own social experience, and each school has its own heritage and identity. The public presence that is shaped by these people in this place inevitably reflects those starting points.

Public presence is also shaped by location in the more ordinary sense of the term "location," as used by real estate agents. How a school relates to its diverse publics depends on where it is. That is a second general point that becomes clear in reviewing the projects. The work with legislators and congressional staffers that Washington Theological Union undertook simply would not be possible for most other schools, because they lack the ready access to places and the informal connections to people that enable the work to

Theme Introduction

begin. The Church of God Theological Seminary inevitably makes a large impact on Cleveland, Tennessee. Other theological schools in larger cities are almost unknown even in their own neighborhoods. The projects at Duke and Emmanuel demonstrate the rich possibilities for interdisciplinary dialogue that are available to theological schools that are part of a university or that are located on a university campus. At the same time, the complex arrangements to secure real participation by aboriginal peoples at the Toronto conference remind us that these schools also have unique opportunities to connect the campus to groups that live far from it, or perhaps have to live in its shadow.

These obvious ties that bind a theological school to its own location set the context for a responsible relationship to the broader public. Accounts of public presence that give attention only to the broad outlines of North American culture or speak of public theology in generic terms may be too abstract for the realities of institutional life. To be sure, theological scholarship also has a global dimension, and the research of individual faculty members may be grounded in communities far removed in space or time from the classrooms where they usually teach. The public character of the theological school as an institution, however, is inescapably local, even when the institution aspires to a national or an international reputation.

Finally, the eight projects reported here remind us that when a theological school enters public space, it will not find itself there alone. Relationships to a broader public are not constructed in a vacuum. It has become fashionable in academic circles to lament the decline of public life and the loss of “social capital” that have resulted from long-term changes in North American culture. No doubt many of those observations about individualism and the privatization of life in an affluent society are correct, but they should not lead us to suppose that the public square is vacant, simply waiting for the publicly responsible theological school to come and fill it. What every one of these projects reveals in one way or another is that the competition for public attention is intense. A theological school that hopes to relate to any public must expect to devote substantial resources in time, energy, and money just to gain initial attention for its efforts, let alone to sustain them to the point of long-term change in either the school or the community. A school that makes its relationships to the broader public a low priority, well behind the sustaining relationships to the church or the academic community, will likely remain invisible to its neighbors—not because the school has nothing to offer, but because so many other possibilities clamor for attention.

To make an impact in that sort of environment, the theological school will have to learn the local culture of the specific publics it most wants to engage. It will have to find ways to make its resources relevant to the needs that these publics already recognize, as well as to the needs that the theological schools think they ought to have. That is not an easy thing to do for theological schools that may begin the process short on resources and preoccupied with their own

Robin W. Lovin and Richard J. Mouw

institutional survival. Nevertheless, a project that seeks to engage the public in hope of eliciting a quick response to the institution's own needs is unlikely to sustain itself for long, and may not even get enough attention from the public to count as a respectable failure. Only a theological school that asks quite specifically who its publics are and what it uniquely has to offer them will be able to sustain the relationship long enough to find out what the public might have to give it in return.

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Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto

Jeffrey P. Greenman and Yau Man Siew
Tyndale Seminary

ABSTRACT: The purpose of this qualitative, cross-sectional study of Master of Divinity students in Toronto was to explore their understandings of spirituality and its relationship to public life and social issues. While there were shared themes in the seminarians' perceptions of spirituality across the theological traditions, this study demonstrates that significant differences exist regarding how spirituality is best expressed. Apart from students in the Jesuit tradition, there was little connection between Christian spirituality and public life. The article concludes with theological reflections and educational implications.

Introduction

Spiritual formation, along with theological learning and professional competence, are three widely accepted goals of theological education. Knowledge in both biblical and theological disciplines have clear and established criteria within the theological curriculum. Most seminary programs include a field education component as well as practical ministry courses to help develop skills necessary for pastoral leadership. However, despite some foundational courses in spirituality and the existence of chapel services, seminary administrators and faculty members sometimes seem uncertain about how to foster the spiritual growth of their students or how to relate spirituality to the “academic” offerings. Indeed, relatively little is known about the nature of spirituality among seminarians, and how spiritual formation is affected through theological education.

The Public Character of Theological Education project examined the ways in which seminaries prepare men and women for leadership in public life and explored seminaries' public presence and public voice in their respective communities. In light of renewed attention being given to spiritual formation in most theological schools, as well as the North American trend toward embracing a bewildering variety of “spiritualities,” a central question emerging in the project is how seminarians related spirituality to public life or social issues. To help answer this question, some corollary questions need to be answered. In the first place, how is spirituality conceived among seminarians? What beliefs and values do they hold about spirituality, and what are some of

Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto

the major influences shaping these beliefs prior to their seminary experience? What impact does the seminary experience have on these beliefs and values? How, if any, have their views on spirituality changed through their seminary experience, and why? Answers to these questions not only will provide a clearer understanding of how current seminarians view spirituality, but also will help educators to identify fundamental presuppositions that shape their students' perspectives on the relationship between Christian faith and public life.

Our aim in this study is to understand spirituality from the perspective of the seminarians. It is an attempt to "put our ears to the ground," so to speak, and to describe the phenomenon from an insider's perceptions, rather than imposing outside definitions. This is in line with "grounded theory" in ethnography, where the theory of a culture is grounded in the empirical data of cultural description.¹ Clifford Geertz speaks of the "thick description" that forms the basis for skillful anthropological inquiry.² To this end, we sought to listen carefully to what seminarians said during in-depth interviews and to collect verbatim quotations. Sound qualitative research involves a careful selection of quotations that are typical or characteristic of the phenomenon described.³

Problem Statement and Research Method

The purpose of this study was to identify the beliefs and attitudes of Master of Divinity students in Toronto concerning their understanding of spirituality and its relationship to public life and social issues. Our research began by sending a letter of intent to the principals or academic deans of five theological seminaries in the Toronto area. One of the researchers followed up with a personal meeting with each principal or dean to explain the details of the study and to answer any questions related to the study. During this visit, we requested a room for the interviews to be conducted in private, as well as a copy of the list of students enrolled in the Master of Divinity program.

Only two seminaries allowed us access to student lists, and only on site. From these lists, subjects were randomly selected from each of the three years of the program. The principals or academic deans in the other three seminaries assigned students for the study as required by our methodology, according to the gender balance and stages of completion in the program.⁴

After the school obtained the consent of the subjects to participate in the study, we made appointments to interview the subjects. The semi-structured interviews were carried out in the rooms provided for the interviews at the participating seminaries. During the interview we reviewed the purpose of the study and thanked the subjects for their participation. The subjects were requested to report information about their demographic and religious background by completing a data sheet. The subjects were informed that their

responses would be coded and treated with the strictest confidentiality to protect their privacy. The interviews were taped and personally transcribed for analysis by the interviewer. The qualitative responses were analyzed for common factors and patterns.⁵

The population for this study is all the theological students who are enrolled in the Master of Divinity programs in graduate theological schools in Toronto. A sample of thirty subjects was drawn for the study, with one male and one female student each, at the beginning, middle, and end of their theological programs, drawn from five theological institutions. The result is a cross-sectional sample of students from five theological schools selected for the study representing a range of denominational traditions: evangelical Anglican, transdenominational evangelical, United Church of Canada, Presbyterian, and Jesuit.

Operational Questions

The following operational questions were used during the interviews: (1) A recognized goal of theological education worldwide is in three major areas: knowledge—particularly biblical and theological knowledge; professional competence—“tools” for ministry; and this whole area referred to as spirituality/spiritual formation. Tell me what you understand by spirituality/spiritual formation. (2) Let’s bring spirituality down to a more personal level. Suppose you see someone and you say, “That is a spiritual woman,” or “That is a spiritual man.” What criteria do you use to say that? (3) What were some major influences to these perceptions of spirituality, prior to coming to seminary? (4) How, if any, has your seminary experience impacted your spirituality? (5) Some people conceive of spirituality in terms of an axis. The vertical line represents one’s relationship with God. The horizontal line represents one’s relationship with people. What is your response to this axis model of spirituality? (6) As we end our conversation together, is there anything about spirituality or spiritual formation that you want to emphasize?

What values and beliefs do seminarians hold about spirituality and spiritual formation?

Among the mainline Protestant (United Church and Presbyterian) students, some subjects pointed out that spirituality today is “trendy” and a “buzz word” sometimes being abused in everyday usage, without a clear meaning or reference to Christ, God, or Christian formation. Most subjects, however, see spirituality as the development or strengthening of one’s “connection” with God through Christ. Spiritual formation is seen as the process of feeding that connection with God.

Subjects from the United Church tradition cited prayer, reading Scripture, and the work of the Holy Spirit as important disciplines in the nurture of

Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto

spirituality. In contrast, subjects from the Presbyterian tradition demonstrated a greater diversity of approaches. In addition to Scripture reading, prayer, and worship, subjects also noted the importance of paying attention to dreams, keeping “soul friends,” and journaling.

When we probed their expression of spirituality, many subjects pointed to the evidence of “Christ-like” character in a spiritual person, such as humility, service, or loving concern for others. Several subjects identified “peace” or “tranquillity” as a defining mark of a spiritual person.

Sometimes you meet someone and there is a certain calm, there is a certain presence about that person. . . a peaceful presence, a kind of sturdiness, almost as though they are rooted somehow. Rooted and peaceful—it is just the feeling I get from the person. (A32)

Almost all subjects, in both United Church and Presbyterian traditions, said that spirituality is expressed in some kind of visible, caring, or compassionate action. In many cases, the students used the category of “service” and spoke of caring action lived out in the wider community or “outside the church,” going beyond the fellowship of congregational life, in order to “encompass the whole of life.”

[E]xpressed as action, daily reflection and integration, action—things an individual does that makes them feel they are living out their faith, service projects, spending time with important people in their lives. People who are spiritual often give off this vibe of good community. . . . They carry their faith with them in personal reflection, lived-out action and community, beyond the church. (A12)

To become. . . as a way of connecting yourself to God. . . I guess in some ways God’s work, we are asked to participate in reaching out to community—whether it is just the local community or the international community. (B12)

. . . justice—it could be on a big scale or on a small scale. Some people are called to justice work nationally or internationally. For me, I am called to justice on a micro-scale—of working with the youth and teaching them about justice, and smiling to people on the street, being kind to the cashier during Christmas time who is flooded with a line-up. And being friendly with the people that I work with in my daughter’s nursery school. (A22)

One subject, from the Presbyterian tradition, best encapsulated this typical line of thought when he said that spirituality is “the incarnation of God’s love in humanity.” (B11)

Turning next to the evangelical students, their definitions of spirituality and understanding of how it is nurtured were consistent. Almost all subjects in the evangelical tradition, both Anglican and transdenominational, define spirituality as the development of one's personal relationship with God, founded upon Christ. Spiritual formation is the process of growth in one's spirituality over time. Spirituality is nurtured through the disciplines of prayer, Bible reading, and fellowship within the Christian community. The clear goal is Christ-like character. In contrast to the transdenominational evangelical tradition, all subjects in the Anglican tradition cited the benefits of a spiritual mentor and the importance of community.

In terms of the expression of spirituality, almost all the subjects, in both the Anglican and transdenominational evangelical contexts, mentioned that spirituality is expressed by a demonstration of Christian character (holiness, humility, obedience to God's will, deep prayer lives, discernment) most notably, the "fruit of the Spirit." Several subjects mentioned the qualities of "peace" and "inner joy" as particularly important.

Someone who values other people, someone who respects other people. I guess certain qualities you pick up in what Paul writes, patience, kindness, self-control. (C31)

There are a couple of women in my church that are spiritual—I call them that because they have incredible prayer lives. God speaks through them . . . they have incredible discernment. The fruits of the Spirit are very evident in their lives. . . (D32)

There are two things I look for. One would be evidence of the fruits of the Spirit. . . . Along with that would be a mark of obedience, of self-surrender, and a longing to do God's will. (D11)

In sharp contrast to subjects from the mainline Protestant tradition, caring and compassionate engagement in the wider community is entirely missing from the definitions of spirituality among subjects in the evangelical tradition. One subject mentioned that the goal of spiritual formation is "to represent Jesus in this world."

At the most basic level subjects from the Jesuit tradition see spirituality as the cultivation of one's relationship with God. However, the emphasis is on developing this relationship in community with others and upon an ongoing process of "discernment." Here, the person enters into dialogue with self, in relationship with others and God. Many students referred to spirituality as nurtured through a three-fold dynamic of study, engagement with the community, and personal prayer.

Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto

Spirituality can be nurtured by learning—an academic approach. It is also nurtured in practice—I am going out there and living out my spirituality. And I think, importantly it is nurtured through dialogue with God, through prayer. These things do not exist in isolation. At one time or another in a person's life, one area may be more dominant. (E11)

While spirituality is seen as the cultivation of one's relationship with God, subjects consistently said that spirituality infuses all aspects of life. There is no fragmentation between Christian faith, daily work, church ministry, personal prayer, and community involvement.

[Someone who] is involved in relationship with the community, who has not fragmented herself into different parts—this is my work over here, this is my home over here, this is my church over here. It is a moment by moment living of her life, in which she reflects the gospel values. Where her prayer life is incorporated with how she lives her life. (E32)

One subject sums up spirituality as “the spiritual aspect of being human.” (E31B)

How do current seminarians define spirituality? Seminarians in all theological traditions commonly understand spirituality as the development of one's “relationship” or “connection” with God founded upon Christ, through the practice of certain disciplines. However, there is significant difference in how spirituality should be expressed. Seminarians in the mainline Protestant traditions feel strongly that spirituality involves some kind of caring and compassionate social action in the wider community. Seminarians in the evangelical traditions largely view spirituality as personal piety and cultivation of the fruit of the Spirit. Seminarians in the Jesuit tradition view spirituality more holistically, noting an inseparable connection between faith, work, study, and community involvement.

What are some major sources of influence to these perceptions?

Responses from subjects representing all the theological traditions were analyzed together. We were struck that a majority of the subjects noted that their family was a primary source of spiritual influence before coming to seminary. Sometimes it is the direct guidance of parents, other times it is the quiet witness of one of their relatives, or the values these relatives hold about the importance of faith or church. Parents, and in some cases grandparents, established important spiritual foundations through modelling faith and exemplifying religious convictions.

My grandmother. . . is a determined, passionate Christian—just her lived example. She had great trouble expressing her faith in words, but she lived

a holy life. There was an implicit connection between her obvious love for people and her faith in God. (C31)

Family of origin is also important in giving me a sense of spirituality. . . . Though their doctrine might be different, their sense of belief and commitment and personal, deep commitment to a spiritual reality and to God is something I was given by them. (E22)

Many subjects also said the church was important. The influence of the church ranged from the pastor's sermon or counsel, to Bible stories in Sunday school and being in fellowship groups within the church community. In particular, we noticed that many subjects emphasized the role of a key individual in the church—such as a pastor, retreat speaker, or youth group leader—whose personal support or intervention in their lives made a significant difference.

After family and church, there were a number of factors that exerted somewhat less influence. A significant number of subjects recalled how a "personal crisis" prompted them toward a journey of faith. Others cited the importance of reading certain works of Christian literature as the beginning of a spiritual pilgrimage. A small number of subjects, all from the Jesuit tradition, said that mentors were important in sharing faith stories in the context of spiritual friendships. Others, within the evangelical tradition, pointed to friends who encouraged them to grow in their faith.

How, if at all, has their seminary experience affected these perceptions?

Almost all the subjects from the mainline Protestant schools said the seminary experience laid strong theological foundations. Their perceptions ranged from developing important frameworks for life and ministry, to helping them read the Bible afresh, to gaining perspectives from different theological traditions.

Subjects within the United Church tradition noted that while their encounter with broader theological viewpoints was at times disturbing, most appreciated the opportunity it offered to articulate their faith more thoughtfully. In contrast, many subjects within the Presbyterian tradition said that the critical approach to biblical studies undermined faith. Indeed, some contemporaries had even given up their faith.

At times I would be frustrated. You would think that in a seminary you would be nurtured in your spiritual growth. Yet, in so many ways, it was torn out from us. . . . Yes, and I had classmates who lost their faith—some left ministry, and some couldn't stand against the teaching that we re-

Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto

ceived and so they bought into it, and I would say have less faith when they graduated than when they first started. (B32)

There are times in some of the studies, where you will be reading some of the interpreters and you say, "What is happening here, is there a God?" You are forced to the other end in terms of questioning your faith, in terms of questioning your beliefs. You listen to the philosophers, "Is there really a God? Is all this a lot of hogwash?" You get this theory, and that theory, and this theory, and all the arguments, and you go back and look at the "garbage" in the OT, and you say, "How could God let that happen?" Almost to the point that on the one hand you are growing in your spirituality and on the other hand, they try to rip it out of you. (B31)

A significant number of subjects, from United Church and Presbyterian traditions, said that academic study, while valuable, also discouraged spirituality. They suggested that their concerns arose in several instances from the pressures of academic study, made worse by a lack of integration in the classroom and a jam-packed curriculum in a very tight schedule.

I find it really hard . . . especially when I am at school because I find that I just have so much work to do that it is really hard for me to practice my spirituality. Actually it makes me feel quite guilty a lot of the time, because I spend so much time learning about my faith, about God and what God calls me to do and then have to go home and do assignments about them instead of spending time integrating it. (A12)

Also, I am forced to . . . the academic pressures dampen the spiritual being in me because you are so busy working on the academics, you are not focusing on developing spirituality. (B11)

. . . most of the students here are commuter students, they are older and married with families, and they don't live in Toronto, they commute. They are only on campus for the three days that classes are offered. All of us, for three days of the week are jam-packed from 9:30AM to 8:30PM, fitting in everything to accommodate the commuter students who then go home. People like me, who are single and without family commitments, are then left here—the community leaves every week. This is also a real spiritual struggle. (A12)

Some subjects, from both mainline traditions, believe that the schools do not emphasise spirituality because they view themselves more as academic institutions than as formation centres.

I don't know that the College actually does anything towards spirituality. I can appreciate that because it is an academic institution, and that's what it is about—the transmission of knowledge here and making sure the students have X amount of knowledge to be able to understand at a certain level. I personally find the College is draining of spirituality. (B31)

It's not something that is talked about—I don't think there is a great deal of attention paid to spiritual formation. I think part of it is the structure of the school—it is a two-day a week, commuter school. . . . Part of it is the discussion of whether we are a seminary or an education centre. . . . theological education is probably the main area, but spiritual formation is not a focus of the College, it is not talked about. (A32)

During such times, some subjects from the Presbyterian tradition, found support within student community groups which developed spontaneously.

I found among my fellow peers that we could find some relief in spirituality. We would pray for each other, and I could see concerns for one another. . . . we did these on our own. We happened to meet in the student lounge and so we talked about issues. We shared the spiritual enlightenment that we might have got in a certain class. I feel that some of the prayers at the start and end of the class are "rehearsed," it did not feel genuine. (B11)

Turning now to the evangelical students, from both transdenominational and Anglican traditions, almost all subjects said that the seminary positively influenced their spirituality. Subjects from the transdenominational evangelical tradition appreciated the school's multid denominational diversity, which often prompted a deeper understanding of one's own faith tradition. Subjects from the Anglican tradition particularly appreciated the models of ministry, either from professors in class or supervisors at fieldwork.

There was one lecture in one of my courses, it was done by different lecturers every week. One of them certainly had an axe to grind. It was very much political in orientation, and I disagreed with most of what he said. And. . . . but one of the high points of the lecture was the response given by . . . the principal. He gave a lovely response—he said just about everything I was thinking. He has actually been a very great help. He is very accessible and he is a very good man, and he is incredibly sharp. I have listened to him speak on several occasions now and I have got a great deal of respect for him and I am learning a lot from him. (C11)

While all subjects in both evangelical traditions acknowledged the positive impact of academic study, all subjects, in the Anglican tradition, said rigorous

Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto

academic study also hampered faith. Most subjects felt rigorous study took time away from being in God's presence, challenged foundational beliefs, made faith dry, and strained family life.

On the other hand, seminary is so much like 'boot camp' and it is so demanding that it is very difficult to maintain the amount of time that I spent with God before on a daily basis. It's been a real struggle to maintain that. And I succeeded for the most part, except for the last three weeks where it has fallen apart (sigh). (C12)

I think I have a sense of how fragile our spiritual lives can be. I should speak directly to the point. . . we study Scripture, we read theology, we struggle with various disciplines. So spirituality becomes homework in a sense. So at the end of the day, I don't read from my Bible you know. I am more inclined to go for a walk, call up a friend to go to the pub. The odd thing happens—your spiritual life becomes objectified—it becomes your job, your task, your homework. . . . Obviously your spirituality becomes compromised, unless you counter that complacency with a really disciplined prayer life. In this sense, our spiritual life is fragile. (C31)

[T]he family and Christian life is very much valued in the classroom and by professors. This is very much talked about, and everyone puts a high value on that. But, on the other hand, it seems like for three years, you really have to neglect a big part of your life to be able to manage the workload of seminary. So, although most of us can find some kind of balance, it is a real struggle. It is very difficult on the families, very difficult. (C12)

Students at this Anglican college consistently highlighted the value of community and the school's attempt to provide some structure for it to happen. However, one subject noted that community mostly happens serendipitously, not as something that can be planned.

Oh, we are constantly being lectured about community. . . . [A] critique of individualism, a critique of the idea that we can know God all by ourselves. We tend to live in a highly individualistic society and I think the church is trying to counter that a little. We are being lectured about community here—sometimes I think it is a little overdone. (C31)

I applaud the school for providing some of the structure for that to happen. We have a retreat at the beginning of the year, and I think that is great. That helps to see where people are at spiritually. I think it is good to create that stage, but I don't think we can impose what shall happen. (C31B)

Many subjects, in the Anglican tradition, expressed the value of spiritual direction in their seminary experience. The Anglican seminary provides a spiritual director for any student who desires one. Spiritual direction is helpful for accountability, providing a friend along the journey of faith.

Well, I have had a spiritual mentor for a year and a half now, and I find it extremely helpful. This is something that my seminary also provides. And the advantage of having a spiritual mentor is that it helps to . . . keep you accountable, but it also helps to have an opportunity to articulate your journey with someone who is very grounded in Christ, who can help you see what you cannot see for yourself. (C12)

The Jesuit students clearly affirm that study is closely related to life in Ignatian spirituality. Study, for them, is not just the acquisition of knowledge, but is the process of reflecting upon truths and personally engaging the content of their studies, for the development of one's life and ministry. One subject shared how this approach to studies contrasted with the approach of professors in other schools within the Toronto School of Theology consortium.

[The college] is a Jesuit school and so the whole idea about reflection-action, reflection-action-reflection and contemplation in between. . . . I do notice the difference between how the professors are engaging me here. Not that one system is better than another—I want to make that qualification. The professors here encourage. . . . I think we speak the same language—at least myself and the professors here, in that they are encouraging me to be reflective, not just pouring in the information. They are doing that, but at the same time, they are also engaging me in a dialogue at a more personal, affective level. Which then forces me to engage in a dialogue with myself and be reflective on it. Whereas my professors from the other schools—there is not much of a dialogue going on, it is more you are here to learn and you learn this. . . . I mean studies now, at this stage of my formation, are not about myself anymore. The focus has changed—I am not here to get the highest grade I can, I am here to learn, as much as I can. I don't mean this as any kind of cliché, or me being humble. I really do see it as an opportunity to learn, to make me a better pastor, to make me a better companion of Jesus. (E11)

Other subjects observed that the school highlights the importance of spirituality, either through the provision of spiritual direction or the modeling of professors who integrate spirituality in their classes.

Certainly through spiritual direction. I have been really grateful for that. I think I did not have any idea when I started the M.Div. program, that it

Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto

would be required. They are really conscientious about making sure that you grow spiritually. If you are stuck, they ask you why. They are still in the process of further developing the program. During the interviews, they will ask how it is going spiritually, how your academics relate to your own spiritual development. They will get information from your history—I think it is really important to do that. The other thing is reflection. It is done in a way that is not intimidating and in a very supportive way. I felt very endorsed by that. (E22)

I just sat in the corner just with the tears flowing—I wasn't crying but I could not stop the tears. The Dean was in the other corner and he saw what was happening. When the class ended, everybody started talking. He got up to leave and I got up and just made a beeline for the washroom thinking, I don't think I could hold myself any longer. I am finished, I am leaving and I am not coming back. I can't even complete this term. He was waiting around the corner and he came, and figuratively, just picked me off the floor and dusted me off. He said, "You are going to be OK with this. Cry, you are grieving. It is OK for you to be doing this. I want to see you in my office." I just look him in the eye and said, "I can't do this. I can't be in this class anymore. I can't hear anymore of this. I am too raw." He literally took the time—and he was so busy—with the ATS study, all the classes he was doing, all the students he mentors. He took the time to be with me, to sit with me, to talk with me, to help me through, to mentor me, to say, "You can finish this." He helped me develop a plan for January to cut back on my studies, to finish my spiritual direction course I started in the fall, to take just one course. If it had not been for that experience of him, who is such a deeply spiritual man, who just cares so much, who was so inclusive, so hospitable, and who constantly goes outside of himself but welcomes what is given back to him. He is my mentor, my model. That experience just changed my situation completely—it changed me even more. I realize this is what spirituality in ministry is all about—what he was able to do with and for me. (E32)

Three subjects were deeply impressed by the spirit of hospitality and inclusion, as part of the culture of the school. This is expressed in a variety of ways—from being open to the contributions of laypersons in class, to a gracious respect for different approaches to the spiritual life.

There is a great respect for the variety of spiritualities. In the past I have often felt like my way of making sense of God in the world—spirituality that is unorthodox but in keeping with the Christian tradition. Here, I

found really authentic feedback on my own beliefs, without criticism. They were just very respectful. That this college can hold the diversity of communities is very impressive. (E22)

How does seminary education affect the spirituality of students? All seminarians, irrespective of theological traditions, shared an appreciation both for the efforts being made by their institutions to provide resources or opportunities to strengthen their spiritual lives, as well as for the valuable contribution of the seminary programs in laying strong biblical and theological foundations. However, seminarians from the mainline Protestant traditions, especially the Presbyterians, found that a critical approach to biblical studies undermined and even eroded faith. Almost all subjects, both mainline and evangelical, commented that the personal demands of rigorous academic study dampened or threatened their spiritual lives. However, seminarians in the Jesuit tradition have a more integrated view of faith and learning, with professors modeling integration of study, prayer, ministry, and the provision of spiritual direction.

How do seminarians perceive the relationship between spirituality and public life?

Almost all the subjects, in both the United Church and Presbyterian traditions, believed that spirituality is linked to public life and social issues. Often these subjects critiqued the vertical-horizontal line axis metaphor as being “too linear” and provided other metaphors such as a “circle,” “straight line,” “ascending spiral,” or “double-helix.” Other subjects critiqued the axis metaphor as an “inadequate” model, as social engagement is the “natural outgrowth” of faith.

As a basic model it is fine. You deal here on a level with other human beings, and you look heaven-ward and there is God. . . . Over the course of my time here, I hold less to a history with a teleological end. Now, I see God in evolution—we are part of the creation, and we work with God. Now, I see God more ahead, not up there in ethereal mansion. All humanity and I will end up with God. In a sense, it brings down, so there is no axis—there is a straight line, God and humanity. We are on a journey to perfection. When I look ahead of me, I see God ahead. God wants to be here with everybody and God is all around. (B31)

I think it is probably too strictly defined. I wouldn't think of it like that. I would think of it as something more integrated. Instead of two axes, . . . the metaphor I heard recently is the double helix from biology, where things are intertwined so completely that they are distinct, but yet they are

Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto

definitely the same. For me, that represents spirituality much better than two axes, which we can then separate. Because I don't think that without a connection to God we have a connection to other people. Without a connection to other people I don't think we have a connection to God. So, for me, if I had to represent it, it has to be much more integrated than the two axes. (A11)

One subject summed up their perspectives well when she said that failure to go out to the community is "failing God" and "not being Christlike." (B11)

In contrast to subjects from the mainline Protestant traditions, not one subject from the evangelical tradition critiqued the axis metaphor of spirituality. Indeed, almost all subjects expressed that the model represented spirituality well in that God and people were involved. In virtually every case, their discussion of the model emphasized the vertical axis, or interpreted the horizontal axis as subordinate to the vertical. In addition, subjects often provided a biblical basis for their responses.

I think it is accurate. You see both axes at work in Christ's life. I mean he does this all the time—he goes away and prays by himself on the mountain, and then he comes back and talks to his disciples. In the Gospel of John, he continually talks about his relationship to the Father, and yet, he speaks of that to his disciples and to other people. And of course, if we take the incarnation seriously—the incarnation is the point where the two axes meet. God who is ultimately vertical, enters our horizontal world—I think that is good theology. (C31)

While subjects speak of engagement with other people, the emphasis very clearly was upon Christian fellowship rather than non-Christian neighbors, and particularly upon being accountable for one another's spiritual lives within the Christian community.

Yeah, I think that is a reasonable model because spirituality has other people involved. First of all there is the Lord, of course, but without the community aspect, we don't share in that together. When the Bible speaks of "you," it is the "you" plural—so it is both the individual and the community aspects. . . we share our struggles and successes. In our spiritual lives we encourage each other to maintain a close relationship with God. In a large community setting, it would be public worship—be it in music or prayer or the whole worship experience. (D21)

In all the responses and examples given about how to represent spirituality, there was a notable absence of engagement with the larger social community. Only one among the twelve subjects was critical of too much of a "church slant" in the evangelical seminary tradition.

If I can be a little critical. I think the one thing that was a little lacking was. . . . OK, evidently this has something to do with my slant—it has to do with the whole idea of social justice, of putting your faith into the world. I come back to experience. In the seminary we have to do our placements in the church, especially for me as I am in the pastoral program. There is not a lot of emphasis of putting your faith into the world. That is my criticism of the church in the world—we do not emphasize the fact that it is good to help out at a shelter, that it is good to do food banks and things like that. . . . It should certainly be taught, but I am not sure how practical it is to encourage this in the seminary. You go to a seminary to be a pastor. I think we need to take away the church slant and give it a world slant. (D32)

Among the Jesuit students, all subjects pointed to a close and vital link between spirituality and public life. One subject said separation would lead to a false sense of piety. Another subject highlighted caring for the earth as a genuine mark of spirituality.

I think because they are so interwoven. If we try to fragment one without the other—into just relationship with God—it leads to a false sense of piety, separation, marginalization. If it is just with the community, we lose a sense of the spiritual—of this relationship, of this free-flowing modeling within the Godhead, which is this grace that flows and is constant. It is just like the Spirit dances constantly. I don't know that She dances constantly if we separate the two. The two are interwoven and it is a beautiful tapestry of life, filled with color and passion and action. If these two are separated there is no action, there is no justice. If there is no justice, then the Kingdom will not be fulfilled as God intended. (E32).

I think we are missing a third intersecting axis, which is some kind of relationship with the earth. A lot of my ethics work in business came out of the experience of the environmental crisis that we face. I was in Nicaragua earlier this year, doing some kind of research on the forgiveness of third world debt. Ecological crisis is as oppressive and difficult for Nicaragua to manage as the economic crisis. . . . People are dying and we are finding that there are industrial and agricultural chemicals involved. There is foot and mouth, there is mad cow disease, the genetically modified food issue—there are just so many aspects to this. In part, we've lost the sacred relation to life and to the earth and we are dealing in a very idolatrous way with human intellect. We assume we can make these manipulations and that we can control them and we can endlessly pursue some kind of benefits. (E31)

What is noteworthy is that these subjects not only talked about this link, a majority of them are involved in community projects. One subject is the

Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto

director of an organization that helps businesses think through ethical issues. Another subject is deeply involved with the Catholic Family Services, helping parishes develop their social and pastoral ministries. A third subject is a geneticist who assists the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, helping to draft documents to governments on issues of science and faith. A fourth subject is a consultant on diversity and education and has been involved with the Asian-Canadian AIDS service.

Perhaps this integrated perspective of spirituality and public life is best summarized by the response of one subject to the axis metaphor of spirituality.

I would disagree with it, completely. Because all of our lives and God's life is one event, meaning they are more held together and always touching, always connecting. So, instead of two lines, it is one thick line, going in the same direction. I don't think we can compartmentalize in a way I think the cross does. . . . My understanding of God is a God who is faithful to us, who is always with us. It makes more sense to me that God is with us every single step of the way. Meaning, at every single moment of my life, I can't divorce my spiritual life from God. At every single moment of the way—whether I am in consolation or desolation. God in consolation or God in desolation is my perception of the situation. At times it is easy to say that as it is only one point where we intersect with God. But realistically, it is every single step of the way. (E11)

How is spirituality related to public life in the understanding of seminarians? Seminarians in the mainline Protestant tradition consistently said that spirituality is significantly related to social issues. Indeed, they often critiqued the axis metaphor of spirituality as an inadequate representation in this regard. In contrast, seminarians from the evangelical tradition consistently affirmed the important of the two elements, quoting biblical support. There was a telling absence of critique of the axis model. Seminarians in the Jesuit tradition see an intimate link between spirituality and social issues. Indeed, from their perspective, separation would lead to a false sense of piety.

It is also clear that there is a good measure of triangulation in the responses of the subjects across the theological traditions. There is often close correlation between how subjects define spirituality, how they believe spirituality is expressed, and their responses to the axis metaphor.

Theological Reflections and Educational Implications

This study seeks to provide a clearer understanding of how current seminarians view spirituality. It is valuable to observe what was present or absent in our conversations with students, as we "put our ears to the ground." First, there are strong threads of shared language and themes used by students

from across the various theological traditions. A great many subjects spoke of spirituality as “relationship with Christ” or “being connected with God.” There was much talk of “journeying” as a metaphor for the Christian life. There was also widespread agreement about how spiritual lives are positively nurtured, as many students spoke of prayer, Bible reading, fellowship with other Christians, and being sensitive to (or discerning) God’s presence or the Holy Spirit’s workings. Virtually every subject strongly associated spirituality with personal qualities of character, or the fruit of the Spirit, with a powerful emphasis upon “peace” and “calmness” under duress. We were struck by how consistently, and clearly, the subjects identified their families of origin as the primary formative influence upon their spiritual lives, and how frequently they specified the church’s influence upon their spiritual growth in terms of the significant influence of a key relationship, rather than the impact of preaching or formalized church programs.

Second, there is a surprisingly consistent absence of certain language or concepts used by the students to describe spirituality. These absences emerge distinctly when we consider current student perceptions against the backdrop of the broader range of approaches and vocabularies used to articulate Christian spirituality throughout the centuries. Notably, there is a complete absence of any reference to sin, across the spectrum of theologies. Current seminarians simply do not associate spiritual growth with a commitment to combating sin. The related categories of confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation also were not found. Apart from a few passing references, the sacraments are not associated clearly or powerfully with spiritual formation, even by the Jesuit students. In fact, corporate worship is only rarely mentioned, and it is never associated with issues of social justice, despite recent attempts by liturgical theologians to make this connection. Despite the frequent mention of the formative significance of prayer, specific content to those prayers is rarely offered, and it is striking that only one subject out of thirty made explicit mention of the Lord’s Prayer. Nor do we find any meaningful engagement with the category of the Kingdom of God, one which has clear social implications. There is remarkably little awareness of issues of violence or poverty as related to Christian spirituality. Likewise, students displayed virtually no awareness of a connection between spirituality and evangelism, even among evangelicals, for whom evangelism would supposedly be a very high priority. Nor is there any mention of public proclamation of the Gospel, and articulation of its social, political, or economic implications; there appears to be a loss of confidence in the church’s moral voice in its preaching. It is notable that only among the Jesuit students was there a clear awareness that the Christian faith calls us to engage in social reform, aimed at systemic structures or public policy decisions. Rather, students consistently focused upon more immediate spheres of involvement, such as helping at a soup kitchen or homeless shelter.

There was no great surprise in the patterns we discovered in the mainline, evangelical, and Jesuit traditions. This study confirms some common generali-

Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto

zations. The mainline Protestant students highlighted the connectedness of personal piety and social involvement, with a special concern for social justice issues (however, usually localized at the micro-level). Arguably, those in this tradition should be concerned to maintain a vital connection to Christ so that their social concerns do not become disconnected from the Gospel. The evangelical students emphasized personal piety, expressed as inner qualities and nurtured through fellowship within the church. This typically evangelical piety, however, was linked with neither evangelism nor social concern. We would suggest that those in this tradition should be concerned to avoid a drift toward a form of self-preoccupation that entails public irrelevance. Jesuit students articulated the inseparable connection of prayer and action, the spirituality of study and reflection, and the Christian faith's concern for social transformation, not merely for relief efforts to provide short-term aid to those in need. For those in this tradition, arguably there should be a sharpened focus upon students being equipped to maintain their spiritual vitality apart from the nurturing environment of their college.

This study may serve as a resource for theological educators as they identify fundamental presuppositions that shape their students' perspectives on the relationship between Christian spirituality and public life. We believe that current seminary students reveal themselves as being predominantly oriented by an "affective-relational" understanding of spirituality.⁶ Students consistently emphasize relational categories, inner qualities, the fruit of the Spirit, and inter-personal conduct as the locus of spirituality, and they understand this to be supported and nurtured through close personal relationships with peers, mentors, or faculty members. This depiction would seem to reflect a tendency toward the individualization, privatization, and subjectivization of Christian faith. Given an "affective-relational" understanding, many students do not naturally associate "spirituality" with public life or social issues. This is not to say that they are entirely indifferent to the wider community, nor that they see that community as wholly unrelated to Christian concern. Rather, our subjects' predominant approach suggests why so many students have difficulty seeing their own spiritual lives as expressed in public realms, and why they struggle to articulate a significant role for the church in the wider community.

In closing, we believe our research should prompt renewed discussion among seminary administrators, faculty members, and students, as well as their supporting constituencies, concerning the place of spiritual formation in theological education. In those seminaries where considerable numbers of students are experiencing spiritual struggles or an erosion of confidence in Christian beliefs precisely on account of the content and context of their seminary studies, there is a need for renewed attention to the formative nature of theological reflection and the school's role in spiritual nurture. This study also suggests a need for ongoing consideration (and in some cases, reevalua-

tion) of the nature of theological learning, especially the crucial relationship between critical methodologies or theoretical knowledge about God and the cultivation of practical Christian wisdom expressed in knowing, loving, and serving God.⁷

Our findings in this study correlate with the Lynn-Wheeler study, "Missing Connections."⁸ We conclude that many current seminarians are, to a considerable degree, missing connections between Christian spirituality and public life. In addition, we believe that seminary education can and should play a vital part in transforming the attitudes and values of students toward social concerns, both through curricular and co-curricular measures that reinforce the active expression of Christian faith as a necessarily public life of discipleship.⁹ If seminaries wish to form men and women for public leadership, expressed either through ordained ministry or as Christians across the professions and throughout society, then they must give careful attention to grounding their students in the best ways in which their respective traditions understand and exemplify the integration of personal spirituality with public responsibility.¹⁰

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ENDNOTES

1. Barney Glasser and Anselm Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine, 1967). James P. Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1979), 3-16.
2. Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" in his *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 3-32.
3. David M. Fetterman, *Ethnography Step by Step*, Applied Social Research Methods Series 17 (Newbury Park: Sage, 1989), 11-23.
4. Subjects were selected using the following method: (1) Two schools provided the researcher with a list of students enrolled in each of the three stages of their Master of Divinity programs (beginning, middle, end). Using a Table of Random Numbers, two students in each stage of the Master of Divinity program were randomly selected (six in each seminary). In four other schools, students were assigned to the researcher by the registrar (in consultation with the academic deans/principals). (2) The students selected had to fulfill the following criteria: have been in Canada for at least five years prior to commencement at the seminary; one to be a male student; one to be a female student.

Spirituality and Public Character: A Qualitative Cross-Sectional Study of Master of Divinity Students in Toronto

5. Before the actual interviews, a pilot study was carried out involving two seminary students from one of the five institutions. This pilot study provided useful insights to sharpen the operational questions and also enhanced the research design of the study.
6. See Urban T. Holmes, *A History of Christian Spirituality: An Analytical Introduction* (New York: Seabury Press, 1981), esp. 1-13.
7. An excellent resource in this regard is Ellen T. Charry, *By the Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
8. Elizabeth Lynn and Barbara G. Wheeler, *Missing Connections: Public Perceptions of Theological Education and Religious Leadership* (Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn Studies, no. 6, 1999).
9. For some suggestions about possible approaches that seminarians can take to these issues, see David Jones, Jeffrey Greenman, and Christine Pohl, "The Public Character of Theological Education: An Evangelical Perspective," *Theological Education* 37:1 (Autumn 2000), 1-15.
10. We are grateful to our colleagues Timothy Larsen and Robert Derrenbacker for their comments on a previous draft of this essay.

Educating for Public Ministry: Models and Strategies for Mainline Seminaries

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ABSTRACT: Relatively few mainline Protestant seminaries today have extensive programs for public ministry formation, despite the historic commitments of their sponsoring denominations to social amelioration and activism. A few schools, however, do have such programs, and these can serve as both encouragement and caution to others. To discern which factors might make for success (and failure), the mainline seminaries' study group of the Public Character of Theological Education project gathered participants in two separate small conferences to talk about the role and experience of schools in training persons to provide public leadership. Several recommendations and observations emerged from this process.

Genesis and Nature of the Project

In 1999, as part of the Lilly Endowment-funded "Public Character of Theological Education" project, a working group began to look seriously at the apparent loss of—as well as the need and theological warrant for—an enhanced "public voice" among many mainline seminaries today. Recognizing the complex but critical web of relationships among seminaries and their staff, denominations, and practitioners, the group decided to bring together a number of such persons for focused conversation. An initial conference that same year with seminary personnel, denominational officials, and local pastors explored the question, "What role do—and should—mainline theological seminaries have in interpreting public events and in training persons to provide public leadership?" (For purposes of the study, the group defined "public leadership" very broadly as leadership that is actively concerned with matters outside the boundaries of a particular ministry setting—for example, the religious leader who works with teenagers in the community, lobbies for environmental reform, or is a radio or newspaper commentator on matters of public interest.)

A follow-up luncheon at the 2000 ATS Biennial Meeting four months later broadened the conversation and allowed the working group to draw some initial conclusions. It seemed clear that historically, mainline seminaries *have* been places where individual leaders have been formed—and transformed—

*Educating for Public Ministry:
Models and Strategies for Mainline Seminaries*

for public ministries. The presence of mentors, “defining moments” of personal and/or cultural significance, the shaping role of context and community—these clearly have contributed to the formation of individual leaders. But often as not, this process seems to have been almost accidental, the result of a fortuitous concatenation of circumstances rather than intentionality on the part of mainline seminaries.

Nevertheless, participants at the Biennial Meeting luncheon made it clear that a few schools *are* seeking to form students for public leadership, often in unique and creative ways. Thus the working group proposed a second phase of the project: a consultation with several mainline schools that are deeply involved in various components of public ministry. From both that conversation and the earlier ones, we proposed to offer models and strategies that might encourage other schools to do the same, and/or provide them with some cautionary observations. Overall, the goal for both phases of the project was to explore the particular challenges facing mainline seminaries, for the purpose of strategizing for effective change.¹

Like the first phase of the project, the second phase (for which this is the final report) consisted of an informal, two-day conference in October 2002 with representatives from five mainline seminaries in the United States and Canada.² Each participant was asked initially to present a response to four questions:

1. How does your school educate and engage in formation for public ministry?
2. What is your school actually doing, both in its formal curriculum and in its co-curricular activities?
3. How does your school understand its mission in the world today?
4. What are the benefits and liabilities of your school’s program(s) for public ministry?

Following the presentations of individual panelists, a theological reflector summarized comments and the entire group engaged in conversation. Subsequently task group members assessed the presentations and generalized from them, reflecting also on the information gleaned from the project’s initial phase.

The participants were from schools that represented different geographic locations, racial constituencies, and programmatic emphases. The three schools with the most comprehensive programs in leadership for public voice and their participants were:

- *Wesley Theological Seminary*, Washington, DC (Hal Recinos). A United Methodist school on the outskirts of downtown Washington, Wesley articulates a vision for a “more just, peaceful society” that is embodied in several programs. An autonomous, on-campus Church Center for Theology and Public Policy serves as a national and ecumenical resource for discerning and studying the relationship between Christian concerns and public policy. The National Capital

Semester for Seminarians brings students from across the country to acquire hands-on experience in dealing with questions of public life and policy formation, and to reflect critically on both domestic and international issues. An urban ministry program focuses on the struggle for human dignity and empowerment of the urban poor, and involves partnership with nearby social service agencies. Finally, the cross-cultural immersion requirement for MDiv students offers students intensive time in an unfamiliar culture, for the purpose of increasing awareness of the impact of culture on ministry and practice. In all these programs, Wesley intentionally takes advantage of its location near the nation's capitol.

- *Queen's Theological College*, Kingston, Ontario, Canada (Jean Stairs). Queen's Theological College is affiliated with the United Church of Canada and is located in an area with ten correctional facilities within a short drive of the campus. A curriculum review in 1996 called the school to become more "culturally aware," emphasizing QTC's singular physical location; thereafter, prison and rural ministries became a central focus. The school's unique restorative justice program—both a concentration within MDiv studies and a diploma program—brings together incarcerated persons, lawyers, journalists, parolees, chaplains, and agency workers for the purpose of truly "healing" both offenders and victims. In addition, QTC has an impressive diversity of programs for public ministry formation: partnership with a Baptist seminary in Nicaragua, to which a student group travels biennially; a rural ministry program that provides a degree concentration; partnership with an indigenous training center for persons of aboriginal ancestry, including a BTh in Native Studies; and a program in deaf culture and ministry—this latter a missional priority for the United Church of Canada.
- *Wartburg Theological Seminary*, Dubuque, Iowa (Shannon Jung). Located in mid-western farm country—and in an area that is one of the most racially and ethnically homogenous in the nation—Wartburg is a Lutheran school, a majority of whose students serve in rural towns. Wartburg's strong missional focus ("where learning leads to mission, and mission informs learning") has led it to a strong emphasis on contextual education. Although the school has initiated programs related to global ministries—both a cross-cultural and a rural immersion are required of MDiv students—its most comprehensive contextual program is both local and rural: sponsorship of the Center for Theology and Land, in partnership with the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. Born out of Wartburg's commitment to the old "town and country" church movement that gained prominence in the early part of the twentieth century, the Center was founded in 1987 as

*Educating for Public Ministry:
Models and Strategies for Mainline Seminaries*

a result of the farm crisis in the Midwest and recognition of the fact that in many rural midwestern communities, church leaders are expected to be community leaders. Its aim is both to encourage and to equip students for work in rural settings by familiarizing them with relevant economic, social, and cultural issues.

Two other schools had significant, but either newer or somewhat less comprehensive programs for formation:

- ***Pacific School of Religion***, Berkeley, California (Fumitaka Matsuoka). A school of the United Church of Christ with a racially and denominationally diverse student body, PSR undertook an extensive curriculum review in the mid-1990s after several years of internal difficulties. The faculty identified four “value areas” for a new curriculum: contextuality, the critical examination of sacred and other texts, partnership with external institutions, and personal formation for ministry. Also emerging from the curriculum review was a shift in focus from developing *leaders* to developing *communities*: specifically, a new commitment to “equip historic and emerging faith communities for ministries. . . for justice and compassion in a changing world.” Here, “compassion” was key: how, the faculty asked, can we acknowledge the *pain* of certain groups? How can we question the “officially optimistic way of life” that has dominated mainline Christianity during much of the past century? PSR subsequently established three ancillary institutions, each directed by a faculty member: the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies for Ministry, the Institute for Leadership Development and the Study of Pacific and Asian American Religion, and the Faith and Health Consortium. All three institutions reflect concerns and communities of particular significance in the Bay area.
- ***Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University***, Richmond, Virginia (Samuel Roberts). A historically African-American school, Virginia Union has long had an urban focus, and—in keeping with the needs of its primary constituency—an expectation that ministry in the African-American community must involve public leadership. As early as the 1970s the school instituted “the plunge,” an intensive two-week, Washington, DC, immersion that involved both political and social learnings. However, for reasons of both safety and economics, a full semester-long urban term replaced “the plunge” in the 1990s. Today students have an abbreviated experience, spending the night in an urban shelter, reading and discussing analyses of the urban environment, and meeting with both civic and church leaders. Extra-curricular forums supplement classroom experience.

Theological Assumptions of the Participants

Part of the working group's task in both phases of the project was theological. Participants wondered: what are the theological warrants for and assumptions about public ministry that have an impact on both individuals and institutions? In the earlier phase of the project, the group's primary concern was with the personal theological assumptions of the participants, that is, the assumptions that led them to become *individual leaders* who are engaged in public ministries. In the second phase, this concern shifted to the participants' reflections about their *institutions' programs* for formation in public ministry.

As was the case in phase one of the project, participants unanimously agreed about the importance of a strong theological grounding in forming persons and communities for public ministries. All insisted that such institutional formation requires a missional focus, and that a missional focus, in turn, must be backed by a coherent theology of missions.

Our panelists described theologies of mission that emphasized two broad themes. One was *theocentric*, and it supported a vigorous engagement in the world. Here the basic idea is that God binds Godself to finite existence so that the world, understood theologically, is God's world, a world that God values and in which human beings meet God at every turn. To engage the world is therefore to respond to God; indeed, engagement is an essential spiritual practice. Mission becomes closely associated with the question of how we respond faithfully to God in the world, and how we act in accordance with God's purposes.

The several schools' emphasis on engagement was evidenced in the importance that all participants placed on *context*. As one noted, speaking about his school's program, "It is central to the Gospel to be open to context. We responded to the context and the context was revelation to us." Another suggested that, theologically speaking, mission to the world is to be understood in the light of a need for God's grace, as well as the idea that it is God's purpose for the world to gain a level of well being.

Another broad theme was *Christocentric*. As one panel member put it, "The cross is God's own pedagogical device that identifies us with the oppressed." Indeed, what more than one participant called "the realism of the cross" was often taken to displace an older and more traditional North American liberal optimism. For a number of participants, this meant that mission both is and should be supported by a theology of vulnerable love: Christ who suffered outside the gate gave his life to empower the marginalized. One participant noted the importance of a cruciform pattern of martyrdom among some Latin American Christians, and the ways in which this pattern contributes to a focus on costly mission. Virtually all understood Christology to be intimately connected with a spirituality of compassion and a ministry of service.

*Educating for Public Ministry:
Models and Strategies for Mainline Seminaries*

These Christocentric and theocentric themes were mutually enriching—merging, for example, in the observation that Christian mission finds God first among the world’s crucified. For almost all the participants, the cross becomes the clue to the presence of God in the world as well as in our faithful response. True mission (and faithful response) is an intentional *being with* those who suffer. This is also the pattern of true discipleship or following Jesus. Both themes seemed also at work when participants spoke of serving God by equipping persons and communities for public ministries of justice and compassion. More than one participant seemed to be searching for a cruciform justice, which was described as restorative rather than merely retributive.

Finally, the panel expressed broad agreement that it is important to understand the seminaries themselves as agents in the world in the light of a theological analysis. Like all other finite entities, seminaries operate within given possibilities and limits. These have to do not only with an institution’s particular financial and educational resources, but also with its specific location: the upper Midwest is not Washington, DC, and suburban Boston is not inner-city Richmond. A strong theology of mission will support realistic assessments of precisely which possibilities for public ministry are appropriate for a given school in its particular context.

Models and Critical Factors for Success³ or Failure

Each of the five schools participating in the conference presently offers learning opportunities that are theoretically replicable in other settings. Nevertheless, for various reasons—among them location, economics, and history—the schools chose what may be called different *models and means* for their public ministry programs. In some instances, more than one model was operative. The task group identified these models and means as:

- **Partnership.** The school cooperates with one or more other existing (but external) institutions to provide public ministry programming, on-site educational facilities, staff, and shared funding. Such partnerships might include teaching congregations, public and private social service agencies, or other educational institutions.
- **Academic Programs/Degrees.** The school offers a discrete track or focused degree program for persons wishing to gain extensive specialized skills in a public ministry area. Both regular and adjunct faculty members may participate in teaching.
- **Study Centers and Institutes.** The school creates a “wholly owned” but distinct institution for study of and training in a public ministry area; such institutions may or may not have their own board and policies.
- **“Selected Shorts.”** The school does not offer a comprehensive program of any sort, but does sponsor regular or occasional activities and learning opportunities, such as symposia, classes, and immersion

experiences; these are supported by the school's overall ethos and/or mission emphases.

What ultimately affects the success or failure of the several schools' programs? The task group identified five critical factors.

Faculty modeling, conversation, and commitment. All participants stressed the importance of faculty buy-in to programs for public ministry at their seminaries. One spoke of "sweat equity," faculty members' personal work to get a program started. Several participants indicated that their schools' programs themselves were the result of commitments made by the entire faculty. Another, however, indicated there had been no comprehensive discussion about mission in nearly fifteen years; from his perspective, the public ministry paradigm "breaks in from the margin," and asks, "How can the church help transform the world?" Nevertheless, he added, without a thoroughgoing self-examination, the school may find it easier to ignore these new voices.

Almost everyone indicated that not all faculty members *have* bought in to public ministry programs, even when there has been a sustained examination of the curriculum and a consensus about institutional mission. In some settings, the initial (and ongoing) success of programs was dependent upon the actions and energy of a handful of passionately committed people.

It is clear that, at the very least, programmatic success in the five schools has depended on three factors. First, the school has had a critical mass of faculty who are committed to, and *actively* involved in the leadership of, the public ministry program. Second, a substantial group of faculty has been prepared to offer genuine and active moral support for the program, even if not actual participation; such support might include encouraging students to participate, using relevant resources in the classroom, inviting occasional guest lecturers, and the like. But long-term success also seems to have depended upon the *absence of antagonism* to innovative programming, even if this has not translated into active support. (Although none of the schools reported universal participation on the part of their faculties, failure of some members to participate was perceived as the result of their having other primary interests.) Perhaps most important, experience seems to suggest that when programs represent the passionate vision and work of one or two individuals, they may be doomed to a short lifespan, especially when inevitable personnel changes occur.

Full curricular integration. Participants agreed that "add-on" programs that are not deeply centered in the school's mission and fundamental to the school's identity will probably not be successful over the long term. In four of the five schools, current programs were the result either of a significant curriculum review, or of a clear and fresh commitment to the programs themselves on the part of both faculty and administration. In the fifth instance, commitment to public ministry programming was an ongoing part of the school's historic past. These programs, in other words, are organic: in each case, faculty members stated that it would be impossible for students to attend their

*Educating for Public Ministry:
Models and Strategies for Mainline Seminaries*

school and not, in one way or another, be affected by the public ministry thrust.

Nevertheless, a healthy dose of realism also seems appropriate. Participants admitted that a certain percentage of students would inevitably complete their degrees without having been significantly shaped and transformed by existing programs. This seemed especially true for the historically African-American seminary, where “as many as twenty-five percent of ministerial students see ministry as an entitlement, an entrepreneurial enterprise.” Our panelist wondered, are liberative paradigms today more peripheral to African-American communities than they formerly were?

Location, location, location. Panel members stressed that their schools’ programs were *indigenous*, that is, they grew out of the particular contexts and circumstances in which the schools themselves participated. Indeed, this fact was obvious in each instance, but perhaps most striking in the restorative justice program at Queen’s Theological College and the three new ancillary institutions at Pacific School of Religion. For both these schools, geographic location and social circumstances—the existence of penal institutions nearby, the presence of “emerging faith communities” with new needs—have been recently decisive in both identifying public ministry opportunities and shaping programs.

Panelists perceived attention to context as both logical and financially sound: working with the situation at hand provided obvious opportunities for fruitful partnerships, ease of communication and planning, and long-term sustainability. Moreover, because the several seminaries are effectively “regionalized”—that is, they draw their student bodies primarily from the immediate geographic area in which they reside—such emphases have served to give the schools local visibility and support, even as they have trained students for the actual environment in which a majority eventually serve.

An able development staff. Almost all participants indicated they had financial concerns about their programs’ future. In two instances, finite grants had enabled programs to begin; in every case continuation of programming now depends upon the ability to raise significant endowment or annual operating funds. Even more important, the development staff itself must fully understand and be able to “sell” the specific program to potential donors. It is clear, however, that sustained and regular conversation between faculty members and development staff does not always happen. Yet without a development staff that both understands and supports the public ministry program, it probably will not succeed.

Awareness that all things end. Despite their deep commitment to the particular programs they facilitate at their schools, panelists were philosophical about the long-term future. Several participants have already seen programs come and go at their institutions; at Queen’s Theological College, for example, an “Institute for Faith and Ethics in Society” is now in suspension because of lack of funding; at Virginia Union, social circumstances caused the

demise of the popular “urban plunge” for seminarians. Still, all agreed that the real issue is not the particular programs—which will inevitably end as finances or other circumstances dictate—but their institutions’ overall commitment to formation for public ministry.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Mainline Seminaries

Not every mainline school is positioned—missionally, financially, or geographically—to mount effective programs for formation in public ministry. The experience of those that do sponsor such programs, however, can be usefully shared. With encouragement to those schools considering a public ministry thrust, the working group offers four recommendations (or, more accurately, cautionary observations) about public ministry programs that have emerged from both phases of the mainline seminaries project.

Successful programs will be theologically grounded. Solid theological grounding is critically important for both an institutional understanding of public ministry and for the self-understanding of potential leaders. Participants in both phases of the project spoke about the importance of a theological—rather than, for example, a sociological or economic—lens in “engendering the courage to turn our back on cultural values and carry out God’s will.” It is the “realism of the cross,” one participant noted, “which causes (people) to identify with suffering communities.” Another noted the importance of the trinitarian understanding that “*difference* characterized by vulnerable love” is part of the “internal quality of God,” a realization that mitigates the “fragmenting nature” of our human specificity and diversity. The theological understanding that this is *God’s* world demands that faithful people ask, “What is God’s *will* for this world?”

Successful programs will be deeply embedded in the life of the school. This means several things. Most important, successful programs will derive from broadly owned curricular commitments, rather than from the passions and interests of particular faculty members or administrative leaders. Such curricular grounding—embodied generally in courses as well as specifically in programs, centers, or tracks—is both a practical and a philosophical imperative. A school’s curriculum is typically “owned” not only by faculty, but also by administration and trustees; it is the primary means by which a seminary’s core identity and values are embodied and realized. A curriculum has more power, longevity, and influence than isolated centers or programs. In the absence of curricular commitment to formation for public ministries, specific programs may be perceived as ancillary and expendable; moreover, from a budgetary perspective such programs may not be able to compete for finite resources.

Curricular commitments also ensure the broadest possible faculty support for public ministry programs, since faculty are the primary architects of the curriculum itself. Nevertheless, this seems to be an area where seminaries

*Educating for Public Ministry:
Models and Strategies for Mainline Seminaries*

sometimes falter. Mainline denominations in America have historically shared the conviction that the Christian faith is involved with the totality of life, not merely with a sequestered part that can be called “church.” Perhaps for this reason, mainline faculty members typically share the general *conviction* that public ministries are a positive good, without necessarily sharing a passion to model those ministries personally. (A participant described his school’s commitments this way: “All of us pay lip-service to the program, but only one-third to one-half actually show up.”) Nevertheless, in both the first and second conferences, participants stressed the power of personal witness—the critical importance of faculty modeling and mentoring—for effective formation. Practically speaking, this means that successful programs will pay serious and sustained attention to questions of critical mass: how many faculty members are likely to be committed *participants in*, and not merely supporters of, public ministry programs? What would be the programmatic consequences if one or more of the most active faculty members were to leave? Is the school prepared to add “public ministry” to the list of ancillary competencies sought in each faculty search? Seminaries need to be especially cautious about establishing what one participant called “entrepreneurial programs,” that is, programs initiated by an individual faculty member and approved—but not necessarily fully “owned”—by others. To be sure, “entrepreneurial programs” *can* be both effective and durable, depending on the longevity and skill of faculty leadership. But they are inherently fragile, depending as they often do on the presence of a very small leadership pool to ensure continued viability. As one participant stated, “*Inertia* is the real resistance here. An entrepreneur’s very passion may lead others to say, ‘That’s what so-and-so does, so *we* don’t need to be involved.’”

Finally, the commitment of senior administrators and board members to programs for public ministry formation is critical. Several participants stressed the importance of presidential leadership in helping to shape new vision and directions for public ministries. (At Wartburg, for example, two successive presidents who had themselves been “farm boys” helped to frame the current emphasis on rural ministry; at PSR, the commitment of new leadership to emerging constituencies in the region was decisive in determining program.)

Successful programs will be contextual. The best and most successful programs will emerge organically from a seminary’s particular location. Indeed, the importance of location cannot be overstressed. All five of the schools represented in the second conference—as well as others identified in the earlier phase of the project—were mindful of their own specific contexts in determining the nature of their public ministry programs. (By “context” is meant both the immediate community or region in which the seminary resides, together with its unique attributes and concerns, and the seminary’s core constituency, which may be broader than the merely local.⁴) This means, for example, that a school whose primary constituency is rural or suburban may

want to think twice before putting its energies into an urban ministry program. Those programs that *do* focus on arenas other than the local—for example, globalization programs—may succeed to the degree that global realities themselves underscore the decisive importance of context.

Why is context so important? Participants identified at least three factors. First, the well-known “regionalization” of theological education during the last several decades means that today many, perhaps most, mainline seminaries draw their student bodies from the surrounding region. Thus a focus on the actual concerns of these nearby communities helps to prepare students for the needs they will eventually address in ministry. Second, a contextual emphasis opens up the possibility of partnerships with local institutions, a strategy that offers potential for shared funding and leadership as well as diversified educational settings. (Both the restorative justice program at Queen’s Theological College and the rural ministry program at Wartburg, for example, are framed on this sort of cooperation.) Finally, a school’s attentiveness to its immediate surroundings may bring it both visibility and financial support. (One conference participant, however, cautioned that this attentiveness is a two-edged sword: depending on the majority viewpoint regarding a particular local issue, a school may receive either a “halo” or a “smear” for its efforts.)

If seminaries are to be mindful of their own contexts in determining the nature of their public ministry concerns, what should they *do* to be mindful? Panelists suggested several strategies:

- **Focus groups.** Seminary personnel can meet with members of local groups and constituencies to determine what the pressing local needs are, and what kind of ministerial training is appropriate to address those needs.
- **Demographic studies.** These can show both where a community actually is vis-à-vis particular public concerns, as well as what longer-term trends may be. As one participant pointed out, locally based “niche programs” can be very successful; but niches can change rapidly, leaving a focused program without a core constituency.
- **Faculty conversations.** Although the need for faculty dialogue might seem obvious, participants were unanimous in suggesting that sustained conversation often doesn’t happen—or doesn’t happen with sufficient intentionality once a program is established. (One participant even described conversational time as “sacred.”) Faculty need regularly to ask themselves, “What are our students learning implicitly and explicitly from their encounter with this program? What are we actually doing to form people for public ministries—or do we expect students to “make connections” themselves, merely by exposure to new situations?”
- **Rewards.** Both students and faculty need “rewards” for participation in public ministries—that is, tangible encouragement to be responsive.

*Educating for Public Ministry:
Models and Strategies for Mainline Seminaries*

Students, for example, might be offered additional free electives, or the opportunity to take directed studies. Faculty rewards must be tied to the traditional assessment points of professional status: tenure, promotion, and salary.

- **Attention to the “feedback loop.”** Participants agreed that schools need to adopt a market-savvy stance regarding their programs, that is, they need to be consistently public about their own public ministries. “We’re doing it,” one participant commented, “but we’re not communicating that we’re doing it.” A school can assess its effectiveness in addressing the needs of the local community only when community members are aware of its activities.

Successful programs will have the financial backing of the institution. Not surprisingly, the single greatest problem for sustaining public ministry programs seems to be inadequate financial resources. All five of the panelists suggested that the future of their various current initiatives was tied in some measure to the securing and/or maintenance of adequate funding—and none was certain such funding would be forthcoming over the long term. Endowment, predictably, is key for viability, but the securing of endowment is typically dependent upon (1) the fund-raising commitments and abilities of senior leadership and (2) the ability of development personnel to make the case for the program. Participants agreed that new patterns of conversation and cooperation between faculty, administration and development personnel are essential in nurturing a supportive external constituency for public ministry programs. Without the support of the seminary itself, program leaders may spend their energies scrambling for funds, rather than doing ministry.

Elizabeth Nordbeck is professor of ecclesiastical history at Andover Newton Theological School in Newton Centre, Massachusetts. Douglas Ottati is professor of theology at Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia. Both were members of the mainline Protestant study group of the Public Character of Theological Education project.

ENDNOTES

1. Results of this conference were reported in *Theological Education* 37:1 (Autumn, 2000), 36-47.
2. Originally, six schools were scheduled to participate, but because the conference was shortly after the September 11 attack on New York’s World Trade Center, several participants chose not to attend.
3. By “successful,” the group meant programs that have some duration and demonstrably affect the commitments and practices of students.
4. For example, Virginia Union’s historic constituency is understood to be the African-American community in general, and not only the African-American community in the area of Richmond, Virginia.

From the Margins to the Center: Exploring the Seminary's Leadership Role in Developing the Public Presence of Pentecostalism

Cheryl Bridges Johns
Church of God Theological Seminary

ABSTRACT: This project involved assessing how we at the Church of God Theological Seminary understand our "public" vocation in light of the seminary's mission statement and the growing needs of the Pentecostal movement for guidance in public witness. This assessment was accomplished in three phases. Phase one consisted of an internal assessment regarding the seminary's community presence and public witness utilizing the guiding questions formulated by the evangelical study group of the ATS Public Character project. Phase two involved sponsoring a symposium on public presence consisting of invited "advisors" and the faculty of the seminary. For phase three of the project there are two special chapel speakers on the subject of "the public vocation of Pentecostalism" and a follow-up course in the June term of 2002 on the topic "Pentecostalismo y Transformacion Social" (Pentecostalism and Social Transformation), which is to be taught in both Spanish and English.

Every Thursday afternoon in Cleveland, Tennessee, a line of people begins to form outside the door of the Good Samaritan Medical Clinic. Those who use the clinic for free health care or counseling services often are not aware of the facility's sponsor, namely, the Church of God Theological Seminary (CGTS). The seminary is located across the street, but for the most part, the people seeking assistance at the clinic know little about the life of the school. This scenario is paradigmatic of our seminary's public presence.

A world away from Cleveland, Tennessee, in Zambia, two recent CGTS graduates, Jack Nkandu and Conscious Mufaya, are struggling to begin a ministry to those of their country affected by the AIDS virus. Their plans are to train clergy to be responsive to the needs of families and individuals impacted by this devastating disease. Needless to say, the people to whom Jack and Conscious will be ministering will most likely know little about the Church of God Theological Seminary; the ministry of these two young men, however, is part of our seminary's public presence.

In Ecuador, seminary graduate Carlos Ramos is hard at work as a member of his country's legislature. Carlos was instrumental in drafting and getting passed his country's first laws protecting the rights of children. Perhaps no one

*From the Margins to the Center: Exploring the Seminary's Role
in Developing the Public Presence of Pentecostalism*

in the government of Ecuador has ever heard of Church of God Theological Seminary, but the work of Carlos Ramos is in some manner related to the seminary's public presence.

Angela Walden, an MDiv student, will begin her internship in February 2002. She is working with Mark Williams, a pastor in Tampa, Florida. Angela, who is called to be an evangelist, will be an under-study with Williams, who is known in the Church of God as a skilled preacher and evangelist. He will be assisting Angela in developing her preaching skill and will help her schedule revival services at other churches. Angela's internship is part of our seminary's public presence.

The Church of God Theological Seminary is located in the small town of Cleveland, Tennessee. It is its sponsoring denomination's only seminary in the United States and has only been in existence for twenty-seven years. While the school is young by most standards, and even though its location is "off the beaten path," it seems that we are in a unique situation to engage in careful and sustained reflection regarding the growing public presence of Pentecostalism. The seminary is a diverse global community with a high percentage of students coming from countries other than the United States.

Pentecostalism is the fastest growing segment of Christianity. If the current trends continue, by the middle of the twenty-first century this movement will be the majority Christian voice in several countries. In many ways the Pentecostal movement is rapidly moving from the margins of society to the center. If mainline Protestants have to worry about the increasing loss of public influence and voice, Pentecostals should have concerns that they may be ill prepared for a more public and visible voice.

Our project involved assessing how we at the Church of God Theological Seminary understand our public vocation in light of our mission statement and the growing needs of the Pentecostal movement for guidance in public witness.

This assessment was accomplished in three phases:

1. Internal assessment regarding the seminary's community presence and public witness using the guiding questions formulated by the evangelical study group of the ATS Public Character project.
2. A faculty symposium on the topic of public character involving dialogue with advisors from outside the seminary, review of the internal assessment, and strategic planning for the future in light of the stated mission of the seminary.
3. As a follow-up to the above, in the spring of 2002 two special guests were invited to campus to speak in chapel on the topic of public presence. In addition, in the June 2002 term a special bi-lingual course "Pentecostalism and Social Transformation" will be taught by Dario Lopez, a Peruvian Pentecostal who is known for his work in human rights.

Phase One: Public Presence Survey

The evangelical study group of the Public Character project developed a series of guiding questions to assist schools in assessing their public vocation. The questions are divided into the categories of community presence (civic involvement) and public witness (public voice). We took these questions and reformulated them into a survey. The survey consists of forty-nine statements grouped into four general categories: A- Community Presence; B- Community Betterment; C- Faculty Issues; and D- Public Witness. Respondents rated the seminary on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being “completely disagree” and 7 being “completely agree.”

We administered the survey during the June 2001 term. There was a total of twenty-eight respondents composed of faculty and the students attending J-term classes. The overall mean of the responses was 5.07, with a variance of 2.20. The mean averages and variances of each main group are as follows: Group A- Community Presence...average 5.11, variance of 2.27; Group B- Community Betterment...average 4.9, a variance of 2.49; Group C- Faculty Issues...average 4.9, variance of 2.49; Group D- Public Witness...average 4.77, variance of 2.31.

The five individual questions with the highest average are all in the category of Community Betterment (Group B). They are as follows:

- #17 The school addresses the relation between Christian mission/evangelism and community presence. 5.93
- #13 The curriculum addresses concerns for a world-engaging Christian discipleship. 5.93
- #16 There are specific courses in church and society, Christianity and culture, church and state. 5.88
- #11 The seminary is a good tenant, landlord, or landowner. 5.71
- #18 There is sensitivity to teaching about community presence and engagement with international students whose settings and opportunities may be quite different from the North American environment. 5.67

The five individual questions with the lowest average are as follows:

- #48 (Group D- Public Witness) The school’s publications contain articles that relate to public issues. 3.83
- #42 (Group D- Public Witness) The institution, administration, and faculty address current issues both for the sake of the public community and for the seminary community itself, utilizing adequate forums for interpreting public life to the public, to the seminary community, and to the church. 4.52
- #33 (Group D- Public Witness) Faculty members are encouraged to participate in civic dialogue. 4.52

*From the Margins to the Center: Exploring the Seminary's Role
in Developing the Public Presence of Pentecostalism*

#32 (Group D- Public Witness) There are adequate forums for interpreting public life to the seminary community, to the church, and to the public. 4.54

#24 (Group C- Faculty Issues) Civic involvement is factored into faculty workloads. 4.58

Overall the results of the survey were not surprising. The survey revealed that our strengths lie in the area of community betterment, involving such issues as the church in mission in the world, and in sensitivity to specific cultural settings and opportunities for Christian witness. Our weakest area was in the area of public witness, which involves areas such as our publications and participation in civic dialogue.

Phase Two: Faculty Symposium

The second phase of our project involved conducting a symposium regarding our seminary's role in preparing leaders for public vocation. The seminary's mission statement served as the guiding paradigm or vision for the symposium. In other words, our mission to prepare "men and women for Christian ministry in today's world" and our vision of the seminary as "a community of faith, worship and study, which nurtures covenantal relationships and creates awareness of the world mission and global diversity of the Church" set the agenda for defining our public presence.

For this event we invited three outside guests: Philip Kenneson, who teaches philosophy and theology at Milligan College; Audrey Bronson, who pastors an inner-city church in Philadelphia; and Kathleen Reid-Martinez, who serves as dean of the School of Leadership and Government at Regent University.

Each guest offered a unique perspective on the issue of public presence. Kenneson, who is the author of *Beyond Sectarianism: Re-Imagining Church and World*,¹ brought to our discussions an Anabaptist perspective. Reid-Martinez operates out of a more "Enlightenment" model that emphasizes moral principles in establishing just and democratic societies. Bronson presented a clear mandate that pastors and Christian leaders must work for the betterment of their communities. She also brought to our discussions a perspective of the African American or Black Church and its role in society.

Background reading for the symposium included a summary of the internal assessment on public presence, the Auburn Center report, "Missing Connections: Public Perceptions of Theological Education and Religious Leadership,"² and Kenneson's *Beyond Sectarianism*.

Knesson's presentation, "Which Public? What Kind of Presence? Some Critical Observations from an Invited Interloper," took to task the Auburn report, "Missing Connections." Kenneson questioned the report's treatment of the word "public." He noted that the report employs the term "public" in "a

dizzying variety of ways, and never with any sense that these different usages have different assumptions informing them." Kenneson identified four different usages of the word public in the Auburn report. First, there is the sense of public as "widely-held," or "known by the average person," which seems to be the usage in the title of the report. He observed that "the report suggests that most people they interviewed didn't really know much about their local seminary, that there was very little 'public' information about what goes on there. Why this by itself is a problem, beyond the admittedly self-interested PR argument. . . is not clear." "Furthermore," notes Kenneson, "what is clear. . . is that it would be an enormous mistake to assume that the impact of any institution on a community is directly correlated to how much the average person knows about its inner workings."

Second, Kenneson saw the word "public" being employed in the Auburn report in the sense of "visible" and "verifiable," as "when we speak of certain claims to truth or knowledge being 'public' claims. This use of 'public' means roughly 'open to view' and is often contrasted with that which is 'spiritual,' 'inner,' or 'invisible.'" Saying that the seminary lacks "public presence" in this sense would amount to saying that it has no easily discernible, visible influence on the surrounding community. "Such a claim," noted Kenneson, "would indeed be damning if Christians believed that easily discernible, visible influence were the only kind that counted, but we don't—or at least shouldn't—believe that."

The third usage of the word "public" in the Auburn report noted by Kenneson was that of "civic." The report does make the point that "... religious leaders and institutions are generally not involved in civic life" or "almost no faculty members are involved in community or civic life." To these issues Kenneson asked: "What exactly counts for being involved in community or civic life and who gets to decide?" He also challenged the implicit assumption that it is only in the institutions of civic society, such as local government agencies; civic clubs are "where the real action is."

The final usage of the word "public" in the Auburn report as identified by Kenneson is that which means non-sectarian, or non-provincial, as when someone speaks of "public discourse" or "public good" or "the common good." Such an understanding of "public discourse" implies that "there is only one kind of social conversation that impacts the shape of that public. . . and those who are not part of this conversation. . . are irrelevant." Kenneson underscored that for a particularly so-called "provincial school" like the Church of God Theological Seminary, it is important to underscore the words of John Howard Yoder: "There is no public that is not just another particular province."

Finally, Kenneson asked us to consider some important questions: What kind of public presence does this seminary have in this community? What kind of public presence does it believe it is called to have? What will count as real

*From the Margins to the Center: Exploring the Seminary's Role
in Developing the Public Presence of Pentecostalism*

presence? Who gets to decide, and on what basis? Who gets to evaluate whether that presence is a faithful embodiment of its Gospel mission or not?

The discussion among the faculty regarding Kenneson's remarks was, for the most part, in agreement. One faculty respondent to Kenneson, Jackie Johns, pointed out that the Pentecostal understanding of its presence in the world is very "public" in the sense of "known by the average person." A Spirit-filled people will attempt to have a prophetic presence that is "noised" abroad. In addition, Johns offered the following observations:

I share a concern that public presence may become a cover for the desire to be legitimized in the eyes of the world (third usage). I also recognize that "public discourse" tends to presume foundations other than the Gospel (fourth usage). Yet, I cannot but wonder if the mission of the church does not demand that we climb Mars Hill and offer our own interpretation of the unknown god. If we are certain of who we are, can we not with integrity enter into dialogue with the pagan society in which we live? Can we not interpret the Gospel without perverting it? Can we not be good citizens of heaven and earth, recognizing that we probably will be misunderstood and persecuted? If the seminary is an expression of the church, should it not be "public" in the sense of the first three uses of the word?

After much discussion regarding the public nature of the church's public role in the world, there was a consensus of agreement with Kenneson's concluding point, namely, that "the real 'missing connection' is this: that the church is called to be about the mission of God, and all that the church is and does. . . should be evaluated on the basis of how we understand that mission and the church's role in that mission."

Audrey Bronson's presentation, "The Vocation of a Public Pastor," underscored the image of the church as a living organism that follows the leading of the Holy Spirit. She noted that the church needs to learn to follow this leading into active concern about problems of the larger community as "opposed to the in-house concerns of the local church community only." Bronson recalled that the church in which she was raised stressed that Christians were to have minimal interaction with the world. Justice would "come when we all get to heaven."

Bronson observed that the Black Pentecostal Church today has moved toward being involved in "every area of the community, social, and political life without losing our uniqueness, our basic character, and mission." She stressed that "it is incumbent upon us as the Christian church to bring the Christian point of view to the table of the larger community."

Bronson's church, "The Sanctuary Church of the Open Door," exists in the midst of the inner city where there is high unemployment, poor education, crime, drugs, poor housing, broken families, and myriad teenage problems. She concluded: "We cannot afford to put our heads in the sand and hope these things will go away." Bronson called for the seminary to become more proactive in training persons who will enter the fray of the inner cities.

The response to Bronson's presentation was to seek her assistance in an advisory capacity to the seminary's new initiative in urban ministry. We discussed some of her concrete suggestions for course offerings that would prepare students for mission in the inner cities.

Perhaps the most controversial and thought-provoking of the three presentations was that of Kathleen Reid-Martinez. Her topic, "Training Leaders for Public Vocation," addressed the issue of how the seminary should play a larger role in preparing leaders for "civic leadership." Reid-Martinez pointed out that in many places of the world there has been the collapse of governmental infra-structures, and that there is a vacuum in moral leadership in many nations. In her presentation she employed terms such as "moral principles" and "higher values" to underscore the need for "good and just societies."

Reid-Martinez noted that Christians are being called upon to help rebuild societies, and that the time is ripe for Christians to influence "nation building." She underscored the need for theological reflection among those who were engaged in such tasks and lamented that it was too often lacking.

Reid-Martinez stressed that seminaries should help train laity to bring theological reflection into their vocations as public leaders. She invited our faculty to be a partner with her in helping train future civic leaders who would discern what "the Creator Spirit is doing in the world and participate in that activity." She observed that the seminary's academic dean, Steven Land, already serves in an advisory capacity to the School of Leadership and Government at Regent.

Faculty responses to Reid-Martinez cautioned against being co-opted by the political right and raised the question as to the capability of our seminary to engage in the training of civic leaders. Other faculty members, however, pointed out that our seminary already has and does train persons who desire to serve in civic capacities. One of our current students from Uzbekistan is a lay person with a university degree in economics whose goal was to return to his country and assist in the economic development of communities. What is our responsibility to such students?

Citing a paper given by Harvey Cox on "Pentecostalism as Public Religion" at a recent consultation on global mission held at the Overseas Mission Study Center in New Haven, Connecticut,³ Cheryl Bridges Johns observed that Pentecostals are being called upon to help Third World Nations build democratic societies. She further noted that it was important for Pentecostals to be proactive in constructing their public vocation.

*From the Margins to the Center: Exploring the Seminary's Role
in Developing the Public Presence of Pentecostalism*

At the end of the symposium several conclusions were drawn:

1. In light of our seminary's mission statement, we prefer the phrase "the church engaging in mission in the world" over against the term "public." We therefore understand our role as preparing women and men for this mission in the world.
2. Our internal assessment revealed that our strengths lie in the areas of Christian mission and developing "world-engaging Christians." We need to capitalize on these strengths.
3. Our weakest area is in the area of "public relations." While this is an ongoing matter of concern, we are not at all convinced that it is necessary to focus our efforts on developing a better "public image." We do, however, understand that our mission is very public and that we are called to engage the world.
4. It was decided that we need to do further study regarding our role in preparing persons for civic vocation. We do recognize that as a global community, our curriculum should relate to the current social, economic, and political conditions present in the world.
5. It was agreed that we need to offer more specific courses in the area of social ethics.

Phase Three: Chapel Addresses and Course Offering

The final phase of our project is ongoing. This spring semester we hosted two guests in chapel. The first, Audrey Bronson, addressed students regarding the needs of persons in the margins of society. The second, Richard Shaull, will address the topic of "The Public Vocation of Pentecostalism."

In June of 2002, the seminary will offer a special bi-lingual course on Pentecostalism and Social Transformation. The course will be taught by Dario Lopez, who is a Church of God minister actively involved in advocacy for human rights and democracy in Peru. Lopez has written several books on Pentecostalism and social transformation.

Conclusions

This project has been helpful for us in several ways. First, we were able to make an assessment of our own perceptions regarding our public vocation. It has been helpful to note what we consider to be our strengths and our weaknesses. Second, it provided the opportunity for us to be in dialogue among ourselves and with outside guests regarding how our mission statement defines our public vocation. Third, we are more aware of the many public dimensions of theological education. And fourth, our project has underscored the need for Pentecostals to define their public vocation on their own terms.

Implications for Other Schools

Other theological schools may find helpful the questionnaire we developed out of the guiding questions formulated by the evangelical study group in doing their own internal assessment (See Appendix).

Also, we found it extremely helpful to look at the issue of public character around the mandates of our mission statement. This exercise allowed us to define our own vision of public presence instead of a-critically assimilating the models of others. It is possible that other schools would find it beneficial to look at the issue of public character through the hermeneutical lens of their mission statements.

Cheryl Bridges Johns is professor of discipleship and Christian formation at Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland, Tennessee. She was a member of the evangelical Protestant study group of the Public Character of Theological Education project and currently serves on the ATS Executive Committee.

ENDNOTES

1. Philip Kenneson, *Beyond Sectarianism: Re-Imagining Church and World* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999).
2. Elizabeth Lynn and Barbara G. Wheeler, "Missing Connections: Public Perceptions of Theological Education and Religious Leadership," *Auburn Studies*, No. 6 (September 1999), 1-15.
3. Harvey Cox, "Pentecostalism as Public Religion," an unpublished paper delivered at the Overseas Mission Study Center, New Haven, Connecticut, December 2001.

*From the Margins to the Center: Exploring the Seminary's Role
in Developing the Public Presence of Pentecostalism*

APPENDIX

PUBLIC PRESENCE SURVEY

The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) is conducting an on-going study of the relationship between seminaries and the communities in which they exist. The Association is concerned with the apparent reduction in the influence seminaries are having on our society. Our seminary has received a grant to study our "public presence."

Please complete the following survey as it relates to COGTS. The items are based upon a series of issues/standards developed by Evangelical representatives within ATS. Return the completed survey to Dr. Cheryl Johns or Dr. Jackie Johns.

On a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being "completely disagree" and 7 being "completely agree," rank the following statements.

COMMUNITY PRESENCE

The seminary articulates and embodies a normative understanding of how a Christian institution should relate to the world. For example, there is some attention to this concern in the institution's mission and purpose statement.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The seminary's institutional practices and relations suggest how a Christian institution should relate to other institutions.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The church's relation to civil society is addressed in classes, chapels, campus activities, and prayer times. For example, public prayer is offered regularly about national events, international concerns, and local civic issues.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

Staff and faculty of the seminary are involved in civic affairs, both modeling and teaching involvement in community institutions and projects.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

Community involvement is an asset in tenure and promotion review.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

In the life of the seminary community students learn skills for civic involvement. For example, there are opportunities to learn/practice organizational skills for leading or developing community events, programs, etc.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

A community, town, or city should be better because a seminary is located there.

In this community, families are more healthy because of the seminary's presence and activities.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

Voluntary associations, local schools, and clubs are stronger because of the seminary.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

People in need are better off because of the seminary.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The seminary is a good employer to the local people who are its employees.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The seminary is a good tenant, landlord, or landowner.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The various offices (maintenance, business, food service, etc.) relate well to vendors and to the larger community.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The curriculum addresses concerns for a world-engaging Christian discipleship.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

These concerns are addressed in core courses across the curriculum.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

These concerns are a focus of particular classes (required or elective).

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

There are specific courses in church and society, Christianity and culture, church and state.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The school addresses the relation between Christian mission / evangelism and community presence.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

There is sensitivity to teaching about community presence and engagement with international students whose settings and opportunities may be quite different from the North American environment.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

*From the Margins to the Center: Exploring the Seminary's Role
in Developing the Public Presence of Pentecostalism*

Faculty teach, model, and mentor in those areas.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

Persons engaged in civic affairs are invited to campus to lecture, conduct workshops, and speak in chapel.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The curriculum teaches students to help their congregations with vocational issues.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

Students learn to bring a Christian world view to the marketplace, professions, family, education, etc.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The curriculum supports those students whose call is to ministry within the various professions or marketplace, providing skills for understanding their moral, social, and spiritual responsibility in those settings.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

For faculty, issues regarding community presence / civic involvement intersect with:

Issues surrounding faculty workloads

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

Issues related to the focus of faculty research and publication

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

Faculty development/in-service training issue

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

Diversity / profile of faculty itself

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

Faculty travel and teaching at theological schools in the Two-Thirds World

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

PUBLIC WITNESS (PUBLIC VOICE)

There are formal and informal settings on campus within which contested public / moral issues can be addressed.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

In these discussions dissent is permitted and conversations about issues are encouraged.									
Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Completely agree	
There are efforts on campus to understand differing viewpoints in addition to critiquing them.									
Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Completely agree	
There are adequate forums for interpreting public life to the seminary community, to the church, and to the public.									
Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Completely agree	
Faculty members are encouraged to participate in civic dialogue.									
Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Completely agree	
The seminary administration / board responds positively to public statements by faculty about public concerns.									
Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Completely agree	
Faculty and administrators are called on or are free to give interpretation of moral / public events and issues.									
Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Completely agree	
Faculty members see themselves as interpreters of cultural and social concerns.									
Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Completely agree	
The seminary and its faculty have helpful relations with local media / television, radio, and newspapers.									
Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Completely agree	
Representatives of the seminary are available for interpretive comments about current issues.									
Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Completely agree	
Public witness extends beyond the most highly contested issues. There is attention to local, regional, national, and global social and moral concerns.									
Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Completely agree	
In preaching classes, questions of public witness are addressed. Preaching is taught in a way that helps students to connect the Word with contemporary social and moral concerns.									
Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Completely agree	
The forms of faculty public witness are varied. Faculty members speak to the church, public, and guild about public concerns.									
Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Completely agree	

*From the Margins to the Center: Exploring the Seminary's Role
in Developing the Public Presence of Pentecostalism*

The institution, administration, and faculty address current issues both for the sake of the public community and for the seminary community itself, utilizing adequate forums for interpreting public life to the public, to the seminary community, and to the church.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

Students are encouraged and given opportunities to participate in public witness, e.g., justice projects or internships in public arenas.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The institution is concerned for a broad range of issues, transcending the usual high-visibility political topics.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The institution is conscious of (and comfortable with) the variety of viewpoints within itself and its constituency.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

Discussion about and exchange between these viewpoints is fostered both officially and unofficially.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The seminary curriculum identifies and instructs in the appropriate use of the various modes of public witness announcement, instruction, rebuke, interpretation, exhortation, commendation, and invitation.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

The school's publications contain articles that relate to public issues.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

Alumni involved in public witness are affirmed as models.

Completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely agree

A Public Voice: Preaching on Justice Issues

Ray John Marek, OMI
Oblate School of Theology
Daniel E. Harris, CM
St. John's Seminary

ABSTRACT: This project is intended to help preachers develop the public character dimension of their preaching as evidenced in how their homilies effectively communicate biblical justice. It is not a separate homiletics course, but a resource designed to be integrated into an existing preaching program. Four learning modules offer a vehicle for investigating and applying notions of biblical justice, prophetic preaching, the identity of the preacher of justice, and the needs of the listeners. Video resources provide models of justice preaching. An entrance instrument measures the students' awareness of this dimension before they formally begin using the resource. An exit instrument allows the instructor to measure attitudinal shifts at the end of the course.

Brief History

The authors designed this project in order to implement ideas presented in a paper written by the members of the Roman Catholic study group of the Public Character of Theological Education project.¹ Their thought-provoking paper contrasted, in part, those clergy whose lives and ministry focused primarily on a narrow ecclesiastical world, with those clergy who saw themselves invested in a wider world where God was active in all aspects of human activity. The rectors of Oblate School of Theology (William Morell) and St. John's Seminary (Jeremiah McCarthy) encouraged the homiletics instructors at their respective seminaries to collaborate on a project that would implement issues raised in this paper. The authors of this project saw an immediate application of the public character discussion in terms of preaching justice. They noted that some preachers and members of their congregations continue to struggle with the notion that we live in a church primarily concerned with justice. Some struggle with the prophetic stance taken by the American bishops, who noted in their 1971 Synod that work in the name of justice is "a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel."² How might a student preacher be motivated to begin developing his or her "public character" as a minister of the Word in a world needing the Gospel infused with justice?

The Basic Design

When designing a strategy to help seminarians develop new skills, it is tempting to begin by adding another course to the curriculum. We did not consider this to be a realistic option. We did believe that existing homiletics programs might incorporate a justice dimension to their present preaching programs. This project was originally designed in terms of the following proposal to The Association of Theological Schools:

The project is not designed to be a separate course, but a resource to supplement existing homiletics courses. The authors will engage consultants with expertise in homiletic strategies that address social justice issues. The pilot audience will be homiletic students at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, CA, and Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX, where the authors teach. The authors will modify the workbook based on experience with the pilot groups. The pilot program will take place during the fall semester of 2001.

The Public Character workbook will consist of four or five modules that will present students with questions and activities that lead to: (1) social analysis of respective congregations; (2) strategies for identifying local and/or global issues calling for an informed theological and pastoral response on the part of the minister and the community; (3) developing a homiletic methodology by which theological studies and social concerns intersect and dialogue; (4) creating support materials; and (5) crafting sermons or homilies that effectively address these public character issues. The videotape will contain examples that demonstrate how various ministers formulated preaching events that follow the strategies in each of these modules.

Specifics of the Final Design

Printed Resources: As noted in the original proposal, the printed material for the project would consist of modules designed to help students examine and integrate issues of justice preaching. We settled upon four module titles:

- Preaching Biblical Justice
- Preaching the Prophetic Word
- Justice Preaching: The Development of Public Character
- Interpreting People's Lives in Light of God's Word (or exegeting the congregation)

Each module would involve a brief description and discussion of the major issues involved in its topic. The heart of the modules would be a series of discussion questions and activities designed to involve the students' experience. These modules would be flexible enough for adaptation to local circumstances.

Module 1-Preaching Biblical Justice is based primarily on the work of Sister Sarah Sharkey, OP, of Oblate School of Theology, and Walter Burghardt, SJ, and John Donahue, SJ. In her paper, "The Biblical Roots of Justice," Sr. Sharkey notes that biblical justice is broader and more inclusive than the Western notions of justice with which our students are often more familiar.³ Although preaching may include American notions of fairness and justice as giving each his or her due, the essence of biblical justice is the right relationship between God and God's people and creation. Justice is about treating our brothers and sisters the way God treats us.⁴

Sample Learning Activities from Module 1

1. Students work in groups to highlight various incidents and narratives in Scripture in which God's justice is at work.
 - How was God's justice actualized in the scriptural passage?
 - What were the effects of God's justice being achieved?
 - What was the response of the people and /or creation to God's justice?
2. Ask students to reflect on a current situation in which contemporary justice was said to be achieved.
 - Describe the incident in which justice was experienced.
 - What were the distinguishing marks of justice?
 - What effects did such justice have on people's lives?
 - On what were actions for justice based?

Module 2-Preaching the Prophetic Word is based on a chapter in a homiletic book by Daniel E. Harris, CM, one of the authors of this article.⁵ This module explores the unique preaching ministry of the biblical prophets and the ways that present preachers share in that ancient tradition. The module applies an understanding of Biblical Justice to contemporary justice situations. Special emphasis is placed on distinguishing authentic prophetic preaching from mere moralism.

Sample Learning Activities from Module 2

1. Identify and discuss some sins or urgent justice issues in your local community.

A Public Voice: Preaching on Justice Issues

2. Pick an issue you discussed in the previous question. How would a moralist deal with this issue? How would a preacher deal with this issue in a homily?
3. Discuss whether a specific issue of justice would be preached no matter which readings are assigned to the liturgy. Can you remain faithful to the readings without accommodating them?

Module 3-Justice Preaching: The Development of Public Character explores the preaching persona of one who preaches from a justice hermeneutic. Of particular interest is how the preacher integrates this justice stance into his or her vocation as a preacher. It is a far deeper and richer exploration as compared to how one preaches on a specific issue. Granted, the personal integration of a justice hermeneutic necessarily informs the manner in which one preaches on a particular issue. Every preaching event, in fact, can then be reflected upon, studied, crafted, and delivered through this hermeneutic of justice.

Sample Learning Activities from Module 3

1. Ask students to reflect on a homily they have heard recently and assess the undertones of biblical justice that shaped the homily.
 - What does the student-preacher detect as the influences that had an impact on the actual preacher of the homily?
 - Is the student able to detect any aspect of “biblical justice spirituality” at work in the life of the preacher, especially as it influenced the homily?
 - What, if any, were the personal costs to the preacher of this homily?
 - What were the concerns that this preacher may have confronted in developing the homily?
 - What are the ways by which the preacher can transcend those concerns?

Module 4-Interpreting People’s Lives in Light of God’s Just Word. The final module takes its special emphasis from *Fulfilled in Your Hearing*, the 1982 document released by the United States Catholic Bishops.⁶ This landmark work on preaching emphasizes the vital role that the listener plays in shaping the homily. Sensitive to the complexities of human communication, the document notes that the listener is the one who ultimately creates the meaning of the preached message.⁷ Therefore, the liturgical homily does not so much explain ancient scriptures to a modern world, as it interprets people’s contemporary lives in light of these scriptures.⁸ This module is designed to help preachers exegete their congregations especially in terms of justice.

Sample Learning Activities from Module 4

These activities were not developed for the pilot phase.

Video Resource: We planned to videotape three or four ministers preaching a justice homily among their usual congregations. We would also videotape an interview with each of these preachers as they discussed their own commitment to justice preaching.

Assessment: In order to measure results of the project, we designed the following entrance instrument that would provide data on where students saw themselves relative to justice preaching before they began the process. Students were instructed to respond to the questions without concern for the correct or acceptable answers; they were assured that this was a non-graded element of the course. In addition to tracking class discussions and homilies during the process, we would again administer this instrument at the end of the course to note any attitudinal changes.

Note: The original instrument spanned three pages. For this article, we eliminated the spaces provided for students' written responses.

Pre-Assessment on Preaching Justice

Name: _____

1. What do you understand by the term "biblical justice"?
2. Do you agree that all homilies should preach justice in some way?
Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree
3. Do you agree that there is too much talk about justice in homilies?
Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree
4. Rate your ability to preach justice.
Very Poor Poor Not Sure Very Good Excellent
5. Rate the difficulty of preaching justice.
Very Difficult Difficult Not Sure Easy Very Easy
6. How would you rate your ability to identify justice issues and concerns in everyday life experiences?
Very Poor Poor Not Sure Very Good Excellent

A Public Voice: Preaching on Justice Issues

7. How would you rate yourself as being informed about local and world news?
Very Poor Poor Not Sure Very Good Excellent
8. Here are typical obstacles to justice preaching. Please write a sentence or two that describes how each might cause you difficulty in preaching justice.
- a. congregational resistance
 - b. the issues are too political
 - c. alienation from congregational support
 - d. too personally challenging
 - e. lack of time to know the issues
 - f. lack of time to prepare
 - g. danger of hypocrisy
 - h. as a preacher, I am part of the problem
 - i. lack of good modeling from other preachers
 - j. lack of ecclesial support
9. What do you hope to learn from studying justice preaching?
[On the exit instrument, this question became, "What did you learn about justice preaching?]
10. Describe a preacher you have heard who is skilled in preaching biblical justice.
11. Is there a difference between lecturing on justice and preaching on justice?

Amending the Design

As the semester neared, the authors soon discovered that we had envisioned a program too complex to be implemented in the allotted time frame. The modules would demand careful writing time that our schedules did not allow. The on-site videos proved to be even more demanding in terms of time. After consultation with ATS representatives, we were encouraged to scale down the design to determine whether a modified version of the program would indicate that the strategy had potential for developing the public character dimension of future preachers. In response, the instructors opted for two of the three modules that were substantially developed. Each school piloted the input and the activities from two of these modules: Module 1-Preaching Biblical Justice, Module 2-Preaching the Prophetic Word, and Module 3-Justice Preaching: The Development of Public Character.

Time did not allow us to produce the sample video homilies and their corresponding interviews with the expert preachers. We chose instead to contact our colleague, Sr. Jan Schlicting, OP, who prepared a videotaped homily on prophetic preaching. Her videotaped homily was followed by a lecture on the theology of justice preaching. Oblate School of Theology was able to secure two additional videos recorded at San Fernando Cathedral (San Antonio) and used them in the modules piloted there.

Implementing the Pilot at St. John's Seminary (Camarillo, California)

Introducing the Pilot

Daniel Harris, CM implemented the pilot program as part of the advanced homiletics course in the fall semester, 2001. Nine students in their third year of Theology were enrolled in the class. All are preparing for ordained priesthood. Two of these men were born in Vietnam, two in Mexico, and one in the Philippines. The students were told that they would be participating in this program along with their counterparts at Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. They were also informed that this was an ATS-sponsored project. From the beginning, they considered this to be a worthwhile effort. All nine students took care to provide complete responses to the entrance instrument.

Modules

This course used **Module 1–Preaching Biblical Justice** and **Module 2–Preaching the Prophetic Word**. The instructor lectured on the main issues but devoted most of the class time to an open discussion of selected learning activities. Since each of the modules offers from eight to fifteen learning activities, it was possible to test only a few in each class meeting. The students participated in lively discussions that incorporated concrete experiences from their lives. Because several students were raised in oppressive political or economically deprived situations, these discussions tended to be more personal than those dealing with other preaching topics.

Sample Videos

The busy semester allowed only one class meeting to view and discuss the Schlicting video. Students found her presentation on the theology of justice preaching to be stimulating. They had difficulty, however, with the style of the sample homily intended to model justice preaching. The seminary homiletics program places strong emphasis on preaching without using a manuscript or notes at the podium. The sample homily, while masterfully written, was read by the preacher. This became something of an obstacle to several students. In a subsequent class we viewed a preacher presenting a prophetic message in a

preaching style with which they were more familiar. This proved a helpful way for them to discuss prophetic preaching without becoming bogged down in criticizing the style of delivery.

Final Homilies

The final homily for this course is a brief witness talk preached in the seminary chapel at evening prayer or at the conclusion of the Eucharist. For the past several years, this presentation was to address some element of justice. Therefore, there was no need to include a special course requirement that would provide some measurement of students' progress in moving from theory to praxis. On the other hand, it was not evident that the final homilies for this pilot group demonstrated a "public character" dimension that was missing from previous graduates of this course. The course has always dealt with justice issues and the preacher's call to bring these before the community. The exit instruments did offer positive indications that most of the students grew in their awareness that justice is an integral dimension of their identity as preachers.

Exit Instruments

It was heartening to see so many positive attitudinal shifts reflected in the exit instruments. The brief scope of this article does not allow a thorough analysis that comparison of the entrance and exit assessments would yield. We will include some highlights that exemplified what they indicated.

- In their responses to the first question of the entrance assessment, "What do you understand by the term 'biblical justice'?" all students revealed a vague understanding at best. However, all students reflected a more sophisticated understanding of the term in the exit instrument. Five of the nine used vocabulary consistent with the language used in discussing the module on biblical justice
- Several reflected through the exit instrument that justice preaching was more difficult than they had assessed it to be at the start of the program. Yet most responses implied a growth in confidence about preaching justice and keeping informed about important social issues.
- Two students reported how they had grown in their appreciation of how the listener creates the meaning of the preaching. This was an issue stressed in the course, not when teaching the justice modules as such. These responses indicate that at least some of the students did not compartmentalize the material by isolating the justice component from the rest of the course. They could clearly see that this communication dynamic was perhaps especially applicable in justice preaching where it is crucial to help the listeners keep their ears open during a prophetic and challenging word.

- One of the more interesting findings comes from the comparison between the entrance instrument that asked what the student hoped to learn from the pilot on justice preaching and the exit assessment that asked what they actually learned. As the course began, five students said that they hoped to learn better skills in preaching justice; three wanted to learn what justice preaching is; one was somewhat vague in terms of what he hoped to learn. All nine reported that they learned valuable insights about preaching justice. Their responses reflected that they had learned that justice preaching is constitutive to preaching the Gospel, that it is about proclaiming the kingdom present in the people's daily lives, that justice is embodied in the person of Christ. Two reflected how crucial it is to be a person of justice so that they are able to preach from who they are striving to be as disciples.

Implementing the Pilot at Oblate School of Theology (San Antonio, Texas)

Introducing the Pilot

The pilot project, *A Public Voice: Preaching on Justice Issues*, was conducted primarily during five sessions of the introductory preaching course at Oblate in October 2001. Ray John Marek, OMI, facilitated the sessions. Eleven students were enrolled in the introductory course; one female (laywoman) and ten males (diocesan and religious seminarians). Four were born in the United States, three in Mexico, two in Vietnam, and one in Zambia.

Similar to the students at St. John's, the eleven students were briefed about the justice initiative and their collaboration with students at St. John's. It was made clear that their participation in the pilot study did not involve additional workload. All students expressed interest and were cooperative. Prior to the overlay of the modules, students completed the entrance instrument. While students were not required to preach their first homilies from a justice hermeneutic, the instructor did listen to the students' homilies with specific interest for the manner in which students integrated any learning from the modules.

Modules

For the designated class sessions, the instructor primarily utilized input and activities from **Module 1—Preaching Biblical Justice** and **Module 3—Justice Preaching: The Development of Public Character**. Given the introductory nature of the course and the demanding content, the instructor's intent was to utilize the justice modules as an overlay to the outlined curriculum and to limit time to approximately twenty minutes. Following initial input from the professor, students discussed salient points and participated in the suggested activities. The suggested activities for the modules were not conducted as distinctly as designed, and, for the sake of time, aspects of one activity were merged with those of another. Participation in the discussion and activities was

lively. A few students had difficulty connecting with contemporary issues of justice, especially in the United States. The more personal the issue, the more animated the discussion became. Of particular interest was the realization that three students already possessed an initial understanding of biblical justice. This familiarity was the result of a lecture on biblical justice that students had taken previously in a course on the social teachings of the Catholic Church.

Sample Videos

The instructor secured three videos to use during the sessions: two from preaching events at San Fernando Cathedral and one from Sr. Jan Schlicting, OP. The videos were well received by the students and provided good discussion points regarding the preachers' methodology and content. Discussing the Cathedral videos, the students noted the preacher's ability to elaborate on particular issues and to be inclusive of all people in the congregation. They also noted his conversational style. The first homily from the Cathedral was preached around Labor Day and addressed the dignity of work and the rights of workers, even using a quote from Samuel Gompers. The second Cathedral homily was preached around the presidential inauguration of George W. Bush. Various state representatives were in attendance at the Cathedral as part of the activities for the upcoming opening of the state legislature. The content of the homily was about the necessity for dialogue between Church and State and the responsibility of the legislators to speak for the poor and for issues of communal concern. In her videotaped homily, Sr. Schlicting eloquently provided the foundation for a theology and spirituality of prophetic preaching using a passage from Amos. Students noted how Sr. Schlicting's homily artistically mirrored the biblical construction of the Amos passage. They also felt the emotional qualities needed for prophetic preaching were reflected in Sr. Schlicting's homily. [N.B. The instructor informed the students that Sr. Schlicting's preaching was not a "live event" but was being recorded, without congregation, for the purposes of the project.]

Student Homilies

As part of the course, students delivered three homilies that attempted to integrate course learning. These homilies are critiqued by the instructor and classmates. No directive was given that homilies must integrate learning from the justice modules; however, the instructor noted any influence that these modules had on students' homilies. In several homilies students did address some issues of justice, and this attention may illustrate the beginnings of the "public character" dimension of a preacher. Unfortunately, in most cases, the students' attention to the respective issue was at a surface level. There appeared to be difficulty for the student to adequately expose various dynamics related to the issue (e.g., history, effects, challenges, implications, etc.). In most cases, the students' attention to the justice concern was rather generic. Students

did not preach on any personal experiences concerning justice or oppressive situations. This absence may be due to the introductory nature of the course and students' concerns about self-disclosure. A concern is raised, however, that students' scriptural and theological learning, especially about justice, may not be integrated adequately into the preaching moment.

Evaluation Instruments

Both the entrance and exit instruments indicated students' interest in justice, a realization that preaching on justice is necessary, and a desire to grow in their ability to preach justice. Many students also noted that to preach justice, they must live justly. Below are some of the significant highlights of the evaluation.

- An initial interpretation revealed that many students modified their understanding that all homilies can preach justice. In the entrance assessment, about half of the students disagreed with the claim. At the time of the final assessment, the majority of students agreed with the assertion.
- All students recognized that they found it challenging to preach on justice, and the majority agreed with the assertion that there were not enough role models of justice preachers nor was there broad-based support for justice issues among other ministers.
- Several students articulated, in both the initial and final assessment, an understanding of biblical justice that was covered in the session. A few used the terminology of "right relationship" that was covered in the session. One student even commented that the modules built on the course taken in Catholic Social Teaching. Two students recognized that biblical justice is quite different from society's understanding of justice.
- Approximately half of the students felt that they were well informed about justice issues and concerns affecting the local community. This self-evaluation is noteworthy because the homilies that were preached did not reveal students' abilities to illustrate comprehensively important issues. Students' preaching on local or international events was typically more general and superficial.
- One student wrote that he/she has more awareness of how important it is to recognize the responsibility that the Church has to continue modeling biblical justice. The student also noted that biblical justice must be preached and that the skill comes from knowing how to preach in such a way that people hear the message without feeling as if they are being chastised.
- Several students commented that they have grown in their awareness of the need to preach on justice and that they should not be afraid to do so. Some added that they also need to act on what they preach.

Need for Further Study

The authors of this pilot program believe that our approach has strong potential for helping future preachers develop the public character dimension of their preaching. As mentioned, we did not believe we had the time to develop the program to its fullest potential. Initial observations gained within our classrooms, and through the student homilies and the assessment instruments indicate that this strategy could develop into a resource that would have value throughout the theological seminary community. The comprehensive formation of a justice persona in students requires the collaboration of all faculty members in various disciplines. Further development of the four modules will offer resources to other faculty members as they shape a justice hermeneutic in the teaching of their respective disciplines. Thus a justice hermeneutic becomes one point of ministerial integration that crosses theological disciplines. The modules provide sufficient content, discussion points, and adequate flexibility so that professors in various disciplines can choose what best suits their particular needs. Further development of the videotapes will offer an additional resource for faculty members. The videotapes offer pastoral and practical experiences from which students can learn.

We would like to have the time and funding to continue writing the modules, to have the entrance and exit instruments refined with the help of a testing professional, and to produce at least two professional quality video models of justice preaching along with interviews with the preachers.

Resources for Other Institutions

In light of the pilot program's need for further work, we would not suggest offering it to other seminaries or theological institutions until we have time to refine the modules, the assessment instruments, and the video resources.

Daniel E. Harris, CM, is a member of the Vincentian Fathers and Brothers. He is assistant professor of homiletics at St. John's Seminary. He has taught homiletics in Catholic seminaries for nearly all of his twenty-eight years of ministry. He received his doctorate in preaching from Aquinas Institute in St. Louis, Missouri in 1998. He is the former president of the Catholic Association of Teachers of Homiletics. His most recent book on preaching is We Speak the Word of the Lord: A Practical Plan for More Effective Preaching.

Ray John Marek, OMI, is a member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Prior to joining the faculty at Oblate School of Theology, he was assistant pastor at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church / The Shrine of St. Jude in New Orleans, Louisiana, and a presenter in Engaged Encounter Retreats. He received his doctorate in preaching from

Aquinas Institute in St. Louis in 2000. His doctoral work centered on preaching in a television-saturated culture. He is also the Director of the Doctor of Ministry program at Oblate.

ENDNOTES

1. Jeremiah McCarthy, William Morell, William McGrattan, Daniel McLellan, and Kevin O'Neil, "Public Character of Theological Education: A Perspective from Roman Catholic Schools of Theology and Seminaries," *Theological Education*, 37:1 (2000).
2. Synod of Bishops, "Justice in the World" (November 30, 1971) in *The Official Catholic Teachings: Social Justice*, ed., Vincent P. Mainelli (Wilmington: McGrath, 1978), 285.
3. Sr. Sarah Sharkey, OP, "The Biblical Roots of Justice." (Unpublished paper, 1995. Used with permission of the author.) Sr. Sharkey's paper was part of her collaborative effort with the *Just Word* retreats, organized by Walter Burghardt. Her insights can also be found on a videotape produced by Liturgical Training Publications, *A Biblical View of Justice*, 1995. Sr. Sharkey comments that biblical justice involves "making all relationships right so that God's vision of shalom is realized." (pg. 2)
4. Walter Burghardt, *Preaching the Just Word* (New Haven: Yale University, 1996), 3. Burghardt notes that biblical justice is operative in the demands made on Jews, who were to return to others what God had given to them, precisely because God acted toward the Jews as such. The response of the Jews was to image not the justice of man and woman, but the justice of God. See also John Donahue, "Biblical Perspectives on Justice," in *The Faith That Does Justice: Examining the Christian Sources for Social Change*, ed., John C. Haughey, Woodstock Studies 2 (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), 69. Biblical scholar John Donahue provides a working model of biblical justice as "fidelity to the demands of relationship, especially right relationship between God, humanity, and creation."
5. Daniel E. Harris, *We Speak the Word of the Lord: A Practical Plan for More Effective Preaching* (Chicago: Acta Publications, 2001).
6. The Bishop's Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Fulfilled in Your Hearing: The Homily in the Sunday Assembly* (Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 1982).
7. *Ibid.*, 4.
8. *Ibid.*, 20.

Making Connections: Faith in the Public Square

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ABSTRACT: The public character of theological education is deeply influenced by the political environment of the federal city. This article recounts the efforts of the Washington Theological Union to address the unique publics that make up the political and policy-making establishment of the nation's capital. The work of "making connections" with these publics, especially in a post-September 11 world, has been difficult but enormously rewarding. Members of Congress and their staffs know how to relate to pastors and lobbyists for religious causes. Appreciating the role of theologians in the political process remains a work in progress.

Introduction

Washington Theological Union was founded in 1968 by six Roman Catholic religious institutes of men to address the church's need for a well-educated ministry. Over the Union's short history, serious effort has been made to craft programs of study aimed at helping graduates be worthy of the congregations they will serve. Consequently, the Union has a history of being quite explicit about the goals it has for its relationship to the church.

In service of this relationship, the Union has long partnered with local and national church organizations. Parishes and other ministries provide the setting and supervision for the Union's pastoral field education program. Union faculty members regularly participate in parochial faith formation programs. Clergy members of the Union faculty have regular weekend assignments in parochial and intentional faith communities. There is strong collaboration between the Union and the many religious communities that rely on the Union for the theological training of their candidates for ordained ministry.

The Union is frequently a venue for meetings of committees and commissions serving the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Union faculty and administrators serve the Conference as consultants for various projects, particularly those related to priestly formation, the education and formation of ecclesial lay ministers, and issues related to the bishops' involvement in social development and world peace, evangelization, and spirituality.

The Union's sense of church is broad. As a founding member of the Washington Theological Consortium, a community of theological schools of diverse Christian traditions, the Union collaborates closely with its ecumenical peers.

The Union has always understood that these relationships are critical to the creation of a climate necessary for the kind of excellence in theological teaching and learning needed for the complex world we live in. However, our reflection on the findings published in “Missing Connections”¹ led us to conclude that our careful cultivation of what binds us to various publics in the church needed to be complemented by a like cultivation of connections to publics beyond the church. Among the Union’s neighbors in the federal capital are the individuals and institutions responsible for shaping the nation’s laws and public policy.

Initiatives

Our efforts to cultivate these new connections involved several initiatives designed to promote specific key theological themes.² Among these themes is the intrinsically relational/social nature of the human person. This means that the dignity of the person is best promoted within the context of a community. From this comes a positive understanding of the role of state and society. Consequently, we saw the need to educate and support those in the forefront of public policy-making and to promote the development of public policy as work fostering that which enables the flourishing of each person in communion with others. As a corollary of this conviction, theology itself is public. And a commitment to sustaining and developing this theology charges us with the task of showing the “socially significant meanings of Christian symbols and tradition.”

In an effort to attend to what Roman Catholic participants in the ATS Public Character of Theological Education project referred to as the *ad intra* perspective of theological education’s public character,³ the Union established a Center for Ministry and Public Life. Funded in part by one of the Union’s corporate members,⁴ the Center is staffed by a director and his assistant, and guided by an ecumenical steering committee. The task of the Center is to work with faculty, staff, and student government to promote education and skills-building aimed at raising awareness in Union students of their ministerial responsibility to public life and leadership. In the last year, the Center has brought public policy issues and public policy-makers to the Union and to other schools of the Washington Theological Consortium for conversation, dialogue, and exploration.

As a school of theology for ministry we envisioned our relationship to law and public policy-makers as primarily educational. However, a modest pastoral relationship was made possible when three members of the Union administration (the president, the vice president for institutional advancement, and the director of the Center for Ministry and Public Life) accepted an invitation from the Faith and Politics Institute to become part of their expanding outreach to Members of Congress and their staff. This outreach took the form of weekly reflection groups organized to “provide occasions for moral reflection and

spiritual community to political leaders, drawing universal wisdom from a range of religious traditions.”⁵ Each of us from the Union was teamed with a member of the Institute staff and assigned to facilitate one of the weekly groups.

“Faith in the Public Square”

Because the Catholic Church in America has come to a point in history where it finds itself permeating the culture, i.e., at the center in positions of power as well as on the fringes in the face of new immigrants, it is poised to speak a word in the public forum from within its particular tradition.⁶ With a grant from ATS, we developed a project “to speak a word in the public forum,” which we called “Faith in the Public Square.” The project was designed as a series of breakfast-hour discussions to be held on Capitol Hill in one of the Senate or House office buildings to enrich and deepen conversation on major policy issues. We envisioned these gatherings as occasions to bring together municipal leaders, Members of Congress, House and Senate staff people, lobbyists, journalists, local clergy, business and professional leaders with the city’s theological community. As a school of theology for ministry, the Washington Theological Union is not simply where the church does its thinking; it is where the church learns to apply its thinking. We hoped to find in this series an opportunity to facilitate theological reflection on the major public issues that cross-cut the public arena.

We formed an advisory group of political leaders, pastors, Union faculty members, and colleagues from our ecumenical Consortium to develop the topics to be addressed. We sought to be attentive to the church’s mission and to offer a theologically informed articulation of key themes in the tradition: “the preferential option for the poor, solidarity, the common good, authoritative teaching (i.e., *Magisterium*), social justice, morality, spirituality, and theology.”⁷ We chose a simple format. During a continental breakfast, the theme would be addressed from viewpoints that included that of a pastor and a theologian and a practitioner in the area under discussion. There would be an opportunity for some open discussion following the presentations. Our plan called for two sessions in the spring 2001 term and two in the fall 2001 term.

The inaugural session was held on May 3, 2001, in the Rayburn House Office Building. Former Catholic University of America president and current pastor of Georgetown’s Holy Trinity Parish, Rev. William Byron, SJ (many who work on Capitol Hill—Congressmen and Congresswomen, staff members, and lobbyists—are members of his parish); Union faculty member, Rev. Kenneth Himes, OFM; and Thomas G. Hughes, former chief of staff to Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-RI) were the presenters. They addressed the issue of “The Relevance of Religious Faith to Public Service.”

Mr. Hughes noted that conflicting forces influence work on the Hill. It is too easy to try to win at all costs, to pass legislation by consensus rather than by merit, and to afford too little time to the necessary reflection that is required in order to discern the moral implications of an issue. Generally, the interests of local constituents are pursued in the absence of apparent harm. "Log rolling trade-offs" and attention to local pet projects mean that little time is available to explore more deeply the demands of the common good.

Fr. Byron suggested that religious faith becomes relevant to such a political process because faith is not so much a set of propositions to which one adheres. Religious faith is, rather, an act in which one entrusts oneself to God. Such trust allows one to make the most of the gifts that come from God: love, joy, peace, patience, generosity, and self-control. These gifts shape both the content and method of caring for the body politic. Fr. Himes noted that individuals are never called for themselves but are called for service to others. "Other-centeredness" then becomes an ethical sensitivity that opens the policy-maker to the merits of issues as helpful or harmful to human well-being.

In the brief time remaining for discussion that day, participants from an audience of eighty to ninety persons sought realistic answers. They quizzed Hughes, one of their own, to learn how he balanced the need to promote his Senator's agenda with his own sense of what was of greatest value. Of the pastor and theologian, they wanted practical guidance to help them with their integration of faith and work.

This session was an important first step for the Union. It laid the groundwork for an engagement that claims a middle ground between those faith-based organizations whose engagement with Congress is primarily pastoral (e.g., Faith and Politics Institute) and those whose engagement seeks to advance specific prudential judgments related to policy issues (e.g., advocates for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Charities, and the like). Participants affirmed the need to interweave spiritual values and one's work. Yet, these spiritual values are hard to come by without the kind of reflection that is not generally possible in the political process. In this first gathering, we sought to provide politicians and policy-makers with an appropriate perspective for theological reflection on the issues they address. Mindful that "the public theologian searches for a way to make truth claims which can be tested by the public without the public having to assent to everything that the theologian believes,"⁸ we provided participants with a template against which they might measure the effectiveness of their work if, by effective, they mean work that is a service to the whole human person: body, mind, and spirit.

"The Immigrant Challenge and the Common Good" was the topic of our second session held on June 7, 2001. Rev. Drew Christiansen, SJ, of the Woodstock Theological Center; Rev. Janet Horman, director, Peace with Justice Program of the United Methodist Church; and Rev. Gerard Creedon, pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Church, Arlington, Virginia, were the present-

ers. Fr. Creedon's parish has a large immigrant population, primarily Latin and Central American. The challenge posed by immigration to the common good is the challenge of maintaining human dignity by supporting fundamental human rights necessary for enhancing and nurturing that dignity.

Fr. Christiansen referred to Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris* as a "spiritual discipline for the ruling class" encouraging those in positions of power and influence to be sure that no individual gets lost in the system. Fr. Christiansen recalled Judge John Noonan's claim that law can be used as a mask to hide us from the accused. He claimed that policies calling for detention of immigrants are policies that are a kind of evasion or mask.

Rev. Horman offered illustrations from her ministry, in particular the custom of detaining individuals in isolated facilities where access to counsel, spiritual advisors, and family is severely limited. Fr. Creedon cited cases where advocacy by the church and clergy on behalf of detained immigrants was scorned by authorities. These authorities were convinced that such advocacy was outside the competence of the church.

The discussion that followed had less to do with developing public policy protective of both the nation's interest and the interests of immigrants than it did with discussing specific legislative, judicial, and political strategies to remedy concrete situations similar to those cited in the presentations. This was not the goal of our project for these conversations. From this experience we learned that we needed to do more homework in properly structuring the presentation of an emotionally volatile topic. It was too easy for the discussion to focus on finding solutions to these case specific problems. Should this become habitual, our ability to engage a highly partisan Congress would be lost.

Our timetable called for us to sponsor two more sessions in the fall. However, the September 11 tragedies and the anthrax infestation shut the doors of congressional office buildings. The subsequent imposition of more stringent security around Capitol Hill completely altered the spiritual and political landscape and made it possible for us to sponsor only one of the two planned sessions.

On November 27, 2001, we held a gathering to explore "Islam and Christian Understanding: Courage in the Pursuit of the Common Good." Speakers were Imam Yahya Hendi, Muslim chaplain at Georgetown University, the National Medical Center, and the National Institutes of Health and Rev. Joseph Donders, MAfr, adjunct professor and director of Mission and Cross-Cultural Studies at the Union.

Both Imam Hendi and Fr. Donders spoke about the common ground that each "religion of the book" shares, beginning with Abraham. As people with a shared "father in faith" there is a common origin and a common act of faith in one God that can serve as the foundation for deeper understanding of our traditions. Fr. Donders pointed out that Moslems share with Christians a

Making Connections: Faith in the Public Square

reverence for the mother of Jesus and respect Jesus as a prophet. Imam Hendi recalled a number of experiences after September 11 in the larger community, both his own and those of the people to whom he ministers. Some were positive and life affirming, others quite unsettling. Reflecting broadly, he observed that Moslems have yet to deal satisfactorily with a secular culture, but he professed the conviction that coexistence with other faith traditions is not inimical to authentic Islam.

Our conversation and the discussion that followed in November was a timely search for the kind of common ground that Mr. Hughes had claimed in our inaugural gathering is the most solid foundation for policy aimed at enhancing the common good.

ATS has generously given us more time to complete our pilot project. Our next session will focus on the impact contemporary biotechnology is having on the common good and the formulation of policy to enhance and promote that good. This was a topic originally requested by participants at the initial meeting and postponed due to the events of September 11.

Making Connections: What We Have Learned

1. The Center for Ministry and Public Life at the Washington Theological Union has had a wholesome impact on the life of the Union. It has sponsored a seminar on capital punishment that included a panelist whose death sentence was later overturned on new evidence and another panelist who is the father of a murder victim. The Center also sponsored separate “brown bag lunches” with Imam Yahya Hendi on Islam in America and a New York City priest who served on the response teams set up to attend to emergency workers, particularly firemen, after the attack on the World Trade Center. As the Center provides our students with the resources needed to reflect upon and respond to pastoral issues, the director and steering committee continue to explore how the Center can become a more integral part of the Union’s educational mission.

2. The Faith and Politics Institute’s reflection groups attempt to help participants integrate their personal and public lives into one coherent reality. Members of the Union staff who have participated in these groups have gained remarkable insight into the vision, values, and practical concerns of the nation’s politicians and policy-makers. Our participation has been a graced opportunity to meet particular Members of Congress. Through them we have come to understand the strains and stresses that must be dealt with to be an effective public servant who is true to himself or herself. In a world where power and influence mean everything and where any sort of doubt or weakness can be used to undermine one’s effectiveness, the reflection groups have been genuinely sacred space where Members of Congress have been able to grapple with what matters deeply to them. We are respectful of the confidentiality that makes all of this possible and grateful for this privilege of sharing in the joys and concerns of our nation’s lawmakers.

3. The “Faith in the Public Square” project has proven to be a much more strenuous effort than first imagined. We have been challenged and have learned much.

a. Establishing and Cultivating Relationships: Our experience has taught us that before politics is about ideas and policies, it is about relationships and the communication that fosters relationships. Political relationships live on their usefulness for reelection and leveraging power. This is not meant to be cynical. It is simply to describe today’s political culture. We have found educational engagement very difficult to achieve absent a strong network of personal relationships with key people in congressional offices. We are new to these relationships and have learned that for schools of theology to engage Members of Congress and their senior staff, the schools must learn to use the techniques and employ the resources of those who regularly address policy-makers. We have observed lobbyists at work and learned why cultivating and maintaining needed relationships are so costly and time-consuming.

The first step to successful engagement is “getting known.” We began our project with the assistance of a group of people with good connections in congressional offices. We know that we need to expand this group. Though we are privileged to enjoy the volunteer services of two veteran lobbyists for major corporations, we were naive in thinking that the relationships these lobbyists had established to promote their industries would easily translate into relationships supportive of our goals. In this world, there is no substitute for personal relationships between key people and members of the Union’s administration and faculty. In particular, contacts need to be developed and sustained with congressional Members’ chiefs of staff. These are the individuals who make access to Members possible. It would also be beneficial for us to cultivate those who manage the member’s calendar and screen his or her faxes and memos. As those relationships are used to make friends for the Union, we need to develop communication protocols that include repeated personal contacts, faxes, and e-mails.

Life went on after anthrax stopped the delivery of mail, but we could not get the message through without the “private fax” and e-mails of the Members and their staff. Moreover, we believe that we need to be familiar with and subscribe to publications that serve the Washington political community including *Roll Call* and *The Hill*. We need to experiment with an advertising campaign in these publications. This effort at getting known and sustaining new relationships is labor intensive and will require significant help of volunteers and office staff.

b. A Secular Environment: We learned that our nation’s laws and public policy are formed in a highly secularized environment. The controversy surrounding the confirmation of John Ashcroft as Attorney General illustrates why religion has been referred to by one former lobbyist as a “third rail.” If you touch it, you die. People in public life want to be moral and ethical, but to be

known as religious in many circles is to die. Capitol Hill mazes are governed by the conventional wisdom that holds religion to be something to be kept private. And Capitol Hill and political power is public. Two incidents exemplify the point.

The Union's logo, which was placed on all our communications, describes the Union as a "Roman Catholic School of Theology for Ministry." We were asked time and again if the "Roman Catholic" could be removed. This was not an anti-Catholic remark. We were told that those words meant religious sponsorship and that in the context of a public event in the congressional office buildings such overt sponsorship would have a chilling effect on possible attendance.

The "dear colleague" letter is a very effective device used by Members of Congress to promote particular events. It is used when a member wants to be recognized on an issue and assume a leadership role in the promotion of the issue. Members will provide such letters to accommodate constituents and friends and when the event stands to strengthen their position in the eyes of their peers and those they represent. But, Members are sensitive to promoting an issue that might appear to be politically incorrect or unpromising. We were initially offered a "dear colleague" letter for our last event on Islam and Christian Understanding but because we had not included a Jewish representative among the presenters the offer was withdrawn. The Congressperson in question is a Catholic but represents a district with a large Jewish population. We understood that there was no need to court trouble.

The challenge for schools of theology is to develop methods of communication that convey theological insights to policy-makers in ways that invite participation and respect the practical concerns that govern political life on Capitol Hill.⁹

c. *Timeliness*: Ordinarily, there is always a key issue preoccupying Congress at any given moment. We are challenged to address the issues that Congress thinks are timely. As a school of theology, the Union needs to examine how it can stay current on the issues facing Congress and how it can contribute a theological perspective in a politically beneficial way. A dramatic example was the affect of September 11 on our planning to deal with biotechnology issues in the fall session. Suddenly, cloning and genetically altered food were not dominant concerns. But it does not take a catastrophe to move the Congress. As Thomas Hughes told us, Congress rarely engages in sustained reflection on any one issue. Any school of theology that hopes to develop meaningful engagement in this kind of venue will need a well-developed network of relationships with key congressional staffers working closely with the school's own staff in order to respond rapidly to the ever-changing focus of concern.

d. *Staying the Course*: Politicians and policy-makers are familiar with the work of religious lobbyists and pastors. The former represents the institutional

interests of a religious organization. Since this often has political implications, the role of the religious lobbyist is clear and finds a place in the process of law and policy-making. The latter is known to be concerned with the personal spiritual life of individuals. And so the role of the pastor is clear. However, the role of the theological educator remains ambiguous. In this highly partisan environment, what interest does the theologian represent?

What we are discovering is the lack of understanding, still, of the contribution to be made by the religious traditions that Martin Marty refers to as public churches.¹⁰ Robert Reich has written that the role of the public church is “to provide the public with alternative visions of what is desirable and possible, to stimulate deliberation about them, provoke a reexamination of premises and values, and thus to broaden the range of potential responses and deepen society’s understanding of itself.”¹¹ Members and staffers closest to issues (e.g., members of committees responsible for a particular piece of legislation) work hard to learn thoroughly the particulars of the issue at hand. What is often absent from that learning is an examination of the issues in the light of those visions and values that serve as the “basic ideas” behind everyday political decisions.¹²

As we move forward with this project, it will be critical for us to develop the relationships and communications strategies that provide needed access to Members of Congress. We will need to stay abreast of the issues Congress is concerned about. And most importantly, it will be necessary for us to be persistent in seeing that our rich biblical and theological tradition is not neglected in the work of building a better world.

Making Connections: Living at a Ground Zero

The Union had the unique opportunity of experiencing post-September 11 life at a Ground Zero. While the magnitude of death and destruction was far less in Washington than in New York City, the events of September 11 and the subsequent anthrax attacks had a distinct affect on the nation’s political life.

New Security

The first indications that September 11 had been a turning point were changes made to the way one comes and goes in the Capitol and congressional offices. These changes reflected the ambiguous mood of Members and staffers. A sense of physical and political vulnerability lies just below a resolute determination not to be cowed by terror and fear.

Two days after the attacks, I walked across the Capitol’s eastern plaza and found it peopled with the usual early morning arrivals, dog walkers and joggers. I entered a House office building and went through a perfunctory security screening. I was not even asked where I was going. A quick walk through the scanner and I was in. The Congress was still numb to the turn of events.

Making Connections: Faith in the Public Square

A week later, barriers had been zigzagged across the driveways to the Capitol plaza. Manned vehicles and heavily armed sentries were positioned at all entryways. The undercarriage of my car was examined by mirrors and sniffed by specially trained dogs. My customary access to the Capitol was now off limits. It was too convenient to the offices of House leadership. I had to park blocks away and enter from a side entrance through Statuary Hall. A perimeter was set around the Capitol buildings and trucks of above a certain tonnage were excluded at flare-lit intersections manned by police and the National Guard. Selected side streets abutting congressional offices were closed. The Hill was hunkering down and Members of Congress were not happy about it.

The Human Reaction

Like every American, Members of Congress were deeply affected by the attacks. Nationwide television showing Members on the Capitol steps singing “God Bless America” let constituents see the patriotism of their Members and a moment of fleeting bipartisanship. But no broadcast was able to share the struggles that many were experiencing.

Members keenly felt their own physical vulnerability and that of their staffers. They well understood that their workplace was a prime target for any future wave of terrorists. And, as the anthrax attacks proved, the ordinary ways of doing business posed life-threatening risks. In addition to fortifying their workplace, Members were forced to design alternative places of business should the buildings on the Hill prove uninhabitable. The Supreme Court had to adjourn to a District of Columbia court chamber. After several months, the Hart Senate Office Building has just reopened. Normal mail has all but been abandoned.

Like all of us, Members experienced a visceral reaction to these events. Some wanted Al Qaeda blood. Members we spoke with clearly recognized the need for the nation to protect itself and so voted for legislation supporting the President’s use of necessary means to safeguard the American people. But we were taken by the fact that it was more than curiosity that led some Members to ask why the United States is hated as it is. A number of Members talked about the need to understand the thinking and feeling that would lead a man to kill himself in the act of murdering thousands of innocents. There was a sense among some that our attitude toward the economic and political helplessness of others breeds an angry desperation in people like the terrorists. Likewise our national embrace of secularism and our apparent unwillingness to take spiritual things seriously were seen as possible explanations for the murderous rage of the terrorists. There was a willingness to realize that some of the medicine needed to cure the world of terrorism is contained in our own attitudes and values. These Members recognized the need for some soul-searching and conversion.

But these were thoughts that could not always be articulated. Some Members agreed that such thinking would be considered by some of their colleagues and constituents to be fuzzy. Seeking to understand the human motivation behind these events was considered by some as a sign of weakness, an effort to excuse this horrible thing. This caused great consternation. How can one be faithful to one's vision and values and at the same time survive politically to promote those values, to offer a vision?

A Future

For some time, a prominent stream of public opinion has held that politics was a calling not worthy of the virtuous, that government is part of the problem, not part of the solution. September 11 seemed to have turned that kind of thinking over for a time. Partisanship has surely returned to the halls of Congress. These are highly competitive, action-oriented men and women. Competition for power, for leverage, is an almost universal attribute for those elected to office and their supporters. Nevertheless, the patriotic witness of so many Americans tells Members that, if not the federal government, then who? They are expected to lead and when the occasion demands rise above partisanship for the common good. It is important that schools of theology be there to help light the way with insights arising from long years of study and reflection on the Word of God and a rich theological tradition.

Daniel McLellan, OFM, is president of Washington Theological Union and was a member of the Roman Catholic study group of the Public Character project.

ENDNOTES

1. Elizabeth Lynn and Barbara G. Wheeler, "Missing Connections: Public Perceptions of Theological Education and Religious Leadership," *Auburn Studies*, No. 6 (September 1999).
2. Jeremiah J. McCarthy, William Morell, William McGrattan, Daniel McLellan, and Kevin O'Neil, "The Public Character of Theological Education: A Perspective from Roman Catholic Schools of Theology and Seminaries," *Theological Education*, 37:1 (2000): 19-21.
3. *Ibid.*, 22-23.
4. Corporate members are religious institutes that have a contractual relationship with the Union that includes financial commitments, provision of faculty, and fiduciary responsibility for the corporation.
5. The Institute's mission is "to provide occasions for moral reflection and spiritual community to political leaders, drawing universal wisdom from a range of religious traditions; to encourage civility and respect as spiritual values essential to democracy; and to strengthen political leadership that contributes to healing the wounds that divide America's citizenry." See website www.faith-and-politics.org.
6. McCarthy et al., 19.

Making Connections: Faith in the Public Square

7. Ibid., 22.
8. Michael J. Himes and Kenneth R. Himes, *Fullness of Faith: The Public Significance of Theology* (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 18.
9. For a particular view of the engagement of religion and politics, see Stephen L. Carter, *God's Name in Vain, The Wrongs and Rights of Religion in Politics* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).
10. Martin Marty, *The Public Church* (New York: Crossroads Publishing, 1981).
11. Robert Reich, ed., *The Power of Public Ideas* (Cambridge: Ballinger Publishing, 1988), 4.
12. Himes and Himes, 25.

Connecting Faith and Vocational Discipleship at Covenant Theological Seminary

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ABSTRACT: Covenant Seminary has augmented existing programs with a new initiative to help students make connections between faith and discipleship in the marketplace. This initiative has sought both to prepare pastors to shepherd church members in their vocations and to assist students to connect faith and calling in their ministry in the marketplace. We have done this by regularly bringing accomplished practitioners of vocational ministry to campus and by planning an in-depth conference on vocational discipleship to be held March 1-2, 2002.

A study¹ by the Center for the Study of Theological Education at Auburn Theological Seminary has found evidence of a substantial “disconnect” between theological education and the public arena. Not only are seminaries isolated from their own communities, religious leaders are often not engaged in discussions in the public arena. Among other things, this study suggests that seminaries are not doing a sufficient job of training prospective leaders to engage with public life.

Covenant Theological Seminary is seeking to assist students to make connections between faith and discipleship in the marketplace. This initiative seeks to train pastors who will assist members of their congregations in vocational discipleship and to equip students training for lay ministries to connect their faith with their own callings. The seminary will do this by bringing thoughtful persons from the marketplace to campus for one-day discussions and for an intensive conference to present the challenges and opportunities of vocational discipleship in a variety of occupations.

Covenant Seminary wishes to thank ATS for raising the important issue of the public character of theological education and for providing support for this initiative through its Public Character of Theological Education project.

Missing Connections in Theological Education

The Auburn study has highlighted the “missing connections” between theological education and the public arena. The study found a substantial disconnect between seminaries and their own geographical and ecclesiastical communities. Civic leaders and the general public—even church members—have at best only a vague awareness of the existence, purpose, or contribution of theological seminaries.

At the same time, the study found that religious leaders are not connected to public discussions and issues. Religious leaders

. . . don’t convene the forums for public conversations, and they’re not in the forefront of articulating issues. . . religious leaders do not appear to be at the table, and they certainly are not leading the conversation.²

Why are religious leaders and religious perspectives absent from public life? Reasons are not hard to find. The study finds “a social climate that is indifferent to religion.”³ For theological or historical reasons, members of some religious communities may not feel welcome in the public arena.

If religious leaders “do not appear to be at the table,” we must examine the theological training that these leaders have received. If church leaders are to make connections between faith and the public arena, seminaries must prepare them to do so.

My wish is that as a part of the curriculum of seminaries there be a more intentional relationship with the world. . . . It’s important for seminaries to consistently seek intentional ways to get out of the [church] walls.⁴

The theological and knowledge part is very very important: interpretation of the bible [sic], that’s extremely important, but I think even more important is how you relate that knowledge to the people you serve.⁵

It is possible to go even further than the Auburn study has done. Church leaders must be prepared to equip those they lead to connect faith with public life. If there is “a social climate that is indifferent to religion,” it may be precisely because religious leaders have not shown even members of their own congregations how to connect faith with public life. Yet perhaps church leaders should not be alone in bringing faith into the public arena. Perhaps they should be joined by architects, teachers, politicians, physicians, and business persons, who have been trained by these leaders to see the relevance of faith to the whole of life. Certainly those from the Calvinistic tradition, who have historically

been committed to the Lordship of Christ over the whole of life and who value each person's "vocation" as from God, should expect church leaders and theologically informed church members to work together to make the "missing connection" between faith and public life. Seminaries, then, must train religious leaders to lead the members of their churches in bringing religious values and commitments into all of life.

Making Connections at Covenant Theological Seminary

As a theological school in the Reformed tradition, Covenant Theological Seminary has throughout its history sought to connect faith with all of life. From its beginning, Covenant Seminary has viewed the Reformed faith not simply as something to be defended, but as something to be communicated to an unbelieving world. To do this, the seminary has actively sought to develop an understanding of and to communicate with the cultures in which we live and in which our graduates serve. In addition to the seminary's primary purpose of preparing students to serve in pastoral ministry, the seminary's Mission Statement indicates that, through its Master of Arts (Theological Studies), Covenant also seeks to "provide biblical and theological training that equips lay people to bring an informed Christian perspective to a variety of secular occupations and non-ordained ministries."

In 1989, Covenant Seminary established the Francis Schaeffer Institute, in tribute to a noted apologist and frequent campus lecturer. Dr. Schaeffer's long-time colleague, the Reverend Jerram Barrs, was named professor of Christianity and contemporary culture and served as the institute's initial director. (The work of the institute is now under the oversight of a full-time administrative director, while Professor Barrs serves as the institute's resident scholar.) The mission of the Schaeffer Institute expresses the heart of Dr. Schaeffer's ministry: "The Schaeffer Institute seeks to train God's servants to demonstrate compassionately and defend reasonably the claims of Christ upon the whole of life." The Schaeffer Institute has become the primary focus of the seminary's effort to connect faith with life.

The Schaeffer Institute carries out its mission through a variety of programs. In addition to regular seminary courses, the Francis Schaeffer Lectures each semester bring special speakers to address a variety of topics, from art to politics. Students may receive academic credit by attending the lectures and completing other reading and writing assignments, but many more from the campus and the community attend the lectures simply out of interest. Lecture topics have included "Where is God? Justice in an Unjust World," "The Future of Religious Freedom," "Windows on the World, Windows on the Heart: Movies and Meaning-Making Today," "Theology of Technology," and "The Challenge for Faith in a Pluralistic Society."

*Connecting Faith and Vocational Discipleship
at Covenant Theological Seminary*

For several years the institute sponsored an informal gathering for students and others called "Apologetics on Saturday." These sessions focused particularly on understanding world religions and other world views. In 2000-01, "Apologetics on Saturday" became a Friday night through Saturday "Apologetics Seminar," similar to the Schaeffer Lectures, for which students may receive an hour of credit. Recent topics have included "Postmodernism," "Loving People Who Hate the Church," and "Youth Culture" (jointly sponsored by the Schaeffer Institute and the seminary's Youth in Ministry Institute, which is described below).

The institute's summer study program brings together outside speakers, interested laypersons, and seminary students for a week of intense reflection on an issue of cultural and theological importance. We intentionally seek to balance the number of participants from the marketplace with those from the seminary student body, in order to ensure that the program effectively engages in a meaningful way the issues faced by real people in the marketplace. Recent topics have included pluralism and technology. The course this summer will focus on poverty.

Since 1996, the institute has also sought to engage the culture through an innovative program of public lectures in area bookstores called Friday Nights @ the Institute that has become a model for similar programs in a number of other communities. A speaker, who may be a local university professor, artist, musician, or Covenant Seminary professor or student, addresses a relevant topic for thirty to forty-five minutes. Following a short break, there is an extended question and answer period. One-on-one conversations also develop. The audience is quite diverse, including store patrons, high school students, clergy, lay people, and seminary students. Representative topics have included "Must We Be Committed in Order to Know?" "The History of the American Chair: Portrait of People," "Kierkegaard on Anxiety and Faith," "The Pursuit of Excellence and the Perils of Perfectionism," "A History of Courtship," "The Argument for Intelligent Design," and "What Is A Gun?"

In addition to the work of the Schaeffer Institute, Covenant has also sought to connect faith and life by hosting a community Bible study one morning each week during the academic year. The study has focused on serving the business community, this year with an average of 120 in attendance. Those attending work in a wide variety of fields, including construction, manufacturing, advertising, investments, and the news media. During 2000-01, the study focused specifically on training these leaders to view their work biblically.

In 1999, Covenant Seminary was privileged to receive a \$1.2 million grant from Lilly Endowment to develop the Youth in Ministry Institute (YIMI). YIMI seeks to introduce high school youth to theological issues and to demonstrate how these relate to contemporary culture. Conferences are particularly designed to assist participants in thinking theologically about work, whether in occupational ministry or in the marketplace, as a calling from God. A subse-

quent grant of \$600,000 from Lilly Endowment has enabled the seminary to continue developing this important program.

As mentioned above, we were particularly grateful for the enthusiastic participation in and response to the fall 2000 conference on youth culture entitled "Two Worlds Under One Roof." This multidepartment-sponsored conference featured sessions in which our plenary speakers focused on the need for authentic relational engagement with youth inside and outside the church. Breakout sessions further focused attention on specific aspects of ministry opportunities including doubt, busyness, decision-making, family systems, popular culture, and sexual identity.

Yet even with these efforts, Covenant Seminary believed that we could do more.

Making New Connections

Stimulated by the initiative and support of the Public Character project of The Association of Theological Schools, Covenant Seminary has developed a multifaceted strategy to expand students' understanding of vocational discipleship. By "vocational discipleship," we mean encouraging and helping lay people in the church to live out their calling under the Lordship of Christ in a way that impacts the world and the workplace. Although discipleship is sometimes defined in ways that are limited to lay people being involved in "church programs," we believe discipleship in the Bible to also include sending Christians into every area of life as witnesses to the transforming power of the gospel in the way Christians actually live out their callings under God day by day. We believe that pastors and church leaders need to have a fuller understanding of and commitment to kingdom impact through the church. This new initiative seeks to prepare prospective pastors to equip members of their congregations to think theologically about life in the public arena, while also assisting students whose vocational goal is marketplace ministry to connect their faith to their calling.

First, we have begun a regular series of special events with a focus on vocational discipleship. Each semester, the seminary invites one or more persons with significant experience in a variety of fields to campus to speak about connecting faith and life in their vocations. These individuals are either interviewed during chapel and/or speak at a "Ministry Lunch" (usually both). Speakers interviewed during chapel (held three times each week during the semester) are asked about their testimony of faith in Christ, how they seek to think and act Christianly in the pursuit of their vocation, and what pastors need to know and do effectively to pastor people like them. The brown-bag "Ministry Lunch" (held once or twice each week) provides a more informal opportunity for discussion and student questions. To this point, speakers have included:

*Connecting Faith and Vocational Discipleship
at Covenant Theological Seminary*

- A business consultant and faculty member of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania (and a former pastor) who consults with the world's wealthiest regarding their family businesses.
- A prominent pathologist with the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.
- A prominent recording artist and producer from Nashville, Tennessee.
- An attorney who until recently led a conciliation consulting organization in Montana.

We are completing plans this spring to have either the chief of staff from the office of a U.S. Senator or a distinguished economist from the University of Virginia. Most of these speakers have come from our own denominational constituency.

Response to these speakers has been excellent. Representative student comments include: "This has helped me connect my training with an understanding of those to whom and with whom I will minister." "This has put a face on those to whom we are training to minister." "I have a much more concrete idea of what the people in the congregation face in their everyday lives after listening to these friends articulate their struggles and opportunities." In addition, it has helped to shape the seminary's ongoing discussion of curricular issues by calling attention to issues of ministry application in the course of ministry training. The consistent theme in the counsel speakers have given has been: "Make sure that you as a minister are walking with God. We do not want another talking head, but someone who models a God-centered life and who speaks to us from the integrity of that life." We plan to continue events like this once or twice each semester.

Second, in cooperation with the Francis Schaeffer Institute, Covenant has planned a conference for March 1-2, 2002, titled "Yearning for Glory: Reflecting God's Truth in All of Life." We have planned the conference with three audiences in mind: pastors, lay men and women working in the marketplace, and seminary students. As with the visiting speaker series, we are seeking to equip pastors to minister to their church members in the marketplace, as well as to encourage those in the marketplace to think creatively and theologically about their various callings.

The conference will begin Friday afternoon with an opening plenary session, followed by a panel discussion with breakout session leaders. The Friday evening plenary session will feature an extended presentation by a Christian musician, reflecting on how his faith shapes his work as a musician. Most of the Saturday morning program will be devoted to breakout sessions. Participants will have the opportunity to attend two of seven sessions led by an educator, a physician, a scientist, a counselor, a musician, a business consultant, and a speaker/cultural analyst. Session leaders have been asked to address the following:

- A brief testimony of their own experience of saving faith in Christ.
- Their involvement in and experience with the local church.

- What it means to live faithfully as a Christian in their specific area of calling.
- What the church needs to be informed about from their area of life.
- Ways the church can minister to and disciple them as they live out their vocation under Christ day by day.

Following the breakout session, there will be a final wrap-up. Students seeking credit for attending the conference will have another two hours of interaction Saturday afternoon in preparation for their written assignments.

While students may receive an hour of credit for the conference, we are widely advertising to the campus community, students from our extension program (*ACCESS*), alumni, area churches, and the general public. We already know of several alumni serving in campus ministry who are bringing students from their colleges for the conference. The registration fee of \$25 (\$10 for students not taking the conference for credit) has deliberately been set low to facilitate attendance.

Because this upcoming conference is similar (although in greater depth) to the special events we have already held on campus, we believe that students and other participants will respond to the conference in much the same way.

Other New Connections

Covenant has continued to look for fresh ways to make connections between faith and the public sphere beyond this present project.

In the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, Covenant provided a variety of forums for reflection and information. We devoted one chapel period to a panel discussion led by three faculty members about the attacks and the events and how we might respond to them. The audio track of this panel was made available by tape and on the seminary's website. In addition, a retired Air Force colonel, who commanded an air base in Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War and who had written a master's thesis on the threat posed by Islamic fundamentalism to the security of the United States, is a current M.Div. student, and he spoke to our faculty and board at its September meeting and was interviewed in chapel for the benefit of students. This student, as well as faculty panelists, have had other opportunities to speak in the community about these matters. Students in our world religions course found their previously scheduled visit to a local mosque of special interest in the light of recent events; their planned hour-long visit became an extended three-hour discussion with the mosque's representatives.

In January, Covenant offered three short courses designed to make connections between faith and public life: "Film and Theology," "Race Relations," and "Community-based Ministries." The latter two one-hour courses were offered in a Friday night-Saturday format to accommodate visitors from the community and were open to the public. The course on race relations was taught by

*Connecting Faith and Vocational Discipleship
at Covenant Theological Seminary*

regular seminary faculty with outside speakers. The course on community-based ministries was taught by an outside instructor who is a practitioner in community-based ministry.

In the fall of 2001, Covenant began an Urban Ministry Initiative. The goals of this initiative are to train students to minister in urban settings and to train others generally to be aware of the needs of urban areas. During this year, one of our Covenant Groups (a small group of students meeting weekly with a faculty or staff member for prayer and mutual encouragement) has been devoted to urban ministry. Attendance has averaged about fifteen students who meet with several area pastors who are involved in urban ministry. We have had three brown-bag “Ministry Lunch” meetings that have focused on ministry to immigrants, church planting in the inner city, and the theology of urban ministry. Two visiting speakers met with faculty and staff to discuss the topics of training for urban ministry and things that whites in particular need to know about ministry in the city.

Transferable Concepts

Covenant Seminary has undertaken a variety of projects that have cost comparatively little, are readily sustainable, and have been significant in helping students think about connecting faith and the public arena.

- The Francis Schaeffer Lecture Series brings speakers each semester to campus to address a variety of issues related to the connection between faith and life. These lectures are open to the public, but students may receive academic credit for participation. Periodically we have offered the lectures off-campus or in conjunction with another organization. Many seminaries already have periodic special lecture series and could easily begin a similar series on topics related to the public arena.
- Friday Nights @ the Institute draws on both seminary and community speakers to lecture on popular topics in area bookstores. We have seen churches in other metropolitan areas successfully develop similar lecture series in their own communities. There is minimal cost and the bookstores, interested in attracting business, have been happy to publicize these to their customers.
- Brief January-term courses in a conference format address various aspects of the public expression of faith and can both serve students and function as “mini-conferences” that are open to the public.
- Covenant’s Urban Ministry Initiative fosters student interest and provides training on a small scale by bringing together interested students and knowledgeable area pastors. This model could be adapted by schools to address other ministry concerns related to the public arena.

The particular initiative on vocational discipleship that has been supported by the ATS Public Character project would be especially easy to replicate. Not all schools would want to devote a major conference to this topic as Covenant has, but most schools could fairly easily include speakers from their own constituencies on the topic of vocational discipleship among the special events on campus during the course of a semester. Organizational and financial commitments were relatively minimal. Some of our speakers even returned their honoraria.

Summary

Covenant Seminary is seeking to help students make fruitful connections between faith and vocational discipleship. We believe that the initiative begun with the support of The Association of Theological Schools through its Public Character project, together with other existing and new programs, help prepare prospective pastors to equip members of their congregations to connect faith with their vocation and with life in the public arena, as well as other students who will seek to connect faith with their calling in the marketplace.

The director of this project and co-author of the article is Donald Guthrie, vice president for academics and assistant professor of Christian education at Covenant Theological Seminary. His doctorate is in adult education from the University of Georgia. He previously served for twelve years in a campus ministry that has had as a key part of its strategy to assist students in thinking Christianly about their vocations. Co-author James Meek serves as associate dean for academics and as assistant professor of Bible. He is currently pursuing the Ph.D. in exegetical theology at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis.

ENDNOTES

1. Elizabeth Lynn and Barbara G. Wheeler, "Missing Connections: Public Perceptions of Theological Education and Religious Leadership," *Auburn Studies*, No. 6 (September 1999), 1-15.
2. *Ibid.*, 7.
3. *Ibid.*, 8.
4. *Ibid.*, 11.
5. *Ibid.*, 13.

Responsibility, Repentance, and Right Relations

*Phyllis D. Airhart and Roger C. Hutchinson
Emmanuel College of Victoria University*

ABSTRACT: Emmanuel College explored the public character of university-related theological schools by focusing on the theme of "Responsibility, Repentance, and Right Relations" in relation to the churches' involvement in operating residential schools for aboriginal children in Canada. This article discusses the project, the challenges of hosting public events in a pluralist university, and the opportunity for institutional self-knowledge that was occasioned in this particular case.

The Project

If Barbara Wheeler had come to Canada to study public perceptions of theological schools, she no doubt would have found evidence in Toronto to support her U.S. findings. A few casual remarks made at the first meeting of the planning group for Emmanuel College's project on the Public Character of Theological Education indicated that we had a few "missing connections" of our own. Our six-person planning group for Emmanuel College's project on the churches' involvement in operating residential schools for native children included a professor cross-appointed to the University of Toronto law school and the department of political science. She was known to some in our group as a member of a nearby United Church of Canada congregation, as well as for her research interests and involvement in previous interdisciplinary conferences at the college. As we settled into the agenda, she happened to mention her first visit, which had been made after seeing a conference notice posted at her church. Perhaps her coming to Canada from the United States a few years earlier explains why she was unaware of Emmanuel's denominational connection to her congregation. More startling was that it had come as news to her to learn that there was a theological college directly across the street from the law school.

That recollection was a reminder of the challenges of and opportunities for creating a public presence in our complex institutional setting. Emmanuel College is located in two university settings: we are the theological college of Victoria University which in turn is federated with the University of Toronto. There is nothing apart from the theological connotations of the word "Emmanuel" itself that identifies it as a theological college, though it is well

known as such within Victoria University. The state of affairs beyond the immediate Victoria community is a different matter. Passersby likely think of it as just another building on Victoria University's corner of the campus. Emmanuel's public identity benefits in many ways from these university connections. For example, many of the faculty agree to be included in the "Blue Book" prepared by the University of Toronto to facilitate media contacts. But the "Blue Book" obscures its theological identity: "Emmanuel" is simply an alternative to the usual departmental locator. The college's public character is also shaped by its relationship to the United Church of Canada as the largest of its theological schools. Yet the church tends not to look to us for accessible, relevant, or viable resources.

The planning group viewed the project as an opportunity to take advantage of our location to observe what happens when those who speak the language of theology are put in conversation with colleagues in other departments of the university, especially those who are members of faith communities. What happens when those who work in a university setting put their faith forward in public? We also wondered what students could learn about the character of public witness from this particular case.

The main focus of the project was a one-day event in the 2001 fall term. The plan was to feature a prominent aboriginal judge from Saskatchewan in dialogue with our planning committee's law school professor. Their conversation would highlight the tensions between individual and community rights in dealing with the issue of residential schools. The other presentations and panels were designed to focus on the question of responsibility (a crucial matter since many Canadians, church members among them, feel no sense of personal accountability for wrongs done in the past), repentance, and right relations. This major event was preceded by two spring events: dinner and discussion with South African theologian Charles Villa-Vincencia, which included faculty from the law school, and a public address by Bill Blaikie, a United Church minister and member of the federal parliament.

Planning, Process, and Problems

From the outset the planning sessions were rich learning experiences that provided a preview of the conference themes. We recognized that we were not set up to speak to the issue of how aboriginal communities can promote their own objectives. Instead our aim was to encourage non-aboriginals, who have been asked as church members to respond to specific demands for justice, to do their own soul-searching. Our concern was that local congregations have little awareness of the issue, pointing to a need for truth telling that will involve those who seem disinclined to hear it. The planning group was convinced that justice-seeking people need to learn how to take even small steps, inching our way onto the stage as it were with the hope of becoming part of a larger drama.

We hoped to generate questions in a disciplined way, provide background and a framework for discussion in congregations and communities, and stimulate a research agenda. Because we did not want to do that work in isolation, we invited two aboriginal United Church ministers to join us as consultants on a number of occasions.

Setting up the conference was simple, or so we thought: we had an important issue, energy, expertise, and an ATS grant. Then the realities of implementation set in. The seemingly simple matter of setting a date signaled the complexities that would follow. On what day of the week would we hold the conference? Wednesday afternoon and evening had obvious advantages because the period is designated at the Toronto School of Theology for community life activities and there are few scheduled classes. But beginning at noon on Wednesday with community lunch seemed to preclude full participation of those from other university departments. Many law school students, for example, would be in classes until late in the afternoon. Friday was for them a better day to schedule extra-curricular events. One of our aboriginal consultants added to our dilemma by suggesting that we use aspects of traditional native ceremonies as a way of shaping the event in a non-academic way. Perhaps we could begin with a sunrise service and follow with a version of the healing circle ritual to focus on right relations. Alongside our anxieties about being perceived as misappropriating native ceremonies was a practical concern: would anyone show up for an autumn sunrise service? Would those unable to come at sunrise feel welcome to attend any or all of the rest of the sessions?

These simple details brought home to us the different understandings of the nature of time and how scheduling both facilitates and limits our life together. We opted for Wednesday, but still hoped to attract law school faculty and students by scheduling our judge/professor “duet” on collective responsibility in the late afternoon. Though we decided against a sunrise service, we planned to include ritual in the form of prayers and songs throughout the conference. To avoid conflicts with other events, we found ourselves scheduled for early November—a month later than we had hoped. After agreeing to meet in mid-September to work on publicity and finalize plans for a number of related events, we broke for the summer.

By the time we gathered in mid-September, the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center a week earlier threatened to eclipse all other public issues. But, for our planning committee, another disaster was looming. Over the summer our key panelist for the evening session, another professor from the law school, had reluctantly bowed out. He had accepted a teaching position in another province, and his class schedule made it impossible for him to participate. We now learned that the aboriginal judge, whose session with our law school colleague was the centerpiece of the afternoon session, was unable to travel because of a difficult pregnancy. With six weeks to go, it was unlikely

Responsibility, Repentance and Right Relations

that we would be able to replace either of these key legal experts. Both had faith commitments that enabled them to connect law and religion in unique ways. It appeared that whatever prospect we had of thinking of the wider university as our “public” was in jeopardy. The only silver lining was that by going back to the drawing board with a willingness to change the date if necessary, we were able to include an aboriginal leader (and former United Church moderator) who had a prior commitment for the early November date.

We had always worked with the assumption that the Toronto-area congregations were another of our important “publics.” Our publicity strategy now became even more intentionally directed toward congregations and judicatory offices of the United, Anglican, and Presbyterian churches in particular. We used flyers, church bulletin notices, and electronic mailing lists to announce the event. It was well publicized around the University of Toronto, especially in the law school, the political science and religion departments, and the public spaces of Victoria University. Still there were glitches, despite the dogged efforts of the student assistant for the project. It was annoying, for example, to find that the notice submitted for the faculty/staff newsletter at Victoria University was apparently overlooked. Recalling all that had gone wrong, mindful of the end-of-term date, and assuming there was minimal interest at the congregational level, we placed our food order with fear and trepidation, not knowing whether anyone would turn up.

As it turned out, the conference itself was wonderful. All the speakers arrived and gently provoked us to new insights. The attendance exceeded our most optimistic expectations. We filled a large lecture hall to capacity and had to use the upper balcony to accommodate the overflow. We attracted very diverse “publics”: the conference was well attended by our own students and faculty, but also drew other university constituencies, our own alumni, a group of school children from a nearby Catholic school, church executives, clergy, laity, and a few whose questions or attire identified them as non-Christians. The college’s office staff, who are perhaps as sharp as any formal evaluation instrument in gauging the success of an event by listening to the tone of the coffee breaks, pronounced it a success.

We had given much thought to the complementarities of issues, speakers, and formats. Conversations with our aboriginal consultants confirmed the importance of storytelling for their culture, and conference participants were encouraged to consider that method of presentation as an alternative to a more “academic” approach. The first session began by hearing from a man (now United Church pastor) and a woman (a Roman Catholic laywoman) who had experienced residential schooling as children. This session was crucial, since we were convinced of the importance of “meeting” the problem before we proceeded to consider how to deal with it.

The second session focused on what the church might offer to discussions of collective responsibility. The corporate identity of the church lent itself well

to consideration of the problems and possibilities of taking responsibility for what is never just “your” responsibility. What does (self-chosen) membership involve? We reflected with the panelists about occasions where the church had been helpfully involved in social reform and where it had stumbled. One powerful moment came as one of the participants used the example of her congregation’s commitment to justice to provoke us to consider this as a contemporary expression of an attitude of moral superiority which in an earlier time had made cultural violence possible and even plausible.

At the suggestion of one of the native participants we had shifted during the planning stages to using the term “right relations” instead of reconciliation: it was still, he felt, too early to talk of reconciliation. Our final session brought together the panelists from the earlier sessions for an interactive conversation led by the pastoral theologian on our planning team about what it means to practice right relations. Titled “Singing and Praying in a New Land: Practicing Right Relations,” it integrated the pattern of praying and singing that had been interspersed throughout the afternoon. These worship elements were experienced by most as helpful and enriching, with an important exception which will be noted below.

Counsel and Cautionary Tales

Before hazarding a guess at what other schools might learn from our project, our planning group thought it advisable to pool our experience with faculty colleagues who had been involved in planning public events at Emmanuel in the past year. “The Church in a Wired World” was a workshop featuring Eric McLuhan (son of Marshall McLuhan) from the University of Toronto Program in Culture and Technology. Robert Wright gave a public lecture on “The Meaning of Evolution: Evidence of Purpose in Biological and Cultural History” and participated the next day in a panel discussion of his book *Nonzero: The Logic of Human Destiny*. The findings which emerged from that conversation have primary relevance for our own school’s consideration of reaching a broader public, but describing the dynamics of our situation may provide some counsel, or at least serve as cautionary tales, for others.

1. Our recent efforts to reach a broader public were in various ways exercises in *institutional* self-knowledge that pushed us to look at our changing student body in relation to the wider university. Exploring our “public character” prodded us to ask questions about *how* and perhaps even more important *why* and *for whom* we organize events. Are they, like Monday and Friday classes, quietly being sacrificed because of the scheduling pressures of accommodating commuter students? We bring in those from outside the college to hear what we and other speakers have to say, but we may be becoming less successful in reaching our own students. They are becoming, in an ironic sense, one of our “missing connections.”

Responsibility, Repentance and Right Relations

We suggest that it is important to give some thought to who the school's conversation partners are presumed to be. In our case it is no longer enough to advertise an effective or well-known keynote speaker; it is important to identify a community with which to connect and around which to build events, and then proceed to draw in others by targeting networks. In doing so we realize that we risk simply identifying and speaking to those who are already committed to a particular *position*. We need to do more to reach those who may be committed to exploring the *questions*.

2. Our conversation led to consideration of the curricular implications of events designed to explore important public issues. We have a number of students who think of their educational experience as a sequence of courses to be completed. But not all learning can or ought to take place in the classroom. How do we present the curriculum in order to create a culture of expectation around other learning opportunities? Can we make the case that such occasions are worth the sometimes very difficult challenges of fitting them into the overextended lives of our own students and faculty?

Most faculty hesitate to require students to attend public events, especially if a grade on an assignment is involved. When an event is scheduled outside class time, is it fair to make enrollment contingent on the student's ability and willingness to attend the event? At least two courses listed attendance at the residential schools conference as an expectation. The United Church history course included a class session on residential schools with a lecture and discussion of assigned readings. Students could choose, but were not required, to do one of the suggested essays on the topic. Where do we draw the line between coercion and persuasion with our student "public"?

3. The most intriguing finding had to do with the encounter between the language of public discourse and the language of faith which we observed. We experienced something of the awkwardness of that encounter and acknowledged that we need to learn how to deal with it honestly and faithfully. What can we say and how do we say it in a university context, which most of the faculty of Emmanuel College would describe as pluralist rather than secular? Whose language do we use?

Our planning session had noted the absence of theological language in discussions about aboriginal justice. The language of faith tended to be quickly transposed into the language of secular morality. Yet the importance of using the language of faith in dealing with aboriginal issues was obvious, since spirituality was so crucial for those most directly involved.

The event demonstrated the complexity of using theological language. Toward the end of the last session, the law professor commented that she had found troubling the singing of the Taizé song, "Jesus Remember Me," which is often used in our worship services as a gathering hymn. What, she wondered, were non-Christians and perhaps even some liberal Christians to do with "when you come into your kingdom"? The dilemma was heightened because,

as the person who had prepared the worship materials commented later, “it’s biblical.” We were confronted with an interesting predicament: a college that is usually criticized in church circles for its lack of piety suddenly appeared very devout when our worship was put on display for public inspection. For the church public it was probably good to challenge some of the stereotypes (though I wondered what the person covering the event for the magazine published by the denomination’s renewal movement made of the situation). Another interesting comment came from a colleague invited to our wrap-up conversation who expressed disappointment that he had found the presentations “insufficiently grounded in biblical and theological insights.”

How to extend hospitality in a world of theological and cultural plurality without erasing the distinguishing features of our own particularity is likely to become an even more pressing question in years to come. Giving permission to use the language of faith may offend some while allowing others the freedom to expand their vocabulary. Ironically, if we had arranged to hold our conference at the law school I wonder whether the law school professor would have been as inclined to speak so personally about the way that her faith community was connected to her research on collective responsibility. How do we deal with the realms of public and theological discourse?

This is an important conversation to join and one with curricular implications. Our students need to watch us struggle to articulate a faithful public response to issues as they prepare for their own ministry of public witness.

Next Steps

As our planning group compared notes with our faculty colleagues, we found we had much in common when it came to follow-up to major public events. Planning takes time and energy that is hard to find and sustain, no matter how important the issue. Fashioning a public presence in the community requires not only *expressions* of institutional commitment and goodwill, but tangible *support* for both creative initiatives and mundane administrative details: publicity, correspondence, food and refreshments, arrangements for hospitality, and the like. This is not likely to happen unless the theological school is committed to cultivating a public presence as part of its mission.

None of the events, including ours, has yet generated a continuing dialogue, however enjoyable and stimulating the initial appetizer. Our intent had been to hold a major conference featuring guest speakers to initiate a conversation that would be followed by events showcasing the contributions of our faculty colleagues in related theological disciplines. Although we had begun to make those contacts, our plans were short-circuited; there was no time between the 28 November conference and the looming 31 December grant deadline.

Yet there is enormous potential and some promising signs. Two members of the planning group will be team teaching a course on “Religion, Law and

Responsibility, Repentance and Right Relations

Public Discourse,” which will begin a new venture between Emmanuel and the law school. Both have developed well-defined research projects related to issues of aboriginal justice. The pastoral theologian is preparing an article for the *Toronto Journal of Theology* that was occasioned by his involvement in the project. At the suggestion of one of the aboriginal speakers, we used some of the remaining grant money to provide students with copies of a new congregational resource (*Justice and Reconciliation: The Legacy of the Indian Residential Schools and the Journey Toward Reconciliation*), which we hope will extend the impact of our gathering.

The greatest learning, as is generally the case, was for those most directly involved. It strengthened the personal networks that had generated the project and expanded our thinking in ways that were enriching. But there was good institutional learning as well. The project challenged us to think beyond our usual public role, which too often is limited to that of a “sponsoring venue” for outside speakers and groups. We recognize the importance of doing more to highlight the work of our own faculty resources.

We succeeded in hosting a fine event addressing an important issue that even members of our own committee feared would not catch the interest of any public—church or university. Even graduates who had been students as recently as three or four years earlier remarked how good it was to see the school taking leadership to encourage discussion of a difficult matter facing the church, a change from what they remembered of their experience as students. As such it enhanced our public presence, particularly in the church, though regrettably we made little headway in the university.

Our project on the involvement of the churches in residential schools pushed us to be more self-conscious about the sponsorship and organization of public events. It still leaves unsettled the matter of what we want to be known *for*. We have more work to do as we explore how to acknowledge and name our ethos as we discuss public issues in the pluralist context of the university.

Phyllis D. Airhart is associate professor of the history of Christianity at Emmanuel College. She was a member of the university-related divinity school study group of the Public Character of Theological Education project. Roger C. Hutchinson is professor emeritus of church and society at Emmanuel College and formerly its principal. His current research project on “Law, Morality and Politics in a Pluralistic Society” will propose a framework for dealing with the legal and ethical dimensions of the residential schools issue.

Geographies of Memory: Theological Reflections on Racial Reconciliation in South Africa and the United States

*L. Gregory Jones and Willie James Jennings
Duke University Divinity School*

ABSTRACT: Over the past two years, Duke University Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina, has begun to exercise significant leadership within the university and in the broader Triangle area on issues of racial reconciliation. During the spring of 2001, the divinity school enhanced that leadership through a series of efforts that included a university-wide team-taught course on race and memory, bringing in several celebrated speakers and scholars, and offering significant support to the university-wide Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration committee. That leadership was confirmed by the divinity school's work during a campus controversy regarding race and reparations.

How does theological reflection engage wider issues of public concern? This is a particularly important issue for university-related divinity schools to engage, especially one such as Duke that has as its primary vocation the preparation of men and women for parish ministry in the United Methodist Church. Yet as an ecumenically minded divinity school within a major research university, we also look for significant ways to claim and reclaim theology's engagement with issues of significant public concern.

During the 2001 spring semester, the divinity school embarked on a project of engaging the wider university in conversations around themes of "remembrance, reconciliation, and restitution." These three "Rs" were chosen by the university-wide Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration committee that was chaired by divinity school dean L. Gregory Jones. The celebration in January 2001 was to focus on the lessons of South Africa's recent past for the light they might shed on the United States' struggles with issues of race. In our judgment, South Africa has been more successful both in sustaining a public voice for the churches and theological reflection, and in advancing a public engagement with racial reconciliation.

This theme also converged in a significant way with a new divinity school initiative. In the fall of 2000, the divinity school formally inaugurated a partnership with the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and with its John Wesley Seminary. The opportunity to focus intellectual and theological attention on South Africa's engagement with racial reconciliation provided an excellent opportunity to build on this nascent partnership.

*Geographies of Memory: Theological Reflections
on Racial Reconciliation in South Africa and the United States*

Through the support of the Public Character of Theological Education project of The Association of Theological Schools, the divinity school was able to undertake an initiative throughout the spring semester that could build on the week-long Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration and its South African partnership. This provided an opportunity to build on Dean Jones's work with the university-wide celebration committee, and more importantly, for the divinity school to build on its developing leadership within the university on the crucial public issue of racial reconciliation.

As we approached the January 2001 celebration, the divinity school was well positioned to lead a series of conversations highlighting the intellectual, theological, and political challenges and opportunities surrounding racial reconciliation in South Africa and the United States. In addition to our partnership, we had recently made two faculty appointments of persons with significant ties to South Africa: Peter Storey (a prominent Methodist South African leader who had helped lead resistance to Apartheid and who had served on the nominating committee for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission) and Michael Battle (an African American with significant ties to South Africa and the author of a book on Desmond Tutu's conception of reconciliation). In addition, Senior Associate Dean Willie Jennings had been exercising major leadership throughout the university on issues of race, reconciliation, and theology—intellectually, programmatically, and in the recruitment of black faculty.

A major focus for our work was a university-wide seminar, team-taught during the spring semester by Dean Jones and Humanities and Social Sciences Dean Karla Holloway. In addition to her administrative leadership, Dean Holloway is the William R. Kenan Professor of English and African-American Studies. The course was entitled "Geographies of Memory," and it focused on an interdisciplinary engagement with issues from both South Africa and the United States.

The course included a wide range of students: undergraduate humanities, social science, and science majors; divinity students; and doctoral students of English, comparative literature, political science, and religion. Most but not all of the students had some background in religious faith. Most but not all had some familiarity with South Africa. The students represented a wonderful mixture of ethnic backgrounds, including Euro-Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and one native-born South African.

The texts for the course were designed to reflect the interdisciplinary and interschool character of the seminar. Theological texts and issues were centrally represented: our first class began with a discussion of Cain and Abel, and our first text was Miroslav Volf's *Exclusion and Embrace*. Over the course of the semester we read other theologically specific texts, including Desmond Tutu's *No Future Without Forgiveness*. We also read other texts that raise specific theological issues, including books about South Africa's Truth and Reconcili-

ation Commission, as well as significant works of fiction, most notably Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and J.M. Coetzee's Booker prize winning South African novel *Disgrace*.

In addition, particularly because we were dealing with themes of memory, we included classes that engaged the arts. We listened to James Macmillan's haunting CD that brings together music from the Latin mass with Ariel Dorfmann's poetry about victims of Latin American torture. We were also able to draw in Professor Dorfmann (who teaches at Duke) to reflect on this poetry and Macmillan's music. We also viewed two videos about the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, listened to the voices from some of the testimony, and engaged a video of Desmond Tutu and Duke Professor John Hope Franklin discussing memory and hope with teenagers from South Africa, the United States, and Senegal.

The course generated great interest and phenomenal discussions. Indeed, it was often difficult to cut off the discussion at the end of class. The class was held in the new John Hope Franklin Center for the Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies at Duke. During the week the Center was opened, our class held an open seminar discussion and interested persons from the public could come and overhear our discussions. Bill Cosby visited the class for a portion of one day, during which time he reflected on the significance of memory and reconciliation in charting a path for the future.

At a black-tie dinner inaugurating the Center, Duke President Nannerl Keohane explicitly lifted up the seminar as a powerful example of the kind of interdisciplinary inquiry that the Center is designed to cultivate. As a result of that dinner, a Duke University trustee has asked Deans Holloway and Jones to design an event surrounding these themes that could be presented for the public at the Museum of the New South in Charlotte, North Carolina.

As a part of the celebration of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, the university planned and conducted several events that focused on the issues facing South Africa and the United States in relation to race. The keynote for that week was delivered by Mamphela Ramphele, a remarkable South African woman leader. Now a vice president of the World Bank, Dr. Ramphele had been a leader in the resistance movement in South Africa. A close friend and lover of Steve Biko, she became a physician as well as a professor of anthropology, and rose to become the first black woman to serve as vice chancellor (the equivalent of a president in America) of the University of Cape Town.

Our project built on Dr. Ramphele's visit with the arrival of Professor John de Gruchy, a Christian theologian and dean of graduate education at the University of Cape Town. Professor de Gruchy visited the Jones and Holloway seminar, engaged in informal conversations with a variety of students and faculty, and delivered a public lecture on issues of reconciliation and justice. His lecture was well attended and stimulated a significant follow-up discussion with Dean Jennings and other faculty within the divinity school.

*Geographies of Memory: Theological Reflections
on Racial Reconciliation in South Africa and the United States*

We had invited South African Ambassador Sheila Sisulu to come to Duke, and she planned to do so. Ambassador Sisulu, the daughter of one of South Africa's most significant resistance leaders and a leader in her own right, has exercised significant influence in working with youth in South Africa. We had designed an event for her to talk with undergraduates as well as divinity students about making a difference in the world.

An unexpected diplomatic trip back to South Africa delayed her visit from February to April. And then an unexpected eruption of events on the Duke campus ended up postponing her visit indefinitely.

Shortly after Duke's spring break in March, Duke's student newspaper (*The Chronicle*) published, without comment, David Horowitz's inflammatory advertisement attacking the notion of reparations for slavery. The advertisement contains a number of historical inaccuracies as well as judgments widely recognized as offensive and inflammatory.

As a result, the entire campus erupted into a series of protests, teach-ins, and boycotts. The original issues surrounding the advertisement (including first-amendment questions and their relation to accepting paid advertisements, etc.) soon spilled over into a broader assessment of the role of African American students at Duke, issues of reparations in South Africa and the United States, and the education of American students about issues of race.

It would be an understatement to say that these issues dominated campus discussion for the rest of the semester. Deans Jones and Holloway held extra discussions with the seminar around these issues, and there were numerous forums and other gatherings to discuss both the intellectual issues as well as political strategies for dealing with issues on campus.

In the midst of these events, it became clear that it would be inappropriate for Ambassador Sisulu to visit Duke at this time. Because of her position, it would be a highly sensitive matter for her to be asked about issues of reparations—especially since that is one of the most controversial issues in contemporary South Africa stemming from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. When we offered Ambassador Sisulu an opportunity to postpone her visit, she was most grateful to be able to do so. Though we regretted this lost opportunity for engagement, it seemed the only appropriate thing to do.

In response to the Horowitz advertisement, a significant number of divinity school faculty and students paid for an advertisement that sought to provide a counter-perspective and to focus on the intellectual, theological, and political judgments that engage issues of memory, reconciliation, and repentance. This counter-advertisement was organized by Professor Stanley Hauerwas and Assistant Professor Daphne Wiggins. In addition, through the leadership of Dean Jennings, the divinity school either sponsored or participated in several town meetings on campus and in the Durham community that focused on a wide range of issues. In these gatherings, we sought to offer a theological voice that engaged the university-wide concerns.

It was fortuitous that we had already scheduled Dr. Alex Boraine to visit as a part of our project. Dr. Boraine, the vice chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and a former Methodist pastor in South Africa, had also recently published a major study of the TRC entitled, *A Country Unmasked*. He had also recently undertaken leadership of a project focused on issues of justice and reconciliation for countries undertaking a transition to democracy.

His visit occurred in the midst of the frenzied activities around campus. He was able to provide a significant perspective not only on issues of racial reconciliation as they related to the TRC in South Africa, but also a very interesting and significant commentary on the issue of reparations as they had struggled with it in South Africa. Dr. Boraine offered his wisdom and insights in a variety of venues: in his public lecture, his visit to the Jones and Holloway seminar, and in informal conversations over meals with such campus leaders as former U.S. Ambassador to South Africa James Joseph, Professor Peter Storey, Professor Ariel Dorfmann, professors of law and political science, and the director of the Kenan Institute of Ethics.

It was fortunate, and indeed perhaps providential, that we had planned these events in advance of the campus eruption that resulted from the Horowitz advertisement, for these events enabled the divinity school to offer leadership and display in significant ways the public character of theological education. Indeed, many leaders across the university thought the divinity school had offered one of the few signs of genuine hope in the midst of the turmoil. In addition, the Jones and Holloway seminar had included students who emerged as leaders in the student protests, the campus forums, and the willingness to keep the issues visible throughout the semester.

During the semester, Dean Jones was asked to write a reflection on the issue of “reparations” for the Duke community. Because it emerged out of our project on “The Public Character of Theological Education,” and because its shape was significantly influenced by the speakers, the roundtable discussions, and the seminar that were supported by this project, the reflection took on a distinctive tone and perspective.

It is reprinted here as it appeared in the *Duke Magazine*, which goes to the entire Duke community—including its alumni/ae constituencies.

“Reparations?”

Dean L. Gregory Jones
Duke University Divinity School
April 23, 2001

How ought people come to terms with difficult and traumatic, even horrifying, histories? The issues are as pressing as they are vexing. Can individuals find a way to atone for the past? What role does repentance play? Can collective groups, such as nations, repent, atone, or forgive? What would such repentance and forgiveness look like? Is it possible to heal memories, or are they bound to be the fertile sources for mobilizing vengeance in the future?

Such issues haunt the moral, political, and religious landscapes of some of the most complicated sites of contemporary life, including the former Yugoslavia, the Middle East, South Africa. Yet they also continue to haunt us in the United States of America. The United States has not yet come to terms with the difficult and traumatic, even horrifying, aspects of its histories—especially in relation to slavery and racism.

Americans are haunted by this issue in diverse ways, yet it often remains as a toxic waste lurking under the surface of other discussions. Rarely is the issue brought to explicit focus for discussion, debate, and—perhaps most importantly—constructive action in the future.

Duke’s campus has spent the latter half of the second semester explicitly trying to grapple with the question, thanks to the inadvertent prompting of *The Chronicle’s* decision to publish, without editorial comment, David Horowitz’s advertisement opposing reparations to African-Americans for slavery. Horowitz had intentionally set a “catch-22” for the more than fifty universities where he tried to place the ad: if they reject the ad, it is confirmation that “political correctness” reigns; if they accept the ad, then his views get airing without needing to pass the normal process of evaluating an op-ed’s quality.

Many members of the Duke community were justifiably outraged by both the content of the ad and *The Chronicle’s* actions in publishing it without any comment. Some of the debate has focused on journalistic ethics, issues of free speech, and the criteria that should or should not be used in accepting advertisements. Many have also questioned whether *The Chronicle* adequately seeks to represent all of the Duke community in its work.

But the debate has turned more determinatively to the content of Horowitz’s ad, and the issue for which “reparations” has become the

shorthand: has the United States come to terms with the effects of slavery and racism on us all? This way of phrasing the question already puts me at odds with Horowitz, for I assume that the issue is not about what “we” (i.e., white Americans) owe to “them” (i.e., black Americans). It also puts me at odds with extremists on the other side, who perpetuate a “we-they” dichotomy through a superficial demonizing of “white” America. Rather, I am convinced that the crucial issue is how all of us who live in the United States should come to terms with the legacies of slavery and continuing racism.

This is the crucial issue because it has been so persistently evaded by the dominant strands of American culture, a culture that systematically enslaved persons for three centuries and then followed that with state-enforced discrimination and oppression for yet another century. Americans have not yet grappled with the consequences of such state-sponsored oppression, not only on the direct black victims and their descendants, but on the broader moral, political, economic, and religious landscape. When a colleague from South Africa is asked to contrast race relations in South Africa and the United States, he says simply, “In South Africa, we have them. In the United States, you don’t. In South Africa, race relations are complicated, difficult, and involve struggle. But at least we recognize what needs to be dealt with.”

In the United States, proposals for reparations, and those that oppose them, often turn to financial considerations and their feasibility—including who should get what from whom. Those are important issues, but they too quickly restrict the scope of analysis.

I suggest that, drawing on the wisdom that can be found by including a theological analysis, we broaden the framework by initially changing the word from reparations to repentance. Both words focus on how to repair the damage, the brokenness, that has occurred in the past. How might people who have directly or indirectly benefited from slavery, and who continue to depend on the effects of racism, express repentance for the horrors of the past as well as the present?

After all, both Jewish and Christian traditions have long emphasized that any apology or regret over wrongdoing in the past—what those traditions call sin—must be accompanied by concrete deeds of repentance. These deeds are not a prerequisite to forgiveness, but they are requisite to showing that one understands the implications of forgiveness for the future. Any attempt to offer an apology and receive forgiveness that does not take into account the necessity of repentance

*Geographies of Memory: Theological Reflections
on Racial Reconciliation in South Africa and the United States*

is cheap and offensive. Repentance is crucial for discovering costly forgiveness that makes remembrance a moral virtue rather than a source for vengeance.

Of course it is crucial that the repentance not be predicated on a presumption of infinite guilt. Too often people are made to feel as if no repentance will be enough, that forgiveness will be deferred indefinitely. Even with this risk, however, we need to put at the center of our discussions how repentance might be expressed for a system of slavery that oppressed millions and that continues to find personal and institutional embodiments of racism.

How might repentance be expressed? How might reparations be conceived to begin to heal the wounds of the past? I suggest four layers of perspective that might indicate that repentance and reparations are a serious issue for all of us in America.

First, there needs to be a serious and truthful accounting for the past and the realities of the present. One of the most offensive features of Horowitz's advertisement is its use of half-truths, distortions, and deceptions designed to advance a pernicious ideological agenda. I do not presume that such a "truthful accounting" will be easy, or that there will ever be an agreed narrative of what happened to whom and when. But a willingness to search for the truthfulness of the past is critical to a more hopeful and just future.

Second, and closely related, there need to be publicly articulated means of remembering truthfully in hope. Why, for example, are there so many memorials throughout the United States remembering the sacrifices made in wars, the traumas of the Holocaust, but very few that bear witness to the horrors of slavery? What might a memorial in Washington, DC, look like that remembered the past of slavery and the realities of racism—not as a source for mobilizing vengeance, but as a way to offer hope for the future?

Third, we need a renewed commitment to eradicating racism in both its personal and institutional forms. Jewish and Christian traditions have long recognized that sin cannot be unlearned overnight—repentance is a gift given by God to cultivate holiness over time. So there need to be concrete actions that seek to make "race relations" in the United States a reality rather than a toxic waste lurking just below the surface.

Fourth, some form of financial compensation needs to be addressed as one means to show concrete repentance. Might such a clear, official statement by the United States government offer a clear recognition of the unique burdens of slavery and racism, and a way to move forward?

Each of these layers of perspective has been part of the work of South Africa's efforts to come to terms with its past, especially through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. South Africa's efforts have not been perfect by any means, but in their explicit willingness to engage moral and religious dimensions in their public debates, they offer a sign of hope—and a word of judgment on this country, which has done so much less in a century and a half than South Africa has in less than a decade.

During the spring semester, Duke's observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday has focused on a semester-long examination of "remembrance, reconciliation, and restitution" in South Africa in order to try to shed light on issues of race in the United States. I hope that the debates and protests prompted by *The Chronicle's* publication of the Horowitz ad will heighten the enthusiasm for our examination of the South African experiment to begin more faithfully and truthfully to come to terms with the difficult and traumatic, even horrifying, histories of slavery and racism in the United States. Perhaps they will help us take specific steps toward a more faithful, truthful, and life-giving future.

The article generated interesting responses. On campus, many African American faculty, staff, and students expressed appreciation for a thoughtful engagement that moved the discussion of reparations to a deeper level. The president and the provost complimented the divinity school for its vigorous and thoughtful leadership.

In addition, Dean Jones received mail from across the spectrum. An African American undergraduate alumna of Duke from the 1970s wrote that it was the first time that she had felt like her identity as an African American woman and a Christian had been honored faithfully. Yet a 1930s undergraduate alumna wrote a blistering letter accusing Dean Jones of reverse racism and having sold out Duke University.

As often happens, the summer months brought both a respite to the frenzy and a turn to other topics and tasks. The same energy has not been present to grapple with issues of racial reconciliation intellectually during the 2001-02 academic year. Yet there has been a noticeable increase in the appreciation of the public character of theological education as a result of our efforts. In addition, there have emerged several conversations within the divinity school about the significance of the South African witness, prompted in part by students who did field education placements in South Africa during the summer of 2001.

*Geographies of Memory: Theological Reflections
on Racial Reconciliation in South Africa and the United States*

Most particularly, during the summer several African American leaders requested that the university permanently lodge leadership for the Martin Luther King, Jr. celebrations in the divinity school. Though the president (wisely, in our judgment) demurred, contending that the celebration needs to be understood substantively and symbolically as an effort of the entire university, it nonetheless was the case that she asked the divinity school to continue to provide leadership for the planning of the celebration.

Dean Jennings chaired this year's celebration. In part because of the vitality of the conversations from last spring, as well as their controversy, the committee decided to grapple with the theme "The Ties That Bind." This theme focused on the relations between Duke and Durham on issues of race, and what issues of remembrance, reconciliation, and reparations there are in dealing with the complicated legacies of the Duke-Durham relationship. After all, the ties that bind do so in a twofold way—drawing people together into a fabric, but also in a sense of constriction or constraint.

This year's events continued to build on the significant discussions from the spring of 2001. In addition, Dean Jones will lead a divinity school sponsored "Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope" to South Africa in August 2002 to help provide a deeper perspective for students, faculty and staff, and friends of the divinity school. The planning for the pilgrimage began in, and grew out of, the conversations of the spring of 2001.

We hope that, as a result of the seminar, the speakers, and the discussions, the Duke community has developed deeper and more faithful ways of grappling with the complicated issues of race and reconciliation—and the geographies of memory that shape our personal and collective lives. And, even more, we hope—and believe—that our efforts have significantly enhanced the divinity school's own understanding, and the wider university's and community's perceptions, of the public character of theological education.

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The Seminary Chapel Building as Spiritual Formation

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ABSTRACT: The seminary chapel building plays an important role in the spiritual formation and education for ministry of seminary students. Not only does it help form an image of our relation to God but it also shapes our concepts of the nature of the worshipping community. The chapel can reinforce images that we would disown if stated in words, but the building's silent witness is often more powerful than we admit.

Two important seminary chapel buildings have undergone major renovations in the past couple of years. Both indicate a new seriousness about liturgical space in the formation of seminarians. It is also noteworthy that financial cost seems not to have been a concern in either case. The schools involved, Perkins School of Theology and Princeton Theological Seminary, did not stint themselves in providing the optimum space for seminary worship services.

In both cases, the existing spaces reflected the prevailing liturgical arrangement of the mid-twentieth century. Both were testimonies to the influence of Elbert M. Conover (1885-1952), director of the Interdenominational Bureau of Architecture, and author of such widely read books as *Building the House of God* (1928), *The Church Building Guide* (1946), and *The Church Builder* (1948). It would be no exaggeration to say that Conover was the most influential figure in church design in the mainline churches of the twentieth century. His credo was the so-called divided chancel with an altar-table at the remote end, choir stalls facing each other, and a pulpit and lectern at the nave end. He preferred gothic but tolerated Georgian. Princeton Chapel was remodeled with a divided chancel at mid-century; Perkins Chapel was built with a similar arrangement in the 1950s.

Now much has changed at the beginning of the twenty-first century. At Perkins, the chancel has been swept clean of furnishings except for the organ console and movable chairs. Out in the nave now are pulpit, altar-table, and font in a straight line across the front, all encircled by a communion rail. This is a clear move into a new ecumenical era with emphasis on word and sacrament. It is significant that there is no longer a lectern, the hardest of Conover's legacy to shed. Having two liturgical centers for the word makes neither as significant as the single testimony of one center. Lessons are read where they are preached; prayers are offered at the altar-table. The font is of

The Seminary Chapel Building as Spiritual Formation

sufficient size (octagonal) for immersion of a baby and is a visible reminder of the baptismal covenant that joins the worshipers. This is clearly a place where both word and sacrament are the core of Christian worship.

At Princeton, the divided chancel has given way to a central pulpit with a large altar-table directly in front of it. The emphasis is on recovery of the Reformed tradition. No baptismal font is present. Those who advocated it lost to those who deemed that only in a parish church should a font be provided. This ignores the silent proclamation of the font in which, as Cranmer expressed it, everyone “present may be put in remembrance of hys owne profession made to God in hys Baptisme.” Calvin also decreed that in the churches of Geneva “the stone or baptismal font is to be near the pulpit” (*Draft Ecclesiastical Ordinances*, 1541). A magnificent font appears in the newly remodeled Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church. Even though a seminary may not be a baptizing community, it is a community of the baptized who need to “be put in remembrance” that they are in the covenant. The pulpit and altar-table, both on the axis of the building, make a strong statement of the unity of word preached and celebrated. The altar-table is of sufficient size that benches could be placed around it for communicants as was done in Presbyterian churches until about 1825. Vestiges of this remain in Presbyterian churches in Mosquitoville, Vermont, and Shrewsbury, New Jersey.

Thus we have two examples of moving beyond twentieth-century liturgical spaces. One, at Perkins, moves away from where Methodists have been to a new ecumenical paradigm. The other, at Princeton, recovers a tradition that had been obscured by twentieth-century romanticism. Both show that seminary communities are at last facing up to the significant role that worship spaces plays in the lives of their respective communities.

In accord with these two examples, the choices before most seminaries today seem to be basically “do we go with an emerging ecumenical consensus?” or “do we try to be faithful to our tradition’s architectural legacy?” For schools that are clearly ecumenical in their orientation, it would seem natural that the liturgical arrangement of the building should reflect such emerging ecumenical priorities as equal emphasis on word and sacrament, the lectionary, the liturgical year, and scriptural preaching. On the other hand, in institutions with strong denominational ties, it makes sense to reflect their liturgical tradition’s architectural experience. This involves historical study such as my *Protestant Worship and Church Architecture* (1964) as well as the more recent *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition* (1989). This is not an argument for past architectural styles but for the liturgical arrangements of centers and spaces developed within a particular tradition. Thus, I would expect a Quaker school, such as Earlham School of Religion, to respect that tradition’s legacy of arranging congregational space or a Baptist seminary to have a significant baptismal pool.

I

Bishop J.A.T. Robinson once said while speaking of church architecture: “the building will always win.” That is a very strong statement but a profoundly accurate one. It is particularly relevant when dealing with seminary chapel buildings and the reason why they must be taken so seriously as a major player in the spiritual formation of seminarians. Indeed, I am quite willing to say that during a student’s years in seminary *the seminary chapel building will probably teach more about spirituality than any single faculty member.*

The problem, all too often, is that the building teaches the wrong thing. We might get rid of a faculty member who was contravening the purpose of the seminary; usually we tolerate the building even though it may be teaching all the wrong things. But ought not worship spaces receive as much time and concern as tenure committees place on faculty evaluations?

Much of the power of the chapel building lies in the fact that students are exposed to it on a regular, if not daily, basis. It becomes the most familiar worship space for them. For students converted while in college or later, it is often the only familiar worship space. What is normal has a way of becoming normative in Christian worship. A good example of this is the propensity of seminary graduates to build the same type of building they knew in seminary when they become pastors. Usually the size is increased but all the problems inherent in a particular building are simply passed on to other congregations. Thus we have a disheartening example of liturgical traditioning. The building that formed the seminarians’ imaginations gets transmitted to their flocks when they become pastors.

Of course, chapel buildings can teach good things; my concern is that frequently they do not. And one might say that these buildings are usually no worse and frequently better than the buildings that graduates will go forth to minister in. But this is faint comfort. Our real concern is a positive one: that the chapel building will be a strong force for equipping for one’s ministry in the most competent way possible. I shall try to be positive but we need to confront the down side in order to understand the problems engendered by many seminary chapels.

II

The first problem is that such buildings give the wrong message about the nature of the God whom we worship. Many of the older buildings and some of the newer ones promote a strong sense of a God who is utterly remote and transcendent. The image they give is of a God who dwells somewhere out beyond the east window. There is a strong directional emphasis in the buildings and it is not directed to the community or even to the world beyond but somewhere up in the wild blue yonder. Thus the buildings suggest degrees of sacredness that increase the farther one gets from the community as a whole.

The Seminary Chapel Building as Spiritual Formation

The two cathedrals in Burlington, Vermont, both experienced fires in the 1970s. Both congregations built new cathedrals a few blocks apart but many ages separate in theology. The Episcopal cathedral is explicitly a two-volume structure with substantial dark space for God and clergy and another distinct volume for congregation and choir. The Roman Catholic cathedral, on the other hand, wraps congregational space around the altar-table so no one is more than eight rows removed from the liturgical action. Clearly God is in the midst of the community, not dissociated from it. A distinguished contemporary architect, Edward Sövik, likes to place the processional cross in the midst of congregational space. God, after all, is found in community, not on the east wall or isolated in a chancel.

Another problem is that so many seminary chapel buildings are overtly and explicitly hierarchical. Now I do not regard hierarchy as necessarily synonymous with evil, although when coupled with patriarchy that connection is hard to escape. Many buildings make distinctions between clergy and laity that are larger than life and certainly an exaggeration of what the liturgy requires. Protestants are certainly subject to this and we still wince at the recollection of the three pulpit chairs—minister, visiting preacher, and song leader—that dominated so many churches for so long. The Roman Catholic equivalent of that is when the presider's chair becomes a throne. Clergy seating raises all kinds of theological issues about the nature of the Christian community. The more the presider sits, the more he or she is delegating leadership roles to others: readers, singers, preachers, etc.

So the location and design of clergy seating are important concerns about the nature of the community. This also applies to the pulpit. J.A.T. Robinson once spoke about preaching “six feet above contradiction.” Is the authority of the word dependent upon being high and lifted up or does the word come to dwell among us?

A sufficient amount of elevation is necessary to make the leaders of worship visible to all present, but excessive height is a sign of power and prestige that in some cases makes a clerical caste out of worship leaders. This demands careful calculation of sight lines in order to avoid discrimination against short members of the community. Excessive height up front demands a tilt of the head from all present. It is a contradiction of a servant ministry and basically is a “built ecclesiology,” which we would hesitate to teach in the classroom but often flaunt heedlessly in the chapel. In Roman Catholic terms, the built environment all too often reflects the extreme clericalism of *Mediator Dei* (1947) rather than Vatican II's *Lumen Gentium*.

So seminary chapel buildings raise some fundamental theological questions about the nature of God and the Church. And buildings must be observed, analyzed, and reformed when necessary. Unfortunately, we are all too often untrained to observe what buildings do to us. We can worry about “full, conscious, and active participation,” but when do we worry also about partial,

unconscious, and passive participation? Yet these forms of participation may be equally important in the theological effect of chapel buildings.

III

There is also a problem that seminary chapel buildings can educate or miseducate so much about the meaning and practice of Christian worship. All too often in older buildings, and in some newer ones, the paradigm of the structure is that of a passive audience that watches and hears others do worship for them. I once taught with an architect who was frustrated by not getting much response from students in an auditorium. So he put them on the stage and all kinds of responses ensued spontaneously.

The image of a passive congregation is accentuated in longitudinal buildings in which the people are arranged on a horizontal axis receding from the pulpit and altar-table. Most of the experiments of the Reformation period were central buildings with a vertical axis. And many churches today have returned to variations on this theme. One of the most popular today is various forms of a fan-shaped floor plan. Others include squares, octagons, and Greek crosses. In each case, the effort is to make the community see itself at the center as participants, not as observers. Worship is largely a do-it-yourself affair, not delegated to others.

Decisions need to be made about the various liturgical spaces: gathering, congregational, movement, altar-table, baptismal, and choir. The ways that these are organized in relation to one another raise all kinds of liturgical issues. How can one locate a choir without deciding what is its function: singing *to* the congregation, singing *for* the congregation, or singing *with* the congregation?

The same care must be used in designing and locating the liturgical centers: altar-table, pulpit, font, and presider's chair. As already indicated, it is a good liturgical exercise to discuss whether a seminary chapel should have a font. In a celibate community, this might seem strange, but celibates also need to be put in mind of their baptism. And then there are serious liturgical questions about where the font should be located. Just about every possibility has been explored in newer Catholic churches. Further questions arise as to the design of the font for the most preferable mode of baptism. These are only sample questions but ones that should not be avoided, although they frequently are.

Questions of acoustics are also essential. Usually floors are carpeted with impunity, no one realizing how this will change the whole acoustical environment. On the other hand, there are church spaces too reverberant to make preaching audible. If it sounds to people that they are singing solo, they soon stop. Singing reinforced by the voices of others encourages less inhibited participation. The demands for good hearing of the Word include suitable eye contact as well as full audibility. How sound behaves is an important part of the environment of worship.

The Seminary Chapel Building as Spiritual Formation

A further problem with regard to worship is that most seminary chapels are highly inflexible with the consequence that students are exposed to only one possibility, however good that may be. This means that usually they have only one option whereas we might wish to expose them to several perhaps equally good arrangements. One solution, of course, is to get them out of the seminary chapel and into as wide a variety of parish churches as possible. This takes considerable systematic planning and probably is easier to do in a metropolitan area where there are abundant choices. We could say a student who knows only one type of liturgical architecture knows none. By comparing a variety of buildings with different types of baptisteries or different arrangements of congregational space, students can analyze the relative values of each.

The usual seminary chapel, unless very flexible, gives few alternative options. Ways must be found to broaden students' experience of liturgical space either by trying alternative liturgical arrangements, if flexibility is possible, or by off-campus visits.

Ironically, there are some advantages to poor liturgical space. It is rather like the student who fumbles in homiletics class and gives clear examples of what not to do. This may teach more than the student who preaches moderately well. Students can quickly grasp what went wrong in a poorly planned or delivered sermon.

One advantage of poor liturgical space is that it sometimes can be used to teach the possibilities of fighting back. Because students are not likely to find better-designed churches in the real world to which they graduate, this introduces a level of reality. The difficulty, of course, is that usually it takes a trained imagination to see how to handle a difficult building. In retrospect, I am grateful for the rigidity of some chapels I have worked in. They forced us to use our imagination and to consult people with training. I must admit that I was often less than grateful at times. But we made movable altar-tables, pulpits, and fonts and found how things change in relationship to each other. Once we hired theater professionals to install a scrim and rid us of the chancel altogether. As a temporary expedient, it was marvelous what a screen made of three doors could do.

Our best teaching experience was to hire an architect and lock students in a chapel for eight hours on a Saturday. By covering the windows with opaque plastics, we could control light. Building towers of scaffolding gave us a vertical dimension never experienced before. Bolts of cloth gave us a new spectrum of color. The chief lesson the students learned was how important a trained imagination is in reshaping space.

Usually, bad liturgical space creates nothing but frustration, but it can be used to show that the building need not always win. At least bad space can help students become aware of the problems inherent in such surroundings. It is frustrating to see so little being done in many seminaries to remedy bad liturgical space. It is all the more discouraging to realize that in many instances

remedies often would cost little more than the effort of moving or removing some furniture, improving the lighting, and working on good acoustics. At least we can rise to the challenge.

IV

A somewhat more subtle problem comes in teaching seminary students discrimination with regard to architecture and art. Basically it is the issue of teaching them to *see*. The old attitude of "I know what I like and I like what I know" is not sufficient for those who are going to be providing leadership for Christian communities. Many of them will eventually be responsible for church building programs. They need grounding, which is more than simply a subjective matter of personal taste. And the best way to teach these things is by living and worshiping in quality buildings.

In 1980, I had a grant from The Association of Theological Schools, which enabled me to do a study on the teaching of worship in North American seminaries. During that year, I visited forty-seven seminaries, always starting first with the chapel. There are some seminary chapel buildings of considerable excellence, which should be better known. I am assuming that it is no longer financially possible or even desirable to try to replicate Sainte Chapelle. Historic buildings aside, there are some good examples of contemporary architecture that are strengthening the spiritual formation of those students fortunate enough to be in their presence. I shall give a few examples as to why I think they make contributions. Several are by architects of national reputation although this is by no means a guarantee of success. Edward Stone attempted a modern version of King's Chapel at one seminary, but I do not regard that as a desirable ambition nor helpful result. Any formalistic approach is already highly jeopardized and the results dubious.

More recent examples include Bishop Cannon Chapel at Candler School of Theology of Emory University in Atlanta. Designed by architect Paul Rudolph, it is a highly sophisticated building yet with rough, even primitive-appearing surfaces of raw concrete. Obviously no students are going to duplicate this building in their future parishes. But it can teach them some things. Designed in consultation with the worship faculty, it provides a high degree of flexibility that enables a variety of liturgical arrangements. It also functions well with a variety of different sizes of gatherings so that as the congregation grows, more areas are utilized.

Similar consultation apparently did not take place in the building for the Hartford Seminary in Connecticut. There is a worship space but it seems to have been designed without any concern for the location of an altar-table or how it would relate to congregational space. The total building is another masterpiece of architect Richard Meier, best known for his art museums. But there seems little for students to learn from the worship space except what not to do.

The Seminary Chapel Building as Spiritual Formation

A much more successful collaboration of a prestigious architect and seminary worship faculty is in the chapel at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. The work of architect Edward Larrabee Barnes, the chapel is the culmination of an entire campus designed by the same architect. In this instance, a deliberate effort was to make the baptistery an important part of the building even when not in use. It is certainly one of the most interesting pools for immersion anywhere and reflects careful discussion of the form and location of this liturgical center. The location and design of altar-table, pulpit, and cross are carefully studied.

A similar careful consultation resulted in the chapel at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio. In this case, Frank Kacmarcik, who is probably the most influential form-maker for Catholic churches, was the liturgical designer. The result is familiar to those who know the first edition of *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship* (1978). As might be expected, there is a prominent baptismal font, which would have satisfied Luther's preference for immersion. The relation of pulpit and altar-table again are standard Kacmarcik arrangements and designs, substantiated by considerable use.

Other seminaries may be more or less lucky. Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne boasts an entire campus designed by Eero Saarinen. The chapel is an integral part of the whole scheme, all designed to look like a northern European village. The chapel interior is not particularly exciting but represents conventional arrangements of the early 1960s. Students at Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas, rejoice in a fresh open space that allows for considerable experimentation. And seminary students at St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota, surely must be familiar with the Abbey Church, Marcel Breuer's masterpiece. But obviously this is an abbey church, not a parish.

Remodeling has gone on in recent years in many seminary chapels. The chapel at Drew University Theological School was made more flexible by replacing pews with movable seating. A new cube-shaped altar-table was placed in the midst of congregational space and a pulpit of the same period as the building was rescued from an older church. The result has been to unite both congregation and liturgical action under a suspended cross in a way that the remote altar-table and pulpit of the past failed to do.

In such cases, the chief learning experience is not in the original building but in its remodeling. This has advantages in teaching students the difference between remodeling and remuddling. Two recent examples by the well-known architect Edward Sövik will suffice. Sövik is very theologically literate and probably the leading form-maker in Protestant church architecture. The chapel at Methodist Theological School in Ohio was a conventional Georgian auditorium built in 1960 with stage and sloping floor. Sövik leveled the floor, gave the building a non-directional orientation, and enhanced the lighting. It is in line with his concept of "non-church" worship spaces and philosophy of

building the best space available as *centrum*. It has full flexibility and can be used to teach students a variety of possible arrangements. The Kacmarcik buildings, on the other hand, are predicated on “getting it right” initially and making everything immovable. The Sövik buildings reflect a quite different approach, with the understanding that the nature of services and congregations will change.

Sövik has more recently redone another United Methodist seminary chapel at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. In this case, it was a relatively high-quality Gothic revival building. His effort was to free it up, to make it less clerical, and to open the community’s imagination to desirable arrangements.

In some cases, more draconian measures have seemed necessary. The old seminary buildings of Immaculate Conception Seminary when it was at Mahwah, New Jersey, included a conventional chapel of moderate-quality Gothic revival. Here the building was completely reoriented with the altar-table placed in the middle of one long side. The shock was drastic and the new liturgical focus always seemed a bit provisional with the vacated chancel so prominent. But the significance of what was being attempted could hardly have escaped even the most dim-witted seminarian. So the value in terms of spiritual formation may have been extremely high.

Other buildings may call for such heroic efforts but the cost of remedies is usually considered too high. Unfortunately, no one calculates the cost of teaching students wrong. Chapel renovation may be a bargain.

The examples cited show an effort to have students experience excellent sacred space. We can only hope that exposure to quality music will have the same effect. One would hope that students can also be exposed to good liturgical art in the context of the seminary chapel. If they do not see good liturgical art while in seminary, where are they going to see it? Again, our problem is in teaching them how to see. If we leave them to what they know in their homes, we might have more paintings on black velvet. Our job is to stretch their minds beyond their elastic limit so they never snap back into conventionality. Good liturgical art grows out of tradition, reflects the life of community, and has genuine religious power to probe beneath the obvious.

This means seminary chapel committees should have a budget, even a modest budget, to commission professional artists to produce textiles, paintings, sculptures, etc. to proclaim the gospel and to say that this is no ordinary place. Maybe if our students took their shoes off at the door, they would grasp the meaning of sacred space. But some good liturgical art can help them sense the transcendent and will be remembered long after any sermon they have heard.

It will be an important learning experience for all seminary students to have contact with living artists. Maybe it should be a requirement for preparation for future ministry. Seminary education is so verbal that any contact with a non-verbal art form is greatly to be desired as remedial education.

The Seminary Chapel Building as Spiritual Formation

In every case, the seminary chapel building's role in theological education must at least be acknowledged even when it is most inadequate. And then maybe something can be done so that the building does not win by fighting the community's values but by reinforcing them.

After all, seminaries are training students for future ministries, not for past ones. At least we can avoid the mistakes of the past and give some hopeful indications of future ministry. John Ruskin's phrase, often quoted by building communities, "when we build, let us think that we build forever," ought to have been retired long ago. No one today would think of building Ruskinian neo-gothic. But we can in our seminary chapel buildings give the best possible guidance for ministries of the future on the basis of present knowledge.

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Technology and Educational Practices

Louis Charles Willard

The Association of Theological Schools

ABSTRACT: Immutability is no longer a characteristic of libraries. We may be at a tipping point, and linearity does not provide clear clues. Distances are increasing between users and resources, between learner and educator. As institutions seek to manage this organizational sea change, the appropriate responsibility of the ATS is analysis and seeking consensus on practices that facilitate good theological education.

Clickity, click, clickity, click. . . . The drum turned slowly and, so it seemed, interminably. Steve McQueen and Robert Vaughn stared at the drum, rather than at each other, as they waited for the telecopier to deliver a poorly but sufficiently rendered copy of the passport application picture of Johnny Ross, the surprise witness Walter Chalmers had turned over for protection to Detective Lieutenant Frank Bullit, played by Steve McQueen. "You sent me the wrong man," McQueen tersely observed when he saw the image. This 1960s telecopier was notable for its slowness and for its lack of clarity. It was also notable for its rarity. The early fax machine did not establish a foothold in the market, and it was to be a few more years before, "What's your fax number?" replaced the less confident, "Do you have a fax machine?"

Presidents and deans regularly complain these days about the difficulty of raising money for libraries. It is not that other types of fund-raising are easy. Until very recently, however, libraries, and librarians, enjoyed the reputation of requiring no defense and little explanation. The present problem, actually, is not too surprising. For many generations, indeed centuries, libraries have been pretty much the same. A donor could give money for the development of a library, either for construction or for collections, reasonably confident *what* would be there and *how* it would be used fifty years later. In fact, there were no questions in these areas. The pre-1996 ATS standard on the library was just that, Library. In the 1996 standards, the successor standard is Library and Information Resources. It is reasonable to anticipate that the next revision of the standards might take up the issues in this area under the rubric, Information Resources. The sense of immutability, permanence, and unchangeability is no longer a characteristic of libraries. In the light of this uncertainty, it is not at all surprising that presidents and deans are finding it difficult to persuade potential donors of the merit of contributing substantial sums to an enterprise whose future is, while exciting, also uncertain. Something has happened.

For some years now, the library and those who care for the library—in both senses of that phrase—have been moving through an important transition, one

of those rare watersheds in organizational life in which change occurs that results in a permanent difference. Hitherto, the library and librarians have enjoyed the benevolent albeit uneasy ignorance of most of the educational administrators. For many generations, they have maintained something of a balance between accountability and support—don't ask too many questions, and we won't ask for too much support. That balance is changing, and before the shift is over, we will see that the change has been dramatic.

Frederick Kilgore, the founder of OCLC, spent a substantial amount of grant and other soft money in his journey toward the development of an effective online bibliographic system before succeeding in creating what was then known as the Ohio College Library Center, later broadened and simplified to the acronym, OCLC. At the time, what he achieved seemed likely to be feasible for only a handful of very large university research libraries, outside its state-subsidized system. The next phase brought OCLC into many smaller research libraries, although it seemed at the time that a single terminal was all that any library would need or could afford. Today, thousands, maybe tens of thousands of libraries, are using OCLC or a similar, shared bibliographic system, with several terminals in each facility. Something happened.

In one of the last scenes of *Dirty Dancing*, Max Kellerman, owner of the resort hotel commented to his band leader, Tito Suarez, about the cultural and sociological changes he was sensing as the summer was coming to an end, "It is all so different. It all seems to be slipping away."

What does this have to do with technology and educational practices? In 1996 the *New Yorker* printed an article by Malcolm Gladwell, "The Tipping Point." He elaborated it a few years later with the publication of *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. Tipping is Gladwell's shorthand way of naming a sudden, unanticipated shift in an organizational or sociological phenomenon. He takes this term from epidemiology. "In the language of epidemiologists, . . . the 'tipping point' . . . [is] the point at which an ordinary and stable phenomenon . . . can turn into a public-health crisis."¹ The problem that laypeople have with coming to terms with tipping points is that most think that everything in the world operates according to the physical law, "For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction." Gladwell comments, "This is what scientists call a linear assumption—the expectation that every extra increment of effort will produce a corresponding improvement in result. . . . This is the fundamental lesson of non-linearity. When it comes to fighting epidemics, small changes . . . can have huge effects. And large changes . . . can have small effects. It all depends upon when and how the changes are made."²

At this point in time, the number of member schools in the ATS engaged in distance education is in the minority. There are those who are confident that it will stay that way, in a state of equilibrium. The conference on distance education that the ATS offered in spring 2001 attracted participants from

perhaps as many as a hundred member schools. This phenomenon has to be saying something even if we are not clear at the moment what that “something” is. For some among the number who are hopeful of the current equilibrium, the issue is a reluctance to engage change. For others, the issue is a conviction that distance education cannot deliver the required formational aspects of the existing degree programs, either not so well as a residential community or not at all. These naysayers are probably happy with the negative connotations of describing the process of tipping by likening it to an epidemic. It is, in fact, neutral, describing a natural, possible process. If Gladwell be correct, we may be close to a tipping point in this social phenomenon. Although we are unable to predict that a particular social or educational phenomenon is approaching a tipping point, we can recognize when it has happened. We can also know that it can happen. On the other hand, the case study method did not become the pervasive form of delivering theological education, so it is not as though every trend leads to a tipping point.

We do need to understand that it is possible that we are on the verge of a tipping point, and, if Gladwell be correct, linearity does not provide clear clues that we are there. We may have the sense that we are being carried along like a twig afloat in a river. We have relatively little control over the speed or direction of the flow. We probably cannot control whether the current continues to carry us down the river or whether we end up in an eddy. We hear a roar ahead that is familiar but not clearly distinguished. Is it a series of rapids or is it a waterfall? We do have a responsibility for determining whether we are prepared and that if what is ahead is a waterfall, we have a strategy for avoiding disaster.

In architecture, Frank Lloyd Wright argued that form should follow function. This principle characterizes good bibliographic structures and operations as well, though in the first instances, the form follows its predecessor rather than its function. Gutenberg and other early printers made their original books so that they looked like the manuscripts they rapidly supplanted. The designers of the earliest computer displays created their work as an emulation of the paper texts that they were replacing, employing Courier 10 as the standard font. Electronic readers invite the illusion of turning pages. The first online public access catalogs were no more than electronic versions of the card catalog, replicating the appearance and format of the cards they were replacing. The initial function of OCLC was as a shared cataloging and card production system. It was a back-room operation and its earliest applications ignored, with messy consequences, the much more significant use of bibliographic databases to support independent, unmediated research in an online environment.

One way of thinking about these changes is to note that the result is, slowly but relentlessly, to disconnect and to separate the user from the physical space of the library. With Internet-accessible catalogs, it is no longer necessary for the

user, even a high-level user with complex needs, to come to where the library is, to the physical place, to find out what to consult. Full-text databases further distance the user from the physical space so that it is no longer necessary for the user, even a high-level user with complex needs, to come to the library to get access to texts. In the increasingly unlikely circumstance that the required text does not exist in a digitized format, the external user can use e-mail or the telephone to borrow or to get a copy of the original text, the latter itself often in a digitized format.

What is a book? The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a book as follows:

A written or printed treatise or series of treatises, occupying several sheets of paper or other substance fastened together so as to compose a material whole. In this wide sense, referring to all ages and countries, a book comprehends a treatise written on any material (skin, parchment, papyrus, paper, cotton, silk, palm leaves, bark, tablets of wood, ivory, slate, metal, etc.), put together in any portable form, e.g., that of a long roll, or of separate leaves, hinged, strung, stitched, or pasted together.³

Is a floppy disk containing the text of Milton's *Paradise Lost* a book? Floppy disks did not, of course, exist when this definition was written, but a close, albeit somewhat strained, reading could make a floppy disk fit.

Technology, therefore, is a passive accomplice in the process of distancing educators and students. In addition to there becoming a distance between users and resources, which technology is both supporting and expanding—hence the charge of complicity, another distance is occurring: the distance between the learner and the educator. Mark Hopkins's bench is getting longer and longer. This distance is in part psychological, prompted by the introduction of the LCD projector and PowerPoint. These technological tools, in addition to whatever improvement to the educational process they may introduce, actually distance the educator and the student from each other in a way that significantly expands upon the distancing consequences of earlier "technological advances," e.g., the flip chart, film strip, slide and 16 mm movie projectors.

Form follows function: Technology merits a place in the theological educational process not because it is there but because it supports the purposes of theological education. This would be the application in theological education of Frank Lloyd Wright's principle, form follows function. The next question is, How will this help the accrediting process? The first thing to recognize is that accreditation is essentially always in a catch-up mode instead of a leadership role. There are, to be sure, programmatic functions of The Association of Theological Schools that do lead, but the work of accreditation, insofar as standards are concerned, will never be in the forefront. The work of development of the standards will normally be a matter of determining whether and how new developments conform to existing formulations of standard practice.

In rare instances, of which the redevelopment of the standards in 1996 is an illustration, the standards may be recast, though that process too is a matter of alignment with those current practices about which a consensus has been reached, rather than a position on future developments.

Another way to pose the question is to ask, What it is about which a library fundamentally is? If the response is “Books,” then librarians are going to be increasingly marginalized, in the same way that railroad companies became marginalized when they focused on trains rather than transportation. Libraries are fundamentally about mediating between inquirers—whether they be labeled patrons, clients, professors, or students—and information—whether it be in the form of books or artifacts or manuscripts or digital resources. To the extent librarians ignore or abandon this mediation function to the technicians, they are doomed to become custodians of quaint, museum-like artifacts.

Sir Richard Southern, then president of St. John’s College in Oxford, spoke at the opening of the new monastic library at Mount Angel Seminary in 1970. Although Sir Richard’s remarks focused on the libraries created as far back as the sixth century, they are salutary for our contemporary reflection. “What can they teach us,” he asked, “and how can their experience be applied to our own condition?”⁴ He concluded with five principles, which have a startling contemporaneity:

It is evident that one must not expect too much too quickly.... When this has been said, [these ancient, exemplary libraries] give no encouragement to lingering over our task. . . . A library is nothing unless it is the center of learned activity. . . . It must be realized that many of the tasks that a library inspires and makes possible are humble and laborious, though they require skills and talents that are more uncommon than people suppose. . . . Whatever their contribution to the world, they had an immediate and inescapable function of providing the necessary books and studies for the ordinary routine of religious life.⁵

The dramatic, pervasive, rapid, and unavoidable impact of technology in libraries presaged a similar impact upon theological education generally. The Association acknowledged this development and its implications by including in its current work plan an area on technology and educational practices. It notes, “ATS schools need to make the transitions necessary to accommodate and maximize the use of information technology to enhance educational practices and institutional administration.” It is far too early to predict where these developments will lead theological education. As institutions take steps to manage, to embrace, and in some instances, to resist, this structural, organizational, and social tidal wave of change, the role of ATS is likely best played out through its capacity to analyze, to bring together, and to seek consensus on

Technology and Educational Practices

standards and practices that are most likely to nourish and facilitate good theological education.

To this end, what ATS is most able to do is to undertake a role of providing an ongoing forum for the collection, review, and analysis of the many and varied ways that its member institutions are experimenting with and implementing different examples and modes of educational technology. To be sure, this comprehensive process will also include failures, from which others may learn.

Louis Charles Willard is director of accreditation and institutional evaluation of ATS. Prior to joining the ATS staff in 1999, he was librarian of the Andover-Harvard Theological Library and a member of the faculty of Harvard University Divinity School.

ENDNOTES

1. Malcolm Gladwell, "The Tipping Point," *The New Yorker*, 72 (1996): 34. cf.
2. *Ibid.*, 35.
3. *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 248.
4. Richard Southern, "A Benedictine Library in a Disordered World," *Downside Review* 94 (1976): 174.
5. *Ibid.*, 174-6.

Theological Education Submission Guidelines

The Association of Theological Schools is a membership organization of schools in the United States and Canada that conduct post-baccalaureate professional and academic degree programs to educate persons for the practice of ministry and advanced study of the theological disciplines. The Association's mission is to promote the improvement and enhancement of theological schools to the benefit of communities of faith and the broader public.

Theological Education, the journal of The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, is devoted to the distinctive concerns of graduate theological education in North America. The journal supports the mission of the Association by providing those concerned with theological education—including administrators, faculty, and independent researchers—with scholarly discourse and reports on issues and trends, research findings and resources, and models of critical analysis and effective practices in graduate theological education.

Unsolicited submissions are reviewed by members of the journal's Editorial Board, who then make recommendations regarding their publication. The Editorial Board will not consider articles that are being submitted simultaneously to other publications.

Article Formatting Requirements

1. Articles should be approximately 6,000-8,000 words in length.
2. Follow *Chicago Manual of Style*, using endnotes.
3. Convert footnotes to endnotes, if necessary, using author's given name and then the surname with no intervening comma.
4. The *American Heritage Dictionary* is the reference for preferred spellings.
5. Provide a paragraph abstract at the beginning of the article in approximately 80 words.
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).
7. Articles should be e-mailed to the managing editor <merrill@ats.edu> followed by a hard copy sent by conventional mail to: Nancy Merrill, Managing Editor, *Theological Education*, The Association of Theological Schools, 10 Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15275-1103.

