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The Integration of Christian Theological Traditions into the Classroom: A Survey of CCCU Faculty

By Nathan F. Alleman, Perry L. Glanzer, and David S. Guthrie

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"[A] funny thing happened on the way to the Christian university," claim David I. Smith and James K. A. Smith, "the central task of *teaching* almost completely dropped off the scholarly radar."¹ We wish to note that the Smiths do not mean that teaching has dropped off the radar, since most Christian colleges and universities are primarily teaching institutions. The problem, they point out, is the paucity of scholarship related to the practice of teaching and the faith-learning conversation. This article attempts to provide an empirical basis for that conversation. In particular, we analyze the results of a survey that sought to discover how professors working at member institutions of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) claim that their respective theological traditions influence one particular aspect of their teaching.

We discovered that professors take eight different approaches. Each one of the approaches, we suggest, has important strengths but each one also has possible weaknesses, especially if used in isolation. In light of this conclusion, we contend that this typology can provide a helpful guide for professors. They can determine the degree to which they are only relying upon one strand of a cord that requires multiple strands to maximize its strength. Indeed, our hope is that this article can help professors appreciate and develop multiple approaches to creating classroom experiences infused with a vibrant Christian faith.

Recently, the distinctive role that Christianity plays in shaping teaching has become an important focus of conversation in Christian higher education. To help provide an empirical understanding of current practices, **Nathan F. Alleman**, **Perry L. Glanzer**, and **David S. Guthrie** drew upon a survey of 2,309 faculty at 48 institutions in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. Overall, they found that Christian professors integrate their particular theological tradition into their course objectives in eight different ways. In this article, they describe these eight approaches and suggest that weaving these various approaches together, and not practicing them in isolation, will create a robust and sophisticated approach to Christian teaching. Nathan F. Alleman is Assistant Professor of Higher Education and Student Affairs at Baylor University, Perry L. Glanzer is Professor of Educational Foundations at Baylor University, and David S. Guthrie is Associate Professor of Higher Education at The Pennsylvania State University.

Our interest in this topic stems from a recent scholarly conversation about the integration of faith and learning in Christian higher education to which the Smiths' quote refers. According to one controversial telling of this story by Doug and Rhonda Jacobsen in *Scholarship and Christian Faith*, the faith and learning conversation in the Protestant context has been largely dominated by scholars who identify or sympathize with the Reformed theological tradition.² Their criticism of this influence does not stem from a concern that traditions should not or do not affect a faculty member's efforts. Indeed, they claim:

There is nothing wrong with the fact that our academic work is shaped by the traditions of faith and learning that have shaped us as persons. In fact, the particularities of our traditions can be construed as scholarly assets that allow us to discover or create things that others simply cannot see or do because their traditions are less attuned to those areas.³

The Jacobsens then proceed to argue that the earlier approaches to the integration of faith and learning, found in the work of scholars such as Arthur Holmes, Nicholas Wolterstorff and George Marsden, had at least two weaknesses.

First, previous scholars did not acknowledge their debt to a specific tradition *enough* when talking about the integration of faith and learning. As a result, the message they communicated was that their approach to the integration of faith and learning can and should be applied generically, or simply with all Christians in mind (even though it had Reformed roots).⁴ Moreover, the Jacobsens argue that the model of faith-learning integration these scholars represented contained the "implicit claim that it is the only way to bring faith and learning together."⁵ In contrast, they suggest that we need to appreciate and to draw upon the diversity of theological traditions when approaching the topic of the integration and faith and learning. One of the main goals of their book is "to make space for alternative models to develop."⁶

Second, they claim that the previous approaches were not multi-disciplinary enough and suffered a "hyper-philosophical approach to Christian scholarship."⁷ From the response of some recent Reformed scholars, it appears that they would

¹David I. Smith & James K. A. Smith, eds. *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith & Learning* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 2.

²Douglas Jacobsen and Rhonda Hustedt Jacobsen, *Scholarship & Christian Faith: Enlarging the Conversation* (New York: Oxford, 2004), 25.

³*Ibid.*, 78.

⁴Arthur Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987); George Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (New York: Oxford, 1996); Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Educating for Shalom: Essays on Christian Higher Education*, eds. Clarence Joldersma and Gloria Stronks (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004).

⁵Jacobsen and Jacobsen, 24.

⁶*Ibid.*, 28.

⁷*Ibid.*, 24.

agree with the Jacobsens' latter claim (and perhaps the former).⁸ For example, James K. A. Smith, a philosophy professor at Calvin College, recently published a work that, one could argue, affirms the Jacobsens' latter argument. His *Desiring the Kingdom* combines an emphasis upon affections and liturgical practices that he claims can provide the necessary supplement to what he considers to be an overly cognitive approach to faith-learning matters. He also recently co-authored a work with David I. Smith in which they claim not only that human affections and habit-forming liturgical practices have not been emphasized enough, but that the more recent conversations about the integration of faith and learning have neglected to give sufficient attention to teaching.⁹ In their own review of the literature they found "only a tiny percentage of the scholarly writing that emerges from Christian higher education is devoted to the development of...nuanced accounts of how teaching and learning are supposed to work in a Christian setting."¹⁰ Smith and Smith's work then provides a variety of helpful examples of faculty who attempt to enact the correctives that Smith and Smith preach.

Significantly, much of this conversation has taken place without any broad-based empirical studies from the very Christian faculty whose classroom practices writers either reflect on or critically appraise. There are some rich individual statements, of course.¹¹ Indeed, the pursuit of categories by which to understand faith integration has been an ongoing enterprise that has taken various forms, at least since Ronald Nelson's classification of compatibilist, reconstructionist, and transformationalist approaches in the late 1980s.¹² For example, Ken Badley has offered a conceptual review of faith integration literature, arriving at five main "paradigms" (p. 24) or logical models of integration: *fusion integration* (two elements merged), *incorporation integration* (one element is subsumed in the other), *correlation integration* (showing the relationship between two elements), *dialogical integration* (related, but in an unknown way), and *perspectival integration* (the entire enterprise is viewed from a particular interpretive angle).¹³ Of the few approaches

⁸It should be noted that some fellow Anabaptists disagree with the Jacobsens' claims. See Elmer J. Thiessen, "Refining the Conversation: Some Concerns about Contemporary Trends in Thinking about Worldviews, Christian Scholarship and Higher Education," *The Evangelical Quarterly: An International Review of Bible and Theology* 79 no. 2 (2007):133-152.

⁹Smith & Smith, eds., *Teaching and Christian Practices*.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 3.

¹¹Chris Anderson, *Teaching as Believing: Faith in the University* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2004); Jean B. Elshtain, "Does, or Should, Teaching Reflect the Religious Perspective of the Teacher?" in *Religion, Scholarship, and Higher Education: Perspectives, Models and Future Prospects*, ed. Andrea Sterk (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 2002), 193-201; various essays in Stephen R. Haynes, ed., *Professing in the Postmodern Academy: Faculty and the Future of Church-Related Colleges* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2002).

¹²Ronald R. Nelson, "Faith-Discipline Integration: Compatibilist, Reconstructionist, and Transformationalist Strategies," in *The Reality of Christian Learning: Strategies for Faith-Discipline Integration*, eds. Harold Heie and David L. Wolfe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1987), 317-339.

¹³Ken Badley, "The Faith/Learning Integration Movement in Christian Higher Education: Slogan or Substance?" *Journal of Research on Christian Education* 3 no. 1 (1994): 13-33.

that have been research-based, Ream, Beaty, and Lion have found eight patterns of faculty faith integration approaches at Christian research universities. Criteria for these patterns ranged from complete separation of faith and curricula, to limited connections within particular spheres of public and private life, to complete integration.¹⁴ Christian higher education institutions have similarly sought to articulate a set of faith integration categories for themselves and their employees. Azusa Pacific University's faith integration handbook includes discussion of 11 categories: vocational, ethical, practice-oriented, conceptual-theoretical, tradition-based, psychological, relational, pedagogical, sociological, and aesthetic.¹⁵ Efforts to encapsulate faith integration conceptualizations from various parts of the academy have thus become increasingly complex in description and number. Most recently, Steven Moroney has called forth the analogy of maps to describe and group faith-learning approaches.¹⁶ These three "locations" (p. 140) are Faith Learning Integration Approaches that examine fields and disciplines in light of a Christian commitment, Christian Worldview Approaches, or "hubs" (p. 146) of sense making that frame perspectives on all topics, including scholarly and educational ones, and Practice and Formation Approaches or questions about distinctiveness and identity at institutional and individual levels. Each approach has been aggressively critiqued and ardently defended, yet as a set, Moroney argues, "by God's grace each can serve as a signpost that points people toward a common destination, the Kingdom of God."

Each of these works lends valuable insights about the nature, content, and process of this contested ground we call "faith integration." Nevertheless, the preponderance of evidence thus far emerges primarily from scholars' reflections, informal observations, and small-scale research studies. This article attempts to supplement this recent work by drawing upon empirical research from a large group of CCCU professors. We attempt to explore responses to this central question: What do Christian professors in CCCU institutions say they actually do when it comes to incorporating their particular Christian traditions into classroom teaching? Moreover, how can answering this question help guide future practice?

Methods

The findings used in this article are part of a larger dataset generated from an online survey of instructional faculty members employed at Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) member institutions. Seventy-nine of the 110

¹⁴Todd C. Ream, Michael Beaty, & Larry Lion, "Faith and Learning: Toward a Typology of Faculty Views at Religious Research Universities," *Christian Higher Education* 3.4 (2009): 349-372.

¹⁵Azusa Pacific University, "Faith Integration Faculty Guidebook, 2012-2013, *The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, the Office of Faith Integration, and the Faith Integration Council*. <http://www.apu.edu/faithintegration/resources/guidebook/>.

¹⁶Stephen Moroney, "Where Faith and Learning Intersect: Re-Mapping the Contemporary Terrain," *Christian Scholar's Review* 43 no. 2 (Winter 2014): 139-155.

institutions that were CCCU members at the time of the survey participated in Phase I of the study. The first phase surveyed institutions about their denominational affiliations.¹⁷ Forty-eight institutions (61%) participated in this second phase of the study directed at the faculty of these institutions.¹⁸ Participants were asked to identify their own faith perspectives, those held by the institution, and the manifestations of those faith commitments in policy and practice. Among these questions, faculty members were asked to identify the broad theological tradition with which they most closely identify. Survey respondents selected from a drop-down menu of faith tradition options which included: Anabaptist, Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Evangelical, Pentecostal/Charismatic, Reformed, Wesleyan, or Other (see Table 1 for the results).¹⁹ Faculty respondents were then asked whether this theological tradition influenced the following areas of their teaching: 1. Course Objectives; 2. Foundations, Worldview or Narrative Guiding the Course; 3. Motivations for or Attitude toward the Class; 4. Ethical Approach; 5. Teaching Methods). The resulting faculty responses to this question, by percentage, are in Table 2.

Table 1. Broad Theological Traditions of Faculty Respondents (n=2309)

Baptist	20%
Evangelical	19%
Wesleyan	18%
Reformed	12%
Pentecostal/Charismatic	8%
Anabaptist	7%
Other	5%
Anglican	5%
Catholic	4%
Lutheran	3%
Eastern Orthodox	1%

¹⁷For a report based upon some findings from this survey see Perry L. Glanzer, Jesse Rine, & Phil Davignon, "Assessing the Denominational Identity of American Evangelical Colleges and Universities, Part I: Denominational Patronage and Institutional Policy," *Christian Higher Education* 12 no. 3 (2013): 182-202.

¹⁸For a summary of the method for this portion of the study see Perry L. Glanzer, Jesse Rine, & Phil Davignon, "Assessing the Denominational Identity of American Evangelical Colleges and Universities, Part II: Faculty Perspectives and Practices," *Christian Higher Education* 12 no. 4 (2013): 243-265. It should be noted that the results reported in the above article pertain only to the faculty respondents working with denominational institutions.

¹⁹This list of faith traditions reflects those used in other national religion surveys, such as the Baylor Religion Survey. We do not suppose that we know all that each respondent assumes about their selected tradition. Nevertheless, most traditions do include important points of convergence, each requiring more explanation than is possible here. We recommend readers interested in better understanding the implications of these faith traditions consult the following resources: Richard T. Hughes, *How Christian Faith Can Sustain the Life of the Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001); Richard T. Hughes and William B. Adrian, *Models for Christian Higher Education: Strategies for Success in the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997); Richard J. Foster, *Streams of Living Water: Celebrating the Great Traditions of Christian Faith* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2001); and Douglas Jacobsen and

Table 2. Does your theological tradition influence the following areas of your teaching? (Responses by percentage)

Question	Yes	Don't know	No
Course objectives	48	9	43
Foundations, worldview or narrative guiding the course	79	5	16
Motivations for or attitude toward the class	78	6	16
Ethical approach	84	4	12
Teaching methods	40	20	40

This paper addresses the area where only close to half of faculty indicated the impact of their particular theological tradition on their teaching: course objectives. Of the 2,313 faculty members who provided a survey response to this question, 48% (n=1110) said "Yes." Twenty-three percent (n=523) of those responding positively also completed the optional write-in answer. This set of responses forms the core of our eight thematic categories discussed in the findings section that follows. Due to the branching structure of the survey, no faculty members who answered "No" or "Don't Know" completed the write-in response. Consequently, the findings discussed below are explanations of ways that faith tradition relates to course objectives for those faculty members who believe that it does.

The 52% of respondents who said "No" to this survey question represent a population worthy of further study. That up to half of CCCU faculty respondents might not believe that their faith tradition (which is not necessarily synonymous with Christian faith generally) is relevant to the formation of course objectives might imply that faith tradition is a concept of little value to many faculty members, or that the particulars of those traditions are not sufficiently distinctive to inform this aspect of instruction meaningfully. The survey included quantitative data about theological positions, as well as professional attitudes, values, and perceptions of their employing institution that may be mined for a future project. However, because of the branching nature of our qualitative survey data we do not have qualitative responses for faculty who responded negatively to this question. The focus of this paper, consequently, does not allow us to take up this worthwhile question further.

We used an inductive approach to analyze the short-form responses since our desire was to generate frameworks from the particulars of faculty responses, rather than to impose theory upon them. To do this we used a two-cycle coding process through which descriptive categories could emerge (first cycle) and then be combined into thematic categories (second cycle).²⁰ The result was eight thematic categories and a summative ninth reflecting synthesis between them.

Rhonda Hustedt Jacobsen, *Scholarship & Christian Faith: Enlarging the Conversation* (New York: Oxford, 2004).

²⁰In the first cycle we used a holistic coding process to identify broad categories of response, initially resulting in 31 codes. In holistic coding, data is examined in sentences or even paragraphs, and a summative word or phrase (one, or more than one) that represents the

Before discussing the different types of responses that faculty provided, it is important to understand the background of the respondents. Of faculty who provided a short-form answer, 61% were male (2% unassigned), and most (58%) held a PhD as their highest degree, followed by a master's degree (14%). Those with a doctoral degree most often received it from a public institution (45%), with almost 20% receiving a terminal degree from a religious institution of some kind (including 8% "Other Protestant," 7% CCCU Member, and 3% Catholic, though 16% did not respond to this item). Respondents tended to be those more firmly rooted in the profession: 85% were employed full-time (with 14% part-time or other) and 39% had achieved full professor rank, followed by associate (27%), assistant (18%), and non-tenure system faculty (14%, through a combination of various titles).²¹

For perspective on this cohort, data for all faculty at 45 of the 48 institutions (not all institutions reported data to IPEDS) who participated in the phase two faculty survey show that the same percentage (61% to 61%) were male, fewer (61% compared to 85% of respondents) were employed full-time, and fewer (32% compared to 39% of respondents) had achieved professor status. The biggest gap

meaning of that passage is identified to represent it. This approach was congruent with our short-form data type in which responses were typically varied between a short phrase and a short paragraph. Following the holistic coding process we performed a second round of coding that then pulled these disparate parts together to identify patterns and elements of greatest salience. To do this we used an axial coding approach often associated with grounded theory development. See Johnny Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, 2nd ed. (London: Sage, 2013). The purpose of the axial approach is "to determine which [codes] in the research are the dominant ones and which are the less important ones... [and to] reorganize the data set: synonyms are crossed out, redundant codes are removed and the best representative codes are selected." H. Boeije, *Analysis in Qualitative Research* (London: Sage, 2010), 109. In our second cycle process we re-examined the first cycle subsets within the largest meta code categories ("Discipline or Course-Specific Implications and References," "Specific Denominational Reference," and "Impart Biblical or Christian Principles or Perspectives") and re-coded them into either existing codes or new sub-codes. We then identified common categories that described groups of similar codes within these sub-sets and among the large set of codes. After identifying five large initial categories through this process, the research team engaged in several rounds of inter-coder review to confirm and challenge this list. Although several of the original thematic categories remained, others were broken up or reconfigured in ways that better reflected the patterns of meaning found across the entire data set.

²¹By discipline, 23% were in some professional program, 21% were in philosophy, religion, or theology, 13% were in the social sciences or history, 10% were in the STEM fields, 9% were in business and related fields, 8% were in English and associated sub-fields, 6% were in communications and technology fields, 5% were in the visual and performing arts, and 3% were unassigned. Respondents' undergraduate alma maters reflected a strong preference for religious institutions generally (60% combined) and CCCU institutions in particular (48%). Public institutions ranked second at 28%, followed by "Other Protestant" (10%) and "Secular, Private" (8%). Catholic institutions constituted 2% of undergraduate alma maters.

was among assistant professors (33% compared to only 18% of respondents).²² This variance might be indicative of a generational difference in faith integration thinking between veteran and early career faculty members, or it may simply be a reflection of the time pressures associated with pre-tenure status.

Findings

So what difference did respondents believe their faith tradition made with regard to their course objectives? The results of our coding process described above led to the emergence of eight categories (see Table 3). Respondents indicated that their faith tradition inspired them to engage in (or to ask students to engage in) eight types of activities. Four of the activities were largely understood as undertaken by the teacher and the other four were focused upon students. As we will see later, all faith traditions engaged in these activities, although some did so to varying degrees. Furthermore, the themes express both a generic Christian sensibility and the particularities of Christian traditions in the development and delivery of course objectives. Nevertheless, the degree to which professors mentioned a particular faith tradition did vary by category, although often the language or manner of expression could still be linked to particular theological cultures. We provide explanations and examples of these eight types of activities below.

Table 3. Ways of Integrating One's Faith Tradition in the Classroom

Activities of the Teacher	Student-Focused
1. Introduce the Data of Scripture	5. Cultivate Personal Spiritual Growth & Practices
2. Employ Specific Interpretive Views	6. Integrate a Christian Worldview
3. Make Distinctive Curricular Choices	7. Understand & Utilize Theological Traditions
4. Use Unique Methodological Approaches	8. Develop Ethical Thinking or Behavior

1. *Introduce the Data of Scripture*

The label for this category was taken from a quote given by a faculty member describing evidence taken directly from the Bible: "Former President [name] challenged us to introduce the 'data of Scripture' into our courses wherever it was relevant. As a philosophy teacher, this was a helpful challenge." Professors' responses placed in this category (n=70 responses) focused upon connecting the subject matter to related Biblical material based upon an implicit view of the authority or relevance of the Bible for the course's subject matter. These professors provide straightforward examples:

- "I may utilize passages of Scripture to illustrate point"
- "I incorporate Biblical Scripture into writing prompts and lessons..."

²²National Center for Education Statistics, *Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System* (Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, National Center for Education Statistics, 2013).

- “When discussing ethical business practices I bring in the Biblical teachings of Christ.”

In some cases these introductions of Scripture may be, as sometimes happens with introductions, a little forced or awkward. For instance, this faculty member gave an example of the way he or she tied course content into a scriptural example:

I have 2 or 3 short devotionals in Kinesiology where I link Bible stories to the content. For example, when we are discussing muscle fiber, I open with a devotional about Jacob’s wrestling match with an angel; the connection here is that the angel touches Jacob’s hip and dislocates it. That leads back to our discussion about muscle and bone anatomy.

Yet, this kind of connection drawing between subject matter and the Bible may be an essential first step in considering the relevance for Christianity or a theological tradition for a discipline.

The goal of this incorporation was sometimes understood, as one professor stated, to support a “strong emphasis on the importance of Biblical literacy.” In other cases, the stated goal entailed making sure that students not only were Biblically literate but understood the relevance of Scripture. For instance, the following faculty response in which the professor begins with scriptural perspective (content) and ends with scriptural application (examples):

“See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.” Colossians 2:8. The relevance of God’s Word must be explicitly included in course objectives.

Faculty who emphasized content and example elements operationalized Scripture and Christian practices as curricular resources for all subjects.

2. *Employ Specific Interpretive Views*

This category, along with the following two (*Influence Curricular Choices* and *Form Methods Approaches*) can be thought of as conjoined yet individually distinct aspects of a continuous curricular sense-making and construction process. In this, the largest of the eight categories (n=188 responses), faculty respondents discussed the foundational perspectives that lend form to their course objectives. Often, their explanations were given without reference to any impact on students:

Reformed doctrine emphasizes that the world is good, though fallen, so that very much influences my approach to all my classes. There is lots of good to be found in any area of study, but we must also seek to recognize the fallen-ness in our approach to any subject.

This response illustrates the essential elements of this category: a prior theological perspective or belief (frequently rooted in an identified tradition), a particular principle drawn from that commitment, and an implicit or explicit expectation that course objectives are yet one more area where said commitment can find expression. In another example, a respondent spoke for his or her academic unit in

describing the shared conceptualization that guides their collective purpose: "We believe that God made us to be dialogic creatures with the ability to communicate; therefore, we take the approach that communication studies are important."

Many faculty responses began with a kind of personal creed or theological testimony, and then transitioned to either the implications of that commitment or the curricular target:

I believe that we are all fallen sinners, but that we can all be redeemed. Those that come to saving faith in Christ are gifted to serve Him. All of us need to be held accountable to give a good and honest effort to tasks that are presented to us. As faculty members, we need to see the potential in each student and do all that we can to help our students grow in faith as well as in our academic discipline and in the ability to use their gifts more fully for Christ's service.

Others emphasized a particular theological tradition and some aspect of it that directs their curricular approach or sense making: "The Wesleyan Quadrilateral understanding of religious authority influences both my beliefs and my pedagogy, which is interdisciplinary, contextual, and integrative." Another faculty member similarly responded from his or her tradition, this time pointing to course objectives as a means to meeting tradition-informed ends:

The Anabaptist theological tradition places great emphasis on discipleship and "following Jesus." I view my course objectives (learning to read and exegete the Scriptures faithfully) as a tangible means to assist my students in that overarching calling.

The nature of the relationship between theological commitments and course-shaping perspectives diverged for faculty along several lines. Most clearly, some respondents framed the issue as a compulsive response and natural outgrowth of their desire for consistency across all facets of professional life:

[My theological tradition] serves as the thread holding together my reason for teaching, for knowing my students, and for guiding them into the worlds beyond this university. My learning outcomes derive from my view of God and who He is in my life (my theology).

Others described it as a deliberate process:

I attempt to incorporate an evangelical worldview into the course objectives. I teach business and leadership and most definitely come from an evangelical perspective throughout while allowing for other opinions and viewpoints to share space and time.

As in this case, some respondents did not specify any particular content focus when mentioning their perspective.

3. *Make Distinctive Curricular Choices*

The prior category (*Employ Specific Interpretive Views*) is the antecedent to the third category, in which theological beliefs, values, and perspectives are translated into a course plan. Many respondents in this category (56 total responses) made

this connection by highlighting a curricular aspect selected or focused on as a result of this theological tradition: "I teach economics, which means I teach about stewardship over everything entrusted to us." The following lengthier response connects the sense making of a Reformed perspective both to the selection of course topics and to a theologically informed approach that the faculty member wished to convey:

In the Calvinist tradition there is a strong emphasis on the universal claim of God over all creation and culture making. As such all areas are legitimate areas for study and research. Rather than rejecting certain areas, such as genetic modification of organisms out of hand, therefore my course objectives emphasize how various technologies can be applied to God's honor and glory.

In some responses faculty members emphasized how their theological tradition influenced their selection of course materials, texts, examples, and experiences. This influence was also sometimes described in indirect terms, as a source of motivation: "Church of the Brethren and Anabaptist traditions value service to others, living out your beliefs and pacifism. These are not directly course objectives but may motivate me to include certain books, examples, articles rather than others."

And in other responses, the process of influence was less circumspect: "Since I teach Ministry courses, my own tradition cannot help but come through in the way I teach. Specifically, I tend to favor textbooks that represent an evangelical point of view."

4. Use Unique Methodological Approaches

Some respondents extended their explication from the influence of their theological tradition to the implications for classroom practice. Though technically departing from "course objectives," faculty respondents described classroom approaches, structures, and behaviors as the end product of course objectives informed by their theological tradition(s). Here, a faculty member's class tactics (listening, supporting, and offering accountability) are shaped by his or her perspective on students as humans deserving of personal regard and care:

The syllabus gives broad objectives that must be met. Because I know life and walks of life can be different, I ask my students what their needs are and how I can serve them during this journey. I listen carefully, help support them and hold them accountable. We meet the course objectives, while also meeting personal objectives, which allows a living example of God in the classroom.

Similarly, the following respondent sought to translate a curricular goal ("serve students well") into a worshipped-centered classroom approach:

As an evangelical Friend, my goal is to serve my students well; that is why I work them hard and seek to engage them in the subjects I teach. I am a servant-teacher. As a believer in the present Christ, accessible wherever two or three are gathered in his name, I have sought to design several of my courses as "the meeting for worship in which learning is

welcomed"—facilitating the student's being enrolled in the school of Christ...

Other respondents suggested that how they taught reflected a general tone or point of emphasis resulting from their faith tradition perspective: "Yes—A Reformed education tradition influences both intellectual formation and the shaping of an entire self. Thus it can be intellectually rigorous." And another faculty member responded in kind: "Teaching Bible & Theology, I seek the transformation of each student, seek to teach rather than indoctrinate, and attempt to clarify and encourage concepts that reflect a Wesleyan/Arminian perspective." In these examples, "rigor" and clarification over indoctrination describe not only interpretive approaches, but the roots of classroom practice as well.

5. Cultivate Personal Spiritual Faith and Practices

This category of responses (n=65) marks the turn from responses that implied a focus on faculty tasks or perspectives, to those that aimed to influence student beliefs, perspectives, or behaviors. In this category professors primarily indicated a desire for their students to further a personal commitment, understanding, or relationship with Christ. Often their objectives reflected the faith orientation of the faculty member ("As an evangelical I emphasize the importance of individuals having a 'personal relationship' with Christ") or the institution ("We always ensure at least one course objective focuses on a spiritual formation objective and this will be constructed from a Wesleyan perspective"). Unlike the last quote, the variety of stated goals in this category often did not mention a particular faith tradition directly, although the language or manner of expression could still be linked to particular theological cultures. Generally, responses focused on some form of personal encounter ("Students will grow in their appreciation of Jesus"), internal change and growth ("To help students better understand the saving grace of Jesus and to grow closer to him"), or personal development resulting in associated behaviors ("Fundamentally I want students to embrace the sacrifice of Christ and have that play out in their best thinking and their daily lives in ways that bless them and draw others to Christ").

Within this category a set of alternative perspectives emerged from respondents who included spiritual formation as a course objective and those who were committed to encouraging faith development but did not include it as a stated course purpose. Some respondents questioned whether these purposes were appropriate for course objectives even as they sought to infuse them throughout the course ("It's not an objective I would state in the syllabus, since it's not one that can be assessed, but I tell students in courses that my primary objective is that they encounter Jesus Christ and grow as his disciples in love of God and neighbor"). Other respondents saw faith as implicitly embedded throughout all facets of the course and thus perhaps unnecessary to state as a singular objective: "Being evangelistically missions-minded is an assumption underlying many of the goals of my classes."

The use of worldview language as one way to understand the integration of faith and learning project has a long history among the Christian traditions within the CCCU.²³ Not surprisingly, we found this language prominent among a subsection of responses (for example, "I use a Christian worldview as a foundation for all I teach"), but we did not place professors' comments in this category merely for the use of that language. The characteristics of this category (n=96 responses) are summarized by one professor's response: "Every course has an objective of relating Christian faith to the subject matter of the course (but nothing related to a particular theological tradition within Protestantism)." In other words, the actions suggested in this category by professors usually are related to helping students understand or critically apply a theological way of thinking that would be shared by all Christians (for example, "Appreciate the beauty of mathematics as an extension of the Creator"). We could not be sure if or whether professors saw these approaches as directly arising from their particular theological tradition (although if they answered the question as intended they would).

Professors generally mentioned four types of broad activities that we placed in this category, all of which are also aspects mentioned in the literature of distinctive Christian scholarship.²⁴ In this respect, visions for Christian scholarship and Christian teaching shared much in common. First, some professors simply emphasized the spiritual dimension of a subject or made sure a subject is not reduced to its materialistic components.

- "For a nursing pediatrics course: identify psychological, spiritual, ethical, and cultural variables that impact the delivery of education and care to members of the child-rearing family. This is done with the understanding that the spiritual dimensions are a fundamental component of nursing care."
- "I cannot teach without regarding both the spiritual nature of humanity, including the literature I teach my students and the very nature of my students and me."

These professors apparently sought to counter the view sometimes promulgated through naturalistic reductionism that reduces humans merely to physical entities.²⁵

A second set of responses discussed common Christian beliefs that involved emphasizing some aspect of the doctrine of creation.

- "Examples of objectives include helping students to understand the world as God's creation, or understand their responsibility in regards to the world based on the fact that God created it and he created us as his image bearers."

²³For the origins of this use see David K. Naugle, *Worldview: The History of a Concept* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).

²⁴For a summary see Todd C. Ream and Perry L. Glanzer, *Christian Faith and Scholarship: An Exploration of Contemporary Developments*, in the ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 47-57.

²⁵See George Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*, 72-77.

- "I believe God has given each of us purpose, gifts, and talents. Course objectives should accomplish the goals of the institution while incorporating the interests of the students."

In other words, these responses focused upon the common doctrine of creation that Christian scholars recognize as shaping one's approach to a subject.²⁶

A third set of responses focused upon Biblical revelation and making sure students understood its authority or trustworthiness. These two teachers provided examples of this approach:

- "One's world view has a dramatic influence on how one structures and teaches. Believing the Bible is God's Word is imperative."
- "One of our department's objectives is to enhance the student's commitment to the trustworthiness of Scripture."

These respondents were different than the "Introduce the Data of Scripture" approach in that their focus was less on including Scripture and more upon students coming to particular theological conclusions about Scripture.

A related and final set of approaches tended to emphasize the broad theological parts of the narrative included in Scripture that starts with creation but also reaches beyond it:

- "The Reformed (or broadly Augustinian) theological tradition informs our institutional mission which speaks of inspiring and equipping learners to bring renewal and reconciliation to every walk of life as followers of Jesus Christ, the Servant King. An emphasis on the goodness of God's creation, the pervasiveness of sin and evil, the cosmic sweep of redemption and the reign of God, and on our human calling to participate in God's redemptive work are characteristic of this tradition, and provide orientation for the entire curriculum."
- "Understand environmental issues within creation/fall/redemption approach."

As can be seen, those in the latter category often identified with the Reformed tradition.

7. Promote Understanding and Critical Use of Theological Traditions

The seventh category of responses involved applying a particular theological tradition to the subject matter (n=68). The responses in this category clearly identified a Christian faith tradition either explicitly or through strong theological referents. Professors would then identify a particular objective related to that tradition and the academic enterprise. It is in this category that one can see confirmed a point made by the Jacobsens that each theological tradition will bring to this task particular theological emphases that result in unique approaches to the integration of faith and teaching.²⁷ We placed these elements on increasing levels of complexity in a way that comprises a kind of taxonomy of learning:

²⁶Ibid., 84-90.

A. Understanding a tradition or traditions:

- “It is very important to me that my students have a broad understanding of Christian history, in particular the Anabaptist insights—as these views have been frequently eclipsed by louder more strident voices. ... Therefore my objectives often read something like: Students will grasp the complex and textured historical purposes of baptism; or students will gain a broader understanding of salvation--not as simply a moment in time, but an ongoing stepping into discipleship that accompanies one’s putting on Christ.”
- “In courses in history and religion, I want to ensure the students understand the High Church traditions since almost all come from Low Church backgrounds.”

B. Seeing its benefits:

- “I teach French foreign language and culture; I hope that students will understand better after my courses that Christian community does not exclude all things Catholic.”
- “One objective is to introduce evangelical Christians to the richness of their Protestant tradition as expressed in Anglican patterns of worship and theology.”

C. Using it to guide one’s interpretive lens:

- “I want students to be able to express the issues we cover in class from an evangelical orientation.”
- “The Baptist tradition emphasizes the freedom of the conscience under God, which is necessary for the educational enterprise. My course objectives are designed to help students learn how to search for truth and evaluate truth claims independently following their own consciences.”

D. Applying it to one’s discipline:

- “In a Finance class I start out by trying to help my students see how religious orientation, creational structure, and the various ways that people have developed the creation affect what happens in business and finance. I then challenge them to think about how finance needs to be “reformed” to become what God expects of his people.”
- “Quaker approaches to ethics, servant leadership, respect for all persons, [and] openness to individuals serving in any role to which God calls them are essential frameworks for teaching Management and leadership principles.”

Although one might be critical of the fact that professors often only mentioned one part of a learning taxonomy instead of the full range of objectives that would entail understanding and applying a theological tradition in a critical manner, we should note that professors were only asked to give one example.

8. *Develop Ethical Thinking or Behavior*

This category (n=120 responses) included the responses from faculty that

²⁷Douglas Jacobsen and Rhonda Hustedt Jacobsen, *Scholarship & Christian Faith*.

reflected a desire for students to think or act ethically. More specifically, they usually sought to help students understand or practice a particular virtue or set of virtues (for example, "Promote [the] character development of students to enhance the integrity of higher education by stressing respect, honesty, fairness and responsibility"). Indeed, professors rarely mentioned moral principles or rules (for example, "My objectives include Biblical principles, such as the Golden Rule when teaching ethics"). The dominant virtues including the following:

Service or Servant Leadership (18 responses)

- "The idea of being a servant in education."
- "In many courses, we conduct service-learning projects serving the poor and homeless."

Love (7 responses)

- "Love of enemy, how to relate to those who disagree."
- "Teaching counseling and psychology courses with an emphasis on the Christian value of love in relationships is fundamental to my approach to meeting the teaching objectives of my courses."

Social Justice (6 responses)

- "Making sure my objectives reflect my sense of community and social justice."
- "Focusing on social justice and cultural humility in nursing care."

Integrity (4 responses)

- "Inclusion of issues related to integrity, honesty."
- "Punctuality, integrity, living with hope and faith, and teaching in that light."

As can be seen from these responses, many comments did not mention a Christian doctrine and instead exhibited a generic form of moralism. As a result, it is not always clear what role a Christian theological tradition plays unless one knows the background Scripture or theology. This proved particularly true in several references to the "Golden Rule," an ethical concept that is not exclusively Christian (for example, "The concept of the Golden Rule can be found in everything I teach including principles, scenarios, examples, etc."). Indeed, one could argue that almost all of the virtues listed above are also emphasized in secular literature and practices pertaining to moral development in higher education.²⁸ Only when combined with a particular Scriptural or theological referent would the Christian distinction emerge (for example, "Character Education course includes a goal on the fruit of the spirit and character"). Only in some rare cases was a whole different approach set forth (for example, "Responsiveness to the Holy Spirit rather than rely[ing] on professional society ethics code books").

Responses by Faith Tradition

Since the focal question for this inquiry asked faculty whether and how their

²⁸See Anne Colby, Thomas Ehrlich, Elizabeth Beaumont, Jason Stephens, *Educating Citizens: Preparing America's Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civic Responsibility* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003).

theological tradition and course objectives related, analyzing the intersection of claimed faith traditions and the eight thematic categories may illuminate how those from particular faith traditions tend to conceptualize how faith ought to shape course objectives. Although about one-half of all participant faculty responded “Yes” to this question, written responses varied by faith tradition. The most frequent positive responses by faith tradition were from Reformed (60%) and Evangelical (57%) participants, followed by Wesleyan (51%), Baptist (48%), Anabaptist (47%), and Pentecostal/Charismatic (40%). Faculty members with the smallest positive response rate were Lutheran (30%), Catholic (23%) and Anglican (21%), though their total participant responses were smaller as well. Nevertheless, results suggest that faculty from High Church faith traditions may make different sense of the question at hand. These percentages may indicate that as a group, faculty from High Church traditions were much less likely to attempt the integration of their faith tradition into course objectives. However, it might also be the case that they conceptualize the role of their faith tradition in the academic setting differently, or they may simply have interpreted the question differently than those from other Christian traditions.

The tally of responses by theological tradition within the eight thematic categories were as follows: Evangelical (150), Baptist (134), Reformed (105), Wesleyan (126), Anabaptist (63), Pentecostal/Charismatic (36), Other (39), and a High Church Combined (30) made up of Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran, and Eastern Orthodox respondents.²⁹ We acknowledge that some respondent groups, once divided by faith tradition, are small enough that findings only suggest implications for faith traditions and require further investigation to validate. However, since the data we are using is qualitative and our purpose is exploratory, individual responses as examples of faculty meaning making are of greater importance than if generalization were our sole aim.

In aggregate by category, *Employ Specific Interpretive Views* (28%; 188 responses) was the largest response group, followed by *Develop Ethical Thinking or Behavior* (18%; 120 responses), *Integrate a Christian Worldview* (14%; 96 responses), *Introduce the Data of Scripture* (10%; 70 responses), *Understand and Utilize Theological Traditions* (10%; 68 responses), and *Cultivate Personal Spiritual Growth and Practices* (10%; 65 responses), all of which were at or above 10%. The remaining categories were *Make Distinctive Curricular Decisions* (8%; 56 responses), and *Form Unique Methods Approaches* (3%; 17 responses).

Responses by faith tradition showed a similar convergence of emphasis, with a few distinguishing variations (see Table 4). *Employ Specific Interpretive Views* was the top category of response across all theological tradition groups (22% to 34% of responses) except the “Other” category. Evangelicals’ responses were similar in most categories, varying between 12% and 17%. Baptists’ responses were

²⁹Note: One respondent’s data may appear in more than one category, thus, this tally represents instances of category appearance and not the number of individual respondents (n=523 respondents; n=680 response appearances).

similarly distributed, with *Develop Ethical Thinking or Behavior* (20%), *Introduce the Data of Scripture* (19%), and *Integrate a Christian Worldview* (15%) as the next top categories. Only 5% of Baptists' responses were in the *Cultivate Personal Spiritual Growth and Practices* category, a rate half of their peers. Responses from Wesleyans were the most frequent in the *Employ Specific Interpretive Views* category at 34%, trailed by *Develop Ethical Thinking or Behavior* at 19% and *Understand and Utilize Theological Traditions* at 15% of their responses. The Wesleyan response percentage for *Integrate a Christian Worldview* was dramatically lower than all other surveyed traditions at 5% of their responses. Perhaps not surprisingly given this tradition's strong emphasis on God's sovereignty in all parts of life,³⁰ Reformed respondents were strong in the *Integrate a Christian Worldview* category (21%), followed by *Understand and Utilize Theological Traditions* (15%). As with Baptist respondents, interest in *Cultivating Personal Spiritual Growth and Practices* was quite low (3%) for Reformed respondents.

The remainder of the theological tradition groups had below 100 responses, causing us to redouble our caution against unwarranted generalizing from these findings. Nevertheless, the findings may be suggestive, if not instructive: Anabaptists showed little concern for *Introducing the Data of Scripture* (2%), emphasizing instead *Cultivating Ethical Behavior and Practices* (22%), perhaps reflective of historic focus on the practical implications of following Jesus. By contrast, Pentecostal/Charismatic responses were evenly distributed among three categories, emphasizing practical application, personal faith, and a broad-based Christian worldview (17% each). The catch-all "Other" tradition category contained many faculty members who had embraced multiple theological traditions (what might be called "theological omnivores"), perhaps reflected in the relatively high 13% response percentage in *Understand and Utilize Theological Traditions*. Their responses were also most often pragmatic: 28% were in *Cultivate Ethical Thinking and Behavior* category. Finally, the summative "High Church Combined" cluster of theological traditions showed strong interest in *Forms Methods Approaches* (20%) and *Understand and Utilize Theological Traditions* (17%). Responses suggest that many faculty members in this group, like the "Other" category, recognize that their theological tradition or combination of traditions may be less familiar to students, resulting in a special point of emphasis in their course objectives.

Evaluating and Synthesizing the Types

What can be learned from this typology to inform our practice? In looking over the responses and the tendencies of different traditions, we suggest that we should avoid the danger common with certain typologies associated with theological traditions of identifying one best approach.³¹ Indeed, we would argue that all of these approaches have their strengths and should be considered when thinking

³⁰Hughes, *How Christian Faith Can Sustain the Life of the Mind*.

Table 4. Eight Categories by Theological Tradition

	Introduces the Data of Scripture	% of Total	Cultivate Personal Spiritual Growth and Practices	% of Total	Employ Specific Interpretive Views	% of Total	Make Distinctive Curricular Decisions	% of Total	Use Unique Methodological Approaches	% of Total	Integrate a Christian Worldview	% of Total	Understand and Utilize Theological Traditions	% of Total	Develop Ethical Thinking or Behavior	% of Total	TOTAL
Evangelical	18	12%	26	17%	39	26%	7	5%	3	2%	26	17%	7	5%	24	16%	150
Baptist	25	19%	7	5%	34	26%	12	9%	1	1%	20	15%	7	5%	27	20%	133
Wesleyan	8	6%	12	10%	42	34%	12	10%	2	2%	6	5%	18	15%	24	19%	124
Reformed	10	10%	3	3%	32	30%	9	9%	3	3%	22	21%	16	15%	10	10%	105
Anabaptist	1	2%	4	6%	19	30%	9	14%	0	0%	9	14%	7	11%	14	22%	63
Pentecostal Charismatic	4	11%	6	17%	8	22%	3	8%	0	0%	6	17%	3	8%	6	17%	36
Other	4	10%	5	13%	7	18%	2	5%	2	5%	3	8%	5	13%	11	28%	39
Anglican	0	0%	1	8%	3	23%	0	0%	3	23%	0	0%	4	31%	2	15%	13
Catholic	0	0%	1	13%	3	38%	1	13%	1	13%	0	0%	1	13%	1	13%	8
Lutheran	0	0%	0	0%	1	14%	1	14%	1	14%	4	57%	0	0%	0	0%	7
Eastern Orthodox	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	50%	0	0%	0	0%	1	50%	2
High Church Combined	0	0%	2	7%	7	23%	2	7%	6	20%	4	13%	5	17%	4	13%	30
TOTALS	70	10%	65	10%	188	28%	56	8%	17	3%	96	14%	68	10%	120	18%	680

about how Christian theological traditions are incarnated in the classroom. Each one, to use Biblical language, is part of the body of Christian teaching. And like different parts of the body, each one is necessary.

Furthermore, each of these approaches has weaknesses when practiced in isolation. We will suggest a few. First, introducing Scripture into the subject is often a reasonable first step, but it may revert to proof-texting without attention to worldview and theological considerations. Second, being conscious of how the Christian tradition influences one's views, curricular choices and methods proves helpful, but modeling this type of integration exhibits the weakness of all other types of "I just model" strategies. Students may not understand the motives or rationale for a professor's actions unless the related worldview or theological rationale is articulated to them. Third, if one focuses upon students' personal devotional growth, it is not always clear what relationship the Christian tradition has to the subject matter being taught. Fourth, exposing students to the Christian worldview proves vital for understanding foundational issues, but as critics have rightly identified it can become too heady (and tends to be favored by philosophers). Finally, the popular ethics approach, as can be seen from the examples offered, can be easily secularized when divorced from the worldview and narrative approach. The golden rule, service, and social justice are all valued at many different secular campuses and it may not be clear how Christianity can or should transform these ethical practices. Indeed, we would argue that the ethics category, although it is for some faculty members the dominant way that they claimed it influenced their course objectives, also demonstrates the most danger of being misunderstood if used alone. Although discussing ethics is perhaps an easy way to address what one envisions as Christian subject matter, it is the approach most likely to discard overt Christian references.

Thus, we would suggest that the best approaches would attempt to make sure that all types of integration are at least considered and possibly addressed, at least by type if not extent. In fact, the most noteworthy examples we noticed were often ones that combined a variety of approaches. This Reformed professor provides a helpful example:

I teach history, and coming from a Reformed perspective it influences my course objectives because I try to teach in such a way to develop empathy for our historical figures among the students. I try to help them see that our historical forbearers were image bearers just as we, and they deserve our courtesy and respect.

Although the respondent suggests that he or she is applying a distinctive theological tradition (the Reformed perspective), we would suggest that an emphasis upon the fact that "historical forbearers were image bearers" fits more with the

³¹We are referring in particular to the controversy surrounding H. Richard Niebuhr's famous typology in *Christ and Culture* (San Francisco: HarperSan Francisco, 2001). See for example Perry L. Glanzer, "Christ, Culture and Heavy Metal: Can Either Niebuhr, Marsden, or Yoder Make Sense of the 'Rock n' Roll Refuge?'" *Journal of Religion and Society* 5 (2003): 1-16.

Christian worldview category. What we find noteworthy is that an ethical objective (“teach in a way to develop empathy for our historical figures ... they deserve our courtesy and respect”) is given a clear theological rationale (“our historical forbearers were image bearers [of God]”).

Not surprisingly, we often found this kind of combination with ethical objectives. In these cases, the professor usually listed a Scriptural, worldview, or theological rationale for the ethical outcome being promoted. For example, one responding professor identified the virtues of humility and servanthood exemplified in the Last Supper narrative, but applied it to a way of being and behaving as a teacher in a future professional position:

The Church of the Brethren teaches a simple life style and a life of servanthood, modeled after Christ who humbled Himself to wash the feet of the disciples at the Last Supper. In the same vein, I advocate to my students through the course objectives that as public school teachers they are answering God’s calling to teach His children in our public schools. I emphasize through the course objectives the importance of differentiating instruction to meet the learning needs of every child they teach.

Similarly, in the following example a faculty member describes an outcome related to teaching a particular reasoning skill that is based upon a Scripturally-grounded Christian worldview:

In Business Ethics, the reason I insist that students need to be able to make a case for asking a non-Christian colleague in a secular business setting to do the right thing by using a secular argument rather than “Bible-thumping” is that, based upon Rom 1:18ff; 2:14, all persons have a moral awareness. Hence, secular ethics, at best, focuses on some aspect of this God-given moral awareness all persons have or had until they repressed it (Rom 1).

Another professor discussed the role that a particular theological tradition shaped his or her course objectives in ways that influenced ethical beliefs and practices:

Quakers have a narrative of living a HOLISTIC life with integrity. Quaker theology is as much seen in practice as it is spoken in theological belief statements. And I try to live and teach according to this, using practices to guide and check beliefs, and beliefs to guide and check practices. So I often have course objectives that involve “living a more holistic life” or “living a life with more integrity” or “putting into practice what I believe to be true.”

In these examples, making sure students understand the connection between theology, ethics, and classroom practice remains vitally important. Combining several strands in this way creates a stronger Christian understanding and presence in the classroom.

Although this type of synthesis often involved ethics, in some cases it involved the merging of two other types. For instance, this professor took what is often considered a matter of personal spiritual growth (the practice of witnessing to others) and combined it with academic goals and a focus on Christology that made for a unique classroom practice:

At the core of my faith is a need to live out being a Christ-follower; one of the ways we do this is through our witness to others. One objective in a biology course I teach states that students will wrestle with an area where their faith and science may seem to be in conflict (and no, this is not always evolution), and reflect on how their response to this area of dissonance may be perceived by non-Christians. They then reflect on what image of Christ they are portraying through this interaction and whether or not their interaction will compel people towards Christ or repel them away.

Connecting one's witness to how one engages in academic intellectual struggle, we believe, would likely be a new and invigorating experience for students.

Conclusions

What do faculty responses reveal about the influence of faith traditions on course objectives? Several fairly straightforward lessons emerged, though with complex implications.

First of all, the eight categories that we identified suggest that there are a variety of ways that faculty members conceptualize integrating their faith tradition content, if at all. Since the typology is based on short responses, we cannot know the degree to which individual faculty members may draw upon these eight, but we would hypothesize that most individual faculty members do not think about all eight types when considering how their theological tradition may influence their teaching. We suggest that faculty development courses at Christian colleges could help faculty be conscious of these eight types and consider how to apply them all. We actually believe that such an activity would be quite freeing to faculty, some of whom may not recognize the variety of ways to think about and practice Christian teaching. Indeed, we note that sometimes faculty think they are failing in this endeavor but in reality they simply are not conscious of the ways their teaching is shaped by the Christian faith in general, their particular faith tradition, or both.

It is also clear that when parsed by faculty member's faith tradition, these various categorical inclinations both cut across historical faith tradition distinctions and reflect their points of theological emphases (for example, Baptists favoring introducing Scripture, Evangelicals and Pentecostals favoring personal faith development, Reformed favoring integrating a Christian worldview, Anabaptists favoring ethical thinking and practice). Although we believe such differences result from the particular strengths of these traditions, we also believe those who identify with those traditions may need to consider if other categories within our typology are being unduly neglected.

Finally, we would suggest that all faculty may want to consider how they can make sure to include and synthesize all the different strands into their course objectives and their teaching as a whole so that the Christian nature of their teaching does not rest on one single strand but is instead a thick cord of several strands woven together to provide a strong and robust line of help to students seeking the wisdom of faith-shaped course objectives in the classroom.

Putting Down Roots: Why Universities Need Gardens

By Jack R. Baker and Jeffrey Bilbro

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In "The Loss of the University," Wendell Berry proposes that contemporary universities should return to a model of learning that envisions knowledge as a tree. Practicing such a rooted, interconnected form of education, however, is difficult in a culture of "boomers" (Berry's term for people who are always looking for a better place somewhere else) who value specialized, commodifiable knowledge rather than wisdom that leads to health and flourishing. These models of learning stem from different underlying desires: if we want to maximize profit, we will isolate and divide and specialize knowledge, but if we want to cultivate health, we will seek to draw together and integrate our knowledge. Thus our attempts to educate students in rooted wisdom begin with our own commitment to our place. Rather than trying to build impressive CVs so that we can move to "better" jobs elsewhere, we want to do good work where we are, even if such work does not bring professional prestige, even if the place is not exactly what we expected. In the following essay, then, we turn to Wendell Berry to work out reasons to hope for higher education even in our industrial, boomer culture. While he does not lay out his argument in quite the following way, we think it is helpful to understand Berry's hope for the recovery of the university as resting upon three requirements: an imagination guided by a unified organization of knowledge; a common, communal language; and responsible work. A university that embodies and unites these three principles might provide students with a rooted education, one that would form fully developed humans capable of serving their places. After offering a diagnosis of how universities came to embrace disintegrated and deracinated

Wendell Berry's agrarian vision challenges the disintegrated, industrial model of higher education that prevails in our culture. Berry's hope for the recovery of the university rests upon three requirements: an imagination guided by a unified organization of knowledge; a common, communal language; and responsible work. A university that embodies and unites these three principles might provide students with a rooted education, one that would form fully developed humans capable of serving their places. Working in a campus garden may seem unimportant, but **Jack R. Baker** and **Jeffrey Bilbro** argue that such simple practices can foster responsible connections to our place and educate students in unified forms of wisdom. Dr. Baker and Dr. Bilbro teach English at Spring Arbor University.

knowledge, we will sketch how a healthy imagination and precise language could restore unity. Then we will suggest one practice—gardening—that can foster more responsible connections to our place.¹

Boomers and Stickers

Currently, our universities tell stories about the need for “upward (and lateral) mobility” that come from the broader culture’s stories about progress and success.² A recent story in the satirical newspaper *The Onion* captures our culture’s dominant belief that mobility is an indicator of success.³ Titled, “Unambitious Loser With Happy, Fulfilling Life Still Lives In Hometown,” the article recounts a sad story: “Longtime acquaintances confirmed to reporters this week that local man Michael Husmer, an unambitious 29-year-old loser who leads an enjoyable and fulfilling life, still lives in his hometown and has no desire to leave.” As the reporter talks with Husmer’s more successful high school classmates, the dreary life he leads comes into focus:

Former high school classmates confirmed that Husmer has seemingly few aspirations in life, citing occasional depressing run-ins with the personally content townie during visits back home, as well as embarrassing Facebook photos in which the smiling dud appears alongside family members whom he sees regularly and appreciates and enjoys close, long-lasting relationships with. Additionally, pointing to the intimate, enduring connections he’s developed with his wife, parents, siblings, and neighbors, sources reported that Husmer’s life is “pretty humiliating” on multiple levels.

In particular, those familiar with the pitiful man, who is able to afford a comfortable life-style without going into debt, confirmed that he resides just two blocks from the home he grew up in, miles away from anything worthwhile, like high-priced bars and clubs. In fact, sources stated that the pathetic loafer has never had any interest in moving to even a nearby major city, despite the fact that he has nothing better to do than “sit around all day” being an involved member of his community and using his ample free time to follow pursuits that give him genuine pleasure.

Our laughter at this portrayal of a “loser” reveals our awareness that we do associate leaving home with having “made it,” even though the stress and anxiety of Husmer’s “successful” acquaintances calls into question the desirability of such a mobile life.

¹This essay is an abbreviated version of the first part of our forthcoming book with the University Press of Kentucky, *An Education in the Virtues of Place: Wendell Berry and the University*. The second part of our book considers how certain virtues are exemplified in Wendell Berry’s fiction and explores how these virtues—memory, gratitude, fidelity, and love—enable us to articulate and embody a healthful vision for higher education.

²Wendell Berry, “Bellarmine Commencement Address,” 2007, <http://christianstudycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/WendellBerry-BellarminoCommencement.pdf>.

³“Unambitious Loser With Happy, Fulfilling Life Still Lives In Hometown,” *The Onion*, July 24, 2013. <http://www.theonion.com/articles/unambitious-loser-with-happy-fulfilling-life-still,33233/>.

Berry has been describing this cultural obsession with restless mobility for decades now, arguing that it causes extensive damage to our land and our character. For as he explains, “Upward mobility, as we now are seeing, implies downward mobility, just as it has always implied lateral mobility. It implies, in fact, social instability, ecological oblivion, and economic insecurity.”⁴ Elsewhere, Berry uses the term “boomers” to describe those who are always on the lookout for better career opportunities in better places. Berry derives this term, and its opposite, “sticker,” from Wallace Stegner’s description of the two contrasting types of pioneers who settled the West. Stegner, a twentieth-century author who writes about the Western landscape in which he was raised, identifies boomers as those who came to the West looking to get rich; they were willing to damage the land and its existing communities for a quick profit. Once they had extracted all they could easily get from a place, whether a mine, a forest, or a farm, they moved on to a more abundant place. But, as Berry explains, “Not all who came to American places came to plunder and run. Some came to stay, or came with the hope of staying. These Stegner called ‘stickers’ or ‘nesters.’”⁵ These stickers came to the West looking to transplant themselves into a new home. In another essay, Berry describes such people as “nurturers,” those whose “goal is health,” the health of the land, the community, and the country.⁶

The root difference between boomers and stickers is not simply that one group is mobile and one group is stationary; rather, they are defined by their contrasting narratives, motivations, and affections. As Berry explains in his recent Jefferson lecture, “It All Turns on Affection,” “The boomer is motivated by greed, the desire for money, property, and therefore power.”⁷ Berry’s title indicates that his emphasis in this distinction is on one’s affections, and this clarifies a common, but misguided, criticism of his thought. Berry does not say everyone who leaves home is a greedy, selfish boomer. Rather, he simply reiterates that our affections are never without consequences. Thus, the individual motivated by “greed, the desire for money, property, and therefore power,” is not necessarily the individual who moves to the only state where she can find gainful employment, leaving loved ones half a nation away. Nor is the boomer the individual who leaves his small town where his entire family lives because he has suffered abuse at their hands. Instead, the boomer is the individual who is guided by wrongheaded affections—affections for power, for wealth at whatever cost, for personal success. We must be clear that “boomer” names a story—a way of imagining success that leads to a way of living

⁴Wendell Berry, “Major in Homecoming: For Commencement, Northern Kentucky University,” in Berry, *What Matters?: Economics for a Renewed Commonwealth* (Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 2010), 33.

⁵Wendell Berry, “The Conservation of Nature and the Preservation of Humanity,” in Berry, *Another Turn of the Crank: Essays* (Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 1995), 68–69.

⁶Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America: Culture & Agriculture*, revised ed. (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1996), 7.

⁷Wendell Berry, *It All Turns on Affection: The Jefferson Lecture and Other Essays* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2012), 11.

characterized by disinterest in place, limits, and externalized consequences—not a person who leaves a place. So perhaps an important distinction is that a sticker may be forced to leave a place but will nest in a new place; a boomer wants to leave a place and is willing to leave again should a better opportunity arise elsewhere.⁸

Currently, “boomerism” pervades our educational culture to such an extent that nearly all departments in nearly all universities are infected by it. As Wes Jackson claims, “upward mobility” is now the only major that universities offer: “Little attention is paid to educating the young to return home, or to go some other place, and dig in. There is no such thing as a ‘homecoming’ major.”⁹ Steven Bouma-Prediger and Brian Walsh extend Jackson’s argument in their essay, “Education for Homelessness or Homemaking? The Christian College in a Postmodern Culture,” claiming, “Colleges and universities—small or large, public or private, Christian or secular—tend to educate for upward mobility, to alienate people from their local habitation, and to encourage the vandalization of the earth.”¹⁰ What such an education forgets is the need for a vocation that subsumes these techniques under a higher purpose: the restoration of health and the flourishing of one’s community. As Berry trenchantly observes in “Higher Education and Home Defense,”

Education in the true sense, of course, is an enablement to *serve*—both the living human community in its natural household or neighborhood and the precious cultural possessions that the living community inherits or should inherit. To educate is, literally, to “bring up,” to bring young people to a responsible maturity, to help them to be good caretakers of what they have been given, to help them to be charitable toward fellow creatures. . . . And if this education is to be used well, it is obvious that it must be used some *where*; it must be used where one lives, where one intends to continue to live; it must be brought home.¹¹

Graduates cannot serve their communities, they cannot take care of them, if they do not settle somewhere and bring their education home.

An education for health, one that forms students to serve their homes, will have to begin by reforming students’ imaginations so that they begin to ask better questions. For, as Berry explains, their differently oriented affections lead boomers and stickers to ask different kinds of questions and to operate in different

⁸Our argument here has been clarified by conversation with some of Berry’s sympathetic critics. For the context of this online discussion, see Jeffrey Bilbro, “Place Isn’t Just Geographical,” *Front Porch Republic* (May 2013), <http://www.frontporchrepublic.com/2013/05/place-isnt-just-geographical/>.

⁹Wes Jackson, *Becoming Native to This Place* (Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 1996), 3.

¹⁰Steven Bouma-Prediger and Brian Walsh, “Education for Homelessness or Homemaking? The Christian College in a Postmodern Culture,” *Christian Scholar’s Review* 32 no. 3 (2003): 281–282. Mark Mitchell describes the problem in similar terms: “liberal education too often amounts to little more than an overpriced means of creating cosmopolitans of the worst sort: people who have little interest in or concern for local communities, customs, stories, or places.” See Mark T. Mitchell, *The Politics of Gratitude: Scale, Place & Community in a Global Age* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books Inc., 2012), 173.

¹¹Wendell Berry, “Higher Education and Home Defense,” in Berry, *Home Economics: Fourteen Essays* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 1987), 52.

economies. The boomer or “exploiter asks of a piece of land only how much and how quickly it can be made to produce, the nurturer [or sticker] asks a question that is much more complex and difficult: What is its carrying capacity? (That is: How much can be taken from it without diminishing it?).”¹² Berry expresses this contrast even more simply in his recent interview with Bill Moyers: “The answers will come not from walking up to your farm and saying this is what I want and this is what I expect from you. You walk up and you say ‘What do you need?’”¹³ These different questions stem from differently oriented desires—one desires quick profit and the other health—and the different complexities of their accounting—one values only profit and externalizes costs and damages, and the other seeks to give an account for all things. These distinctions mark the contrast that Berry draws in “Two Economies” between our industrial economy, which “tends to destroy what it does not comprehend,” and the “Great Economy” or the “Kingdom of God,” which “includes everything” in its comprehensive “pattern or order.”¹⁴

This fundamental difference between teaching students to get what they want from their places and teaching them to ask “what do you need?” marks not only the difference between boomers and stickers, but also the difference between a more medieval way of organizing knowledge like a tree and the organization (or lack thereof) in modern universities. Asking “what do I want?” simply leads to education in techniques of extraction for personal appetite, but the question “what do you need?” leads to an education in charity and health. C. S. Lewis describes this difference in terms of the contrast between medieval learning and the mere technical training increasingly offered today:

For the wise men of old the cardinal problem had been how to conform the soul to reality, and the solution had been knowledge, self-discipline, and virtue. For...applied science... the problem is how to subdue reality to the wishes of men: the solution is a technique.¹⁵

The work of conforming our souls to reality via knowledge, self-discipline, and virtue is long and arduous, but if we desire to be responsible members of our places, this is the work we will have to take up.

The contrast between boomers and stickers—the different desires they have, the different stories they tell, the different questions they ask, the different econo-

¹²Berry, *The Unsettling of America*, 7. Berry also expands on this line of questioning in his two recent commencement addresses, urging graduates to ask questions about where they are and how they can serve these places. See Berry, “Bellarmine”; and Berry, “Major in Homecoming,” 34–35.

¹³Wendell Berry, “Wendell Berry on His Hopes for Humanity,” interview by Bill Moyers. Television, November 29, 2013, <http://billmoyers.com/segment/wendell-berry-on-his-hopes-for-humanity/>.

¹⁴Wendell Berry, “Two Economies,” in Berry, *Home Economics* (New York: North Point Press, 1987), 54–55.

¹⁵C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man, Or, Reflections on Education with Special Reference to the Teaching of English in the Upper Forms of Schools* (San Francisco: Harper, 2001), 83.

mies they participate in, and the contrasting models of the university that they propose—should now be clear: the boomer wants to isolate knowledge from its origins in order to maximize its utility and profitability, but the sticker values a medieval, rooted kind of learning whose branches connect as much as possible. Thus, the way we organize and order knowledge stems from the kinds of questions we ask, which in turn rise from the orientation of our desires.

Because such questions involve complex interconnections, they do not often lead to simple answers. As professors, we believe that we are called to model for our students ways of living with such questions and working them out slowly and patiently. In *Jayber Crow*, one of Berry's novels, Jayber is attending seminary with the view to becoming a preacher. But his studies lead him to ask many questions about the core of the Christian faith, how prayer works, and how it might be possible to love our enemies. So one day he goes to a professor's office and musters the courage to ask these questions. The professor listens patiently until Jayber gets through his list, and then simply says to the confused young man, "You have been given questions to which you cannot be given answers. You will have to live them out—perhaps a little at a time."¹⁶ Jayber is shaken; he leaves seminary, eventually returns to his hometown, and does not pray again for many years. Yet by honestly sticking with his questions, he finally comes to a place where he is again able to pray, not with the vending machine mentality of his childhood faith, but with a sober, terrifying awareness that Jesus' own most fervent prayer in Gethsemane was not answered.

Rooting Ourselves

Professors who feel compelled to look for better jobs elsewhere, though, find it hard to model this patient process of living out answers to difficult questions. One of the reasons that students look for simple, actionable answers is likely that professors, as a whole, often fail to stick with difficult questions and situations. Instead, it often seems that our profession has largely acquiesced to the promiscuous temptations of boomerism: we look to pad our CVs with impressive accolades so that we can negotiate light teaching loads and high salaries and shop around for the best research fellowships. In other words, we are much like the opportunistic pioneers Stegner writes about or the exploitative strip-miners that Berry criticizes, always on the lookout for more profitable pastures.¹⁷ And yet when we seek better opportunities elsewhere, we fail to stick it out where we are and live with our questions until we find ways to make the place in which

¹⁶Wendell Berry, *Jayber Crow: A Novel* (Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 2000), 54.

¹⁷Eric Zencey describes this academic culture well in his essay "Rootless Professors." While professors may be more stationary now than when this essay was first published in 1986, much of this can be attributed to the terrible academic job market that makes it harder to move up the professional ladder. See Eric Zencey, "Rootless Professors," in *Rooted in the Land: Essays on Community and Place*, eds. William Vitek and Wes Jackson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

we already abide healthier.

In our own lives, we have worked out such vocational challenges in different ways, and these differences may be instructive in that they indicate that seeking the health of one's place is a process that can take many different forms. I (Jeff) grew up in Washington State, near Seattle, and developed a deep affection for the mountains, forests, rivers, and people of my home. Most of my extended family still live in the area, and my wife's family is also in the Northwest. When we left to go to graduate school in Texas, we told ourselves that this would be a five- or six-year adventure and that then we would return home. But the academic job market being what it is, my interviews with schools in the Northwest did not result in job offers, and we had to choose between jobs in Tennessee and Michigan.

The economic reasons that led us to Michigan are well respected in our boomer culture. But my parents' story made me know that staying away from home for the sake of a job was not the only option. My parents moved to Connecticut for my dad to go to graduate school, and when he earned his master's degree, they turned down a job back East in order to return to Seattle, without a home, with no job prospects, and with an infant daughter. The economics of their situation were different, I know, and my dad was able to find a good job within a few weeks, but I am still impressed by the courage they demonstrated in moving home without the assurance of a job to support their young family.

Yet even though we did not return home, we are working to make a home in this place. We attend church, subscribe to the local paper, shop at the farmer's market, pick and preserve local fruit, and visit local cultural venues. We have bought a neglected house, worked hard to repair and restore it, and planted a garden. We have built a shared mailbox with several neighbors and taken Christmas cookies around the neighborhood. We have learned the history of the neighborhood over coffee in others' homes and exchange greetings as we work in our yard or take walks. This is not an intergenerational, economically interdependent community. This is not the rich membership that Berry describes in his fiction, but we are trying to deepen the forms of neighborliness and community that are available to us in our suburban place. We are trying to knit ourselves into the fabric of this place.

I (Jack) grew up in Shelby, a small town in West Michigan. With a population of just over 2,000, it is easy to miss as tourists travel U.S. 31 on the shoreline toward golden beaches and crystal blue waters at Silver Lake or the Charles Mears State Park in Pentwater. Like many small towns in America, Shelby used to be a thriving community—surviving on tourism, robust fruit farms, and local processing and canning factories. I love my hometown. I miss it dearly. But most of all, I mourn for it. My parents still reside in my childhood home—a craftsman foursquare built in 1907 by the original owner of the Rankin Hardware store in town. The town is dying. Jobs have disappeared, homes have lost considerable value, and culture has quickly petrified.

Before I left home for college, I could already sense what was happening to my hometown, which only further encouraged my affections to leave home for

good. I saw college as the opportunity to make something of myself, something living and not dying; and Shelby stood for everything stagnant—for lost health and wholeness. Of course, my affections in some ways were misguided. But I was persuaded, like so many others, that leaving Shelby was good for me, that I should turn away from home in hopes of finding a better life elsewhere. And how many found that life? How many began their journey as itinerants, never to settle down long enough in a place to really be a part of it? Well, I was one of those itinerants throughout my higher education, and it was not until my wife and I left Michigan for graduate studies in Indiana that I began to feel the deep connection I had to my home state and hometown.

When we would drive back to Shelby to visit my family during this period, I was struck by the deep longing I had to be a part of the landscape with which I was so accustomed. On weekend visits with family, I waxed poetic about how much I desired to return to my home state. Until I lived elsewhere, I never knew how connected to Michigan I was in a very real spiritual way. It was what I knew, where I had lived all but a few years of my life, and I could not shake the overwhelming sense of loss I had at the prospect of not returning there for a job at a university. Of course, in humility we rejoice that we were able to return to work in Michigan; and while we now live in the South-Central region of the state, we are directly between both sets of parents, working to make Spring Arbor our home. And it is here that I am continuing the process of reshaping my affections for a different place, thinking often about how I ought to live in order to care for the health of Spring Arbor, as well as the health of my students—to be committed to a sticker mentality in a boomer profession. To echo Jayber Crow once again, we simply cannot have any hope of this place being home if we have no prospect of staying here. And so in some ways, Spring Arbor has become my Shelby—my new hometown—and I will work to cultivate the right affections in my own heart, in the hearts of my children, in the hearts of my students.

We are not alone in our desire to articulate the stories of our places as significant toward encouraging the sticker mentality. In fact, our stories are part of a protean genre that is often featured on the *Front Porch Republic*, a website whose authors follow Wendell Berry in valuing place, limits, and liberty. One poster, Mark Signorelli, recently argued for a more nuanced understanding of

[the] arch-typical narrative that has become quite popular here at FPR, and in some sense, emblematic of its defense of place and home. It is the “Going Home” story, the story of someone rejecting the allures of wealth and status in the big-city, and returning to the fixed traditions of his or her hometown.¹⁸

Signorelli offered his own autobiography of growing up in a nowhere suburb as evidence that not everyone has a home to return to, and yet such people can still find a place to plant themselves. So while some Porchers, like Jeff Polet and Conor

¹⁸Mark A. Signorelli, “Going Home Again? Not Likely,” *Front Porch Republic*. Accessed June 1, 2013, <http://www.frontporchrepublic.com/2013/03/going-home-again-not-likely/>.

Dugan, have been able to find good jobs in their hometowns and thus enact the more typical “Going Home” narrative, others work to make a home in the place their vocation has taken them.¹⁹

The protagonists in these “Going Home” stories offer an alternative to the boomer narrative that undergirds much of our culture and is particularly prevalent in higher education. We live in a society that values the peripatetic ladder climber whose success is in large part attributable to his ability to cut and run as soon as the getting is better elsewhere. We have made leaving a place the great indicator of one’s success in the world. If you seek an education, leave home, it is somewhere else. If you seek a good-paying job, leave home, it is somewhere else. If you seek to make something meaningful of your life, leave home, it is somewhere else.

One of Wendell Berry’s characters, Hannah Coulter, lives her life in opposition to such a narrative, and when she sends her children to college, she mourns the way their education shapes them to become boomers:

The big idea of education, from first to last, is the idea of a better place. Not a better place where you are, because you want it to be better and have been to school and learned to make it better, but a better place somewhere else. In order to move up, you have got to move on.²⁰

This “big idea” is what we must change if we hope to form our students to be caring sticklers. For while we may not all be able to return to the street on which we grew up or the town in which we were raised, and some of us may not even be able to return to our natal state, all of us can and should set about deliberately rooting ourselves in our place and finding ways to make it a better place. Such roots teach us about the complex interdependencies on which health depends, they teach us how to desire this health more fully, and they teach us what kinds of questions might lead to a greater understanding of how we can serve this health.

Affections and the Organization of Knowledge

If we want an education that forms students to serve their places and local communities, universities will have to stop genuflecting before the industrial economy and the motives of personal success and affluence that it rewards. It may seem trivial to state this, but we seem to forget that the only value the money economy recognizes is money; it justifies any technique that brings in more money. Techniques of division and specialization have been the most lucrative methods employed by modernity, and universities have adopted them in their quest for economic profit. Yet if we commodify education, dividing it from other sources of value, Berry argues that we will turn it into a weapon that will be wielded to

¹⁹Jeffrey Polet, “Education and the Way Home,” *Front Porch Republic*. Accessed June 1, 2013, <http://www.frontporchrepublic.com/2012/01/21097/>; and Conor Dugan, “The Journey Home,” *Front Porch Republic*. Accessed June 1, 2013, <http://www.frontporchrepublic.com/2013/03/the-journey-home/>.

²⁰Wendell Berry, *Hannah Coulter* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2005), 112.

consolidate power:

When educational institutions educate people to *leave* home, then they have redefined education as “career preparation.” In doing so, they have made it a commodity—something to be *bought* in order to make money. The great wrong in this is that it obscures the fact that education—real education—is free. I am necessarily well aware that schools and books have a cost that must be paid, but I am sure nevertheless that what is taught and learned is free....To make a commodity of it is to work its ruin, for, when we put a price on it, we both reduce its value and blind the recipient to the obligations that always accompany good gifts: namely, to use them well and to hand them on unimpaired. To make a commodity of education, then, is inevitably to make a kind of weapon of it because, when it is disassociated from the sense of obligation, it can be put directly at the service of greed.²¹

Berry's claim about the ultimate freedom of education implies that whenever education is made to serve the industrial economy, it will become an education in the service of greed rather than of the health of our homes.

The connection between greed and the modern fragmentation of knowledge in the multiversity may not be immediately apparent, but the two are directly related. The desire to use knowledge for power and money contributes to the fragmentation of the disciplines. To shift metaphors, if we want to control and manipulate reality, we will organize knowledge into a map, but if we want to conform our souls to reality, we will understand knowledge as taking us on a pilgrimage. As Paul Griffiths argues in *Intellectual Appetite*,

There is a direct genealogical link between the seventeenth-century aspiration toward a *mathesis universalis*—of, that is, mapping all knowledge onto a manipulable grid and providing clear principles of method that would permit the attainment of certainty about any topic—and the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century hope for institutions of higher education free of commitments to value.²²

This “*mathesis universalis*,” or universal knowledge, causes the strict departmental divisions within modern universities, divisions that Berry decries as arbitrary and opposed to our understanding of the true interconnections between all knowledge. But knowledge that has been divided into discrete bits and arranged in a scheme is much easier to use, so if all we care about is knowledge that we can use, knowledge that gives us power, then we will tend to organize our universities in such fragmented ways.²³

²¹Berry, “Higher Education and Home Defense,” 52.

²²Paul J. Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite: A Theological Grammar* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 16.

²³Schreck also notes the broader cultural divisions that Berry sees contributing to the divisions within universities: “[Berry] argues that higher education represents disconnection itself: institutions disconnected from their communities, disciplines disconnected from each other, research disconnected from its consequences, teaching disconnected from emotions or values, and curricula disconnected from possibility. Often the result is that higher education works to disconnect students from home.” See Jane Margaret Hedahl Schreck, *Wendell Berry's Philosophy of Education: Lessons from Port William* (Grand Forks, ND: The University of North Dakota, 2013), 350.

Indeed, the same desires that contribute to the fragmentation and specialization of knowledge in universities have a similar effect in other areas of modern life: diverse, healthy neighborhoods with residences, businesses, and stores are replaced by segregated zones that isolate each function;²⁴ complex farming patterns with polycrops and integrated animals are replaced by monocultures and factory farming; family doctors who know their patients are replaced by specialists who each treat only one particular disease; jobs requiring diverse skills are replaced by assembly-line jobs where each person fulfills only one function. Division enables control, and so we divide madly: “The first principle of the exploitive mind is to divide and conquer.”²⁵ With the mounting ecological and social costs, however, it seems more and more clear that the “divide and conquer” mantra leads only to pyrrhic victories. As we have already seen, this greedy desire for control characterizes, as Lewis argues, applied science, not those who want to conform their souls to a reality that is, in fact, interconnected in endlessly complicated and interesting ways. Yet if we demand that our places provide what we want, then we will organize and divide knowledge as we have done in our modern research universities. If, on the other hand, we are to learn how to ask of our places, “What do you need?” we will seek to organize knowledge differently.

The Tree of Wisdom

In his essay “The Loss of the University,” Berry proposes that we might recover a true university by remembering that the task of the university should be to form good human beings: “Underlying the idea of a university—the bringing together, the combining into one, of all the disciplines—is the idea that good work and good citizenship are the inevitable by-products of the making of a good—that is, a fully developed—human being.”²⁶ Berry explores some of his ideas regarding what such a unified education would look like in the rest of this essay. In essence, his ideas rest upon cultivating healthy imaginations—which as we have seen begins with fostering affection for our places rather than seeking to extract what we can from them—and a common language, and then keeping both of these responsible to their place through local work.

If we desire to serve the health of our places, Berry argues, we should return to the ancient understanding of knowledge as a tree. Re-imagining knowledge

²⁴Eric O. Jacobsen, *The Space Between: A Christian Engagement with the Built Environment* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 33–54.

²⁵Berry, *The Unsettling of America*, 11. Berry expands on his diagnosis throughout *The Unsettling of America*, and his critique centers on these divisions and the unhealthy level of specialization they lead to. As he states, “The disease of the modern character is specialization.” *Ibid.*, 19. See also Alasdair MacIntyre’s essay “Politics, Philosophy, and the Common Good” where he claims that “the forms of compartmentalization characteristic of advanced modernity are inimical to the flourishing of local community.” Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *The MacIntyre Reader*, ed. Kelvin Knight (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 248.

²⁶Wendell Berry, “The Loss of the University,” in *Home Economics: Fourteen Essays* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 1987), 77.

through this metaphor reminds us to pay attention to the ways that knowledge coheres, a particularly important reminder in our highly specialized age:

This Tree, for many hundreds of years, seems to have come almost naturally to mind when we have sought to describe the form of knowledge. In Western tradition, it is at least as old as Genesis, and the form it gives us for all that we know is organic, unified, comprehensive, connective—and moral....If we represent knowledge as a tree, we know that things that are divided are yet connected. We know that to observe the divisions and ignore the connections is to destroy the tree. The history of modern education may be the history of the loss of this image, and of its replacement by the pattern of the industrial machine, which subsists upon division—and by industrial economics (“publish or perish”), which is meaninglessly apart from division.²⁷

If the history of modern education, and the loss of the university, is a story of the loss of this image, then the recovery of the university should begin with reestablishing this metaphor of knowledge as a tree.

The image of a tree cultivates in us a fidelity to both people and the earth, calling us to consider how such an image might shape the form and content of the work universities do. If knowledge is like a tree, each discipline needs to work out its relationship both to the trunk of truth and to the land in which the truth is rooted. Universities must, first of all, provide their students with a coherent trunk of knowledge, a clear sense of the way that various disciplines cohere. Hence Berry maintains that the “need for broadly informed human judgment...requires inescapably an education that is broad and basic.” Such an education would begin by leading students up the trunk of this tree, and only once they have grasped the trunk would it guide them into more specialized knowledge. As Berry explains, “The work that should, and that can, unify a university is that of deciding what a student should be required to learn—what studies, that is, constitute the trunk of the tree of a person’s education.” Berry acknowledges that determining what constitutes this trunk, or core curriculum, is a difficult matter, but our current practice of leaving it up to the student is an avoidance of responsibility. How can we expect an eighteen-year-old freshman to know what they need to know if their professors cannot even agree on the necessary common knowledge?

Berry suggests that our conversations about what should form this trunk begin with the classic understanding of the liberal arts:

It cannot be denied, to begin with, that all the disciplines rest on the knowledge of letters and the knowledge of numbers....From there, one can proceed confidently to say that history, literature, philosophy, and foreign languages rest principally on the knowledge of letters and carry it forward, and that biology, chemistry, and physics rest on the knowledge of numbers and carry it forward.²⁸

He thinks that further definition of this foundational knowledge should be provided by the local faculty, but what he particularly decries is our current refusal to define a trunk at all. For “although it may be possible to begin with a branch and

²⁷Ibid., 82–83.

²⁸Ibid., 86.

develop a trunk, that is neither so probable nor so promising."²⁹ Thus universities have a responsibility to define for their students a common curriculum that anchors their further studies. If a university community is not rooted in a common narrative and common understanding of its community, then it will wither. And if a university is not unified in its reaching toward a shared vision of the good, of the light of the sun, then it will sprawl in confusion.

Learning how language ought to make meaning within a community is essential for practicing this rooted learning, and it is for this reason that a liberal arts education begins with the *Trivium*, or the study of language. The *Trivium*, or the "Three Ways," consists of grammar, the art of order, or questions about the structure of language; logic or dialectic, the art of thinking with language, or questions about truth; and rhetoric, the art of soul leading, or questions about how to use language to persuade others of truth.³⁰ The classical liberal arts also included the *Quadrivium*, and while these mathematical arts of order are also important, the *Trivium* is particularly foundational for any institution of higher education because it investigates the connective human faculties of order, sound thought, and wisdom through persuasion. The fruit of these arts is a liberated thinker and doer who wields a precise language with which to assign value to people, places, and problems.

An education founded in the liberal arts necessarily and somewhat paradoxically frees humans to be accountable. While our culture tends to think of freedom in negative terms—we want to be free *from* all restraints—the liberty offered by the liberal arts is a positive freedom—we are free *for* generous service. Indeed, the etymological link between liberty and liberality points to the traditional belief that generosity and concern for others was the proper posture of a free person.³¹ In other words, a liberally educated person is responsible to exercise her freedom in a way that serves the health of her place and community.³² Learning how language ought to make meaning within a community is essential for practicing this responsibility.

The liberal arts, then, teach students how language orders our thoughts and lives, thereby freeing them from the oppression of the unimportant things that so often preoccupy their time. This is why Berry argues that the proper task of

²⁹*Ibid.*, 82.

³⁰For a thorough introduction to the *Trivium*, see Sister Miriam Joseph, *The Trivium: The Liberal Arts of Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric: Understanding the Nature and Function of Language*, ed. Marguerite McGlinn (Philadelphia, PA: Paul Dry Books, 2002). We have also been influenced by Stratford Caldecott's efforts to "translate" the *Trivium* in Stratford Caldecott, *Beauty in the Word: Rethinking the Foundations of Education* (Tacoma, WA: Angelico Press, 2012).

³¹C. S. Lewis traces this development in the meaning of the words "free" and "liberty" in C. S. Lewis, *Studies in Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

³²William Cronon makes a similar argument in his excellent essay on liberal arts education. "Only Connect...: The Goals of a Liberal Education," *The American Scholar* 67.4 (1998): 79. See also Joseph A. Henderson and David W. Hursh, "Economics and Education for Human Flourishing: Wendell Berry and the Oikonomic Alternative to Neoliberalism," *Educational Studies* 50 no. 2 (March 1, 2014): 178–179.

contemporary education is to teach students how to order their lives responsibly:

The complexity of our present trouble suggests as never before that we need to change our present concept of education. Education is not properly an industry, and its proper use is not to serve industries, either by job-training or by industry-subsidized research. Its proper use is to enable citizens to live lives that are economically, politically, socially, and culturally responsible. This cannot be done by gathering or "accessing" what we now call "information"—which is to say facts without context and therefore without priority. A proper education enables young people to put their lives in order, which means knowing what things are more important than other things; it means putting first things first.³³

In order to learn "what things are more important than other things," we must cultivate a responsible, common language—a particularly necessary task at a time when the role of language in universities is understood as just one more piece in the puzzle of a student's education.

If we imagine a concerned student who has been trained in the *Trivium* present at a township meeting along with other citizens, all from various socio-economic and educational backgrounds, we can begin to see the responsibility this student has to these people and their place. She feels a moral obligation to share her concerns for the sanitation policy and is unafraid to do so. She knows that if her thoughts are unordered, or she argues unsoundly or articulates herself poorly, she will likely fail to communicate adequately the truth in her concerns. In other words, she will struggle to imagine how to persuade the township board responsibly if she has not practiced the arts of the *Trivium*. We hope that her university community has not failed her and that it has instead prepared her—through the order of grammar, the soundness of logic, and the persuasive force of rhetoric—to stand by her words and to foster a healthy language that responds clearly and wisely to the problem at hand.

Incorporating the *Trivium* more deeply into higher education could take different forms at different institutions. Revising the general education curriculum to require students to take a foreign language might be one way, and indeed Berry advocated for this requirement at the University of Kentucky.³⁴ But even without such curricular revisions, faculty and students can find more immediate ways to practice a caring, responsible language. For instance, when Berry taught at the University of Kentucky in the late 1980s, he posed a question from the day's reading at the beginning of each class. He then gave students 20 minutes to write their response to this question. The catch was that they had to do so in a single sentence. As one of Berry's students recounts, this assignment was quite challenging:

The first quiz was a disaster for most of the class, including me, mainly because we were not accustomed to writing, much less thinking, so directly and precisely. His quizzes demanded

³³Wendell Berry, "Thoughts in the Presence of Fear," in *Citizenship Papers* (Washington, D.C.: Shoemaker & Hoard, 2003), 21.

³⁴Wendell Berry, *Conversations with Wendell Berry*, Literary Conversations Series, ed. Morris Allen Grubbs (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2007), 11.

archer like strength and accuracy, and we had to get in shape and practice. Focusing our minds to make every sentence and every word matter, we tried our best to rise to our teacher's challenge. Some of our sentences even came close to the mark. Of all of the skills I practiced as a graduate student, this skill of achieving directness and accuracy—this astonishingly practical but difficult skill—is the single most valuable one to me as a writer and a teacher.³⁵

This sort of simple assignment may not seem very significant, but it clearly made a difference in the life of one student, and it represents the kind of small steps that faculty and students can take toward cultivating responsible language.

Thus an education unified by a common trunk of knowledge and a responsible language forms students' imaginations to perceive the connections between seemingly disparate fields; in this way they can keep their specialized knowledge faithful to the whole tree. Yet while such a liberal arts curriculum is undoubtedly important, it is not sufficient to form healthy imaginations, imaginations capable of judging whether or not our knowledge and work are serving the health of our places. For the standard by which we need to judge all our learning and work is found outside of the university, in the ground in which the tree of knowledge is rooted. This rootedness is not only metaphorical but also literal; as Berry explains, the standard to which we must ultimately remain faithful is "the life and health of the world."³⁶ Elsewhere, Berry calls this external standard against which we should judge all our work the "Great Economy" or the "Kingdom of God."³⁷ This Great Economy is much more comprehensive than the market economy—in fact, it "includes everything."³⁸ Of course the task of making our knowledge and work faithful and responsible to everything is a task that is never complete. It requires the ongoing work of judging and correcting our visions, and it ultimately requires a healthy imagination, one that sees the complex needs of its community. Difficult though this task may be, it is a necessary one, for if the learning that universities foster fails to stem from and contribute to the health of the "Kingdom of God," then the university and the communities it exists to serve will wither and die.

Growing a Garden

Imagining knowledge as a rooted tree, teaching the liberal arts, and being imperfect exemplars of rooted living are not sufficient to form our students to desire to be stickers who seek the health of their homes, particularly when the broader culture continues to foster boomer values. So while we work to shape

³⁵Morris Allen Grubbs, "A Practical Education: Wendell Berry the Professor," in *Wendell Berry Life and Work*, ed. Jason Peters (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 140.

³⁶Wendell Berry, "Discipline and Hope," in *A Continuous Harmony: Essays Cultural and Agricultural* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace & Co, 1972), 164.

³⁷Berry, "Two Economies," 54–56.

³⁸Herman Daly compares these two contrasting economies to Aristotle's *oikonomia* and *chrematistics*. See Herman Daly, "Forward," in Wendell Berry, *What Matters?: Economics for a Renewed Commonwealth* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2010), x. See also Henderson and Hursh, "Economics and Education for Human Flourishing," 180–182.

our curriculum in ways that will bring questions of place into the heart of our classroom conversations, such a curricular shift is not adequately formative. Thus, inspired by Wendell Berry and the philosopher James Smith, we have worked here at Spring Arbor University with other members of our community to start a campus garden. Is growing a garden sufficient to root students' learning? Probably not, but our hope is that the practice of gardening together will shape our students' imaginations, their affections, and their questions.

Smith, in his *Cultural Liturgies* series, draws on an Augustinian anthropology to argue that we humans are liturgical animals, by which he means desiring, imaginative creatures whose affections are shaped by our practices and shared stories. What this means for the university is that "the mission of the Christian university should be conceived not just in terms of dissemination of information but also, and more fundamentally, as an exercise in formation."³⁹ Practices that form students in rooted living are difficult to imagine in institutions where students only live for four or five years and then set off to follow their careers wherever they may lead. It is even harder to implement such practices in a 15-week class, although the contributors to *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith and Learning* display remarkable creativity in adapting to this context practices that form students in other ways.⁴⁰ Our hope, though, is that the practice of gardening as a community might shape students to care more deeply about their connections to their place, to desire a more vigorous health, and to adopt a posture of gratitude.

Gardening places us in our time and location; it reminds us of our limits as placed creatures and fosters a language accountable to such limits. Plants grow in particular places from the soil and nutrients and light available to them there. We cannot grow bananas or mangoes in Michigan. We have to learn which plants will thrive here, and which will thrive in our particular conditions. We learn to accommodate our appetites to these plants, and to the seasons in which they bear fruit. Such learning clarifies and roots our language. Now when we say the word "tomato," our associations include not merely the pale red slices on a McDonald's hamburger, but also the rich red globes hanging from the deep green foliage on a summer afternoon we spent weeding with our friends in the garden. Gardening also sharpens our language because it forces us to, as Berry says, stand by our words; we have to test the language we use against the reality of the things we are talking about, the seeds, soil, bugs, work, sun, and water that foster or inhibit life. With this more accountable language, we become able to respond to the conditions and needs of our place. We thus begin to live within the limits of what our place can allow and become more able to lead lives of reciprocity and responsibility.

This reflects the complex health and beauty that a garden can embody. Our culture's vision of a healthy life is about as simplistic as its vision of a healthy

³⁹James K. A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom (Cultural Liturgies: Volume 2): How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013), 4.

⁴⁰David Smith and James K. A. Smith, eds. *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith and Learning* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2011).

lawn: 1.5 children, a nice house in the suburbs with a three-car garage, and a good career indicate the monocultural, impoverished cultural imagination we have. It is this imagination that leads us to flatten the space around our houses and buildings and dump chemicals on it until it looks evenly green. But when we trade this relationship with our environment for one in which we cultivate different kinds of plants and carefully tend their growth, we begin to enrich our imaginations. As Berry writes in "Think Little" about the way that gardening can transform our thinking, when we apply our "minds directly and competently to the needs of the earth, then we will have begun to make fundamental and necessary changes in our minds."⁴¹ These changes in our minds will expand our imaginations as we participate in the economy of the soil, where water and sun and organic nutrients, brought together with human care, grow good food. Faculty, staff, and students may then be better able to envision how this healthy pattern might be cultivated in our marriages, our churches, and our communities. This formation in an aesthetic of health can help us all to be better participants in the Kingdom of God rather than simply accommodating ourselves to the simplistic, boomer economy of consumerism.

Finally, gardening can cultivate the gratitude that should characterize our posture as placed creatures. When all of our food comes from the grocery store, we begin to treat food, as we already treat most everything else, as a commodity that we deserve. This sense of entitlement, as we have already argued, infects our attitude toward education as well. But gardening can remind us of the proper gratitude we should have for our food. When some vegetables actually survive the vicissitudes of weather, bugs, disease, and deer, we recognize more deeply the true miracle that life is, and our gratitude for this gift springs almost unbidden. Our affections and imaginations have begun to be oriented toward our place, and while this can seem insignificant, this orientation may have far-reaching consequences, changing the questions we ask, the life choices that we make, and the economy in which we participate.

Gardening is no panacea for the ills that infect our deracinated culture and universities. What we are urging is that particular communities in particular institutions begin imagining ways that they can actively root themselves in their places. Gardening is one way to do this, but such formation will look different in different places. One of our friends at University of Mobile has begun a regular "Foxfire Evening" where students and professors gather to learn handicrafts. Other schools, like St. Catherine's College and Berea, incorporate the physical work of caring for their place much more comprehensively. Our hope is that local curricula, committed faculty, small reading groups, long-term involvement with the surrounding community, and a shared sense of institutional purpose can

⁴¹Wendell Berry, "Think Little," in *A Continuous Harmony: Essays Cultural and Agricultural* (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace & Co, 1972), 84. See also Wendell Berry, "The Reactor and the Garden," in *The Gift of Good Land: Further Essays Cultural and Agricultural* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2009), 161–170.

142 all contribute to offering students an education that will root them and prepare them for the work of restoration. Such an education can perhaps form us and our graduates not to desire a better place somewhere else, but, as Hannah Coulter longs for, "a better place where [we] are, because [we] want it to be better and have been to school and learned to make it better."⁴²

⁴²Berry, *Hannah Coulter*.

Stop Talking that Way! An Affective Approach to Uncanny Speech in the Christian College Classroom

By Bethany Keeley-Jonker and Craig Mattson

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Imagine for the moment a professor—say, one of the authors of this essay—whose institution asked her or him to teach every course from a Christian perspective, including a basic skills course like Public Speaking 101. Hunting for intersections between oral presentation and the Christian faith, she or he could start with a careful review of the six or seven public speaking texts stacked on an office shelf, sent at the sometimes dubious largesse of academic publishers. And sure enough, all these books address problems potentially addressable by Christian doctrine or worldview analysis: ethnocentrism, plagiarism, deceitfulness, to name a few. Of course such questions about unethical exclusivity, fraud, and deceit could conceivably arrive in courses from a range of disciplines: education, social work, physical therapy, chemistry, criminal justice. And in almost every case, one can find something usefully doctrinal or perspectival to say. But the fact that doctrine or worldview proves so quickly and generally useful makes us a little suspicious, especially when efficient generalities elide the particularity of disciplinary praxis and perspective in a given course.¹ We would like to notice the ways that a skills-based, methods-focused course—in our case, Public Speaking—presents professors and students with problems for which Christian faith proves resourceful. We are thinking in particular of problems rooted in material, embodied, and emotional concerns. In a Public Speaking class, such concerns arrive for teachers and students as problems of affect.

The term *affect* is defined variously across disciplines. Our use of the term draws on Brian Massumi's distinction between *affect* and *emotion*. The more common term, *emotion*, is the socially recognizable label given to an indefinable but palpable "liveliness" that Massumi and a growing host of theorists are calling *affect*:

Bethany Keeley-Jonker and **Craig Mattson** notice that some of their best speech students practice a delivery so controlled it feels uncanny. This essay traces such "zombie speech" not to students' worldview assumptions but to affective norms in conventional speech pedagogy. The essay appropriates Christian theology to reorient the practice of speech in keeping with a newly identified value: "immanent publicity." Ms. Keeley-Jonker is an Assistant Professor, and Mr. Mattson a Professor, both of Communication Arts at Trinity Christian College.

An emotion is a subjective content, the sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal. Emotion is qualified intensity, the conventional, consensual point of insertion of intensity into semantically and semiotically formed progressions, into narrativizable action-reaction circuits, into function and meaning. It is intensity owned and recognized.²

In this case, the emotion would be stage fright, or communication anxiety, whereas the affect would be the indeterminate energy that student speakers and audiences experience in the live speech event.

The first day of speech class is often bubbling with affect, as students introduce themselves to each other with over-eager laughter, indirect gazes, shaky knees, trembling hands, and sometimes frozen facial expressions to the classroom. But when instructors move quickly to offer reassuringly familiar or technical labels for these phenomena, either as “stage fright” or “communication anxiety,” they sometimes forget that each speaking situation comprises not only anxiety, but also other kinds of affect essential to a dynamically functioning public address. When Christian professors reassure stage-stricken students with the very biblical injunction, “Be not afraid,” they may elide other biblical passages calling people to fear, to revere, to tremble. We should like to ask how such passages put in question the received wisdom of the modern public speaking tradition—that communication anxiety should be governed and engineered and ultimately replaced by a cheery calm? We acknowledge that talking about affect is difficult in any disciplinary context, especially given needs for scientific legitimacy and assessment accountability. But paying attention and bearing witness to elusive realities should be, we contend, a specialty of Christian thought.

This essay draws on Christian thought to address affective questions in the speech classroom. First, we examine the affective norms of conventional public speaking pedagogy, by looking at common tropes in speech textbooks.³ Then we

¹Here we drew on the critique of conventionally worldview-focused pedagogy and scholarship put forward by James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009) in which he makes an argument for greater attention to affect in pedagogy. In a similar vein, James Davidson Hunter has critically evaluated overly cognitive approaches to cultural engagement in *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 18-31. Finally, our argument about teaching runs parallel to an essay by Kurt C. Schaefer, “Christian Practices and Technical Courses: Making Integral Connections,” which focuses on a technical course which, like the public speaking course, might seem to resist theological integration. See his essay in *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith & Learning*, eds. David I. Smith and James K. A. Smith (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 194-210.

²Brian Massumi, *Parables of the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 28.

³Our essay consults a range of popular speech textbooks, including Stephen Lucas’s *The Art of Public Speaking*, 11 ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2012), which ranks as a bestseller in Amazon and Google listings of speech textbooks. But we note that other textbooks cited in this paper, despite variation in author and publisher and general approach, speak with conspicuous uniformity. Accordingly, our selection of texts for analysis establishes not

search out the affective consequences of this pedagogy, especially in an eerily calm and tightly controlled mode of delivery which too easily turns the classroom into a kind of “uncanny valley.”⁴ Finally, we argue that affective problems in uncanny speech provide an unlooked-for opportunity for Christian theology to intersect with rhetorical practice, not simply by commending an improvement of the speaker’s worldview or moral character in order to improve her speech, but by re-voicing teaching and learning. Instead of interiorizing and individualizing speech—which we fear leads students into uncanny delivery—Christian theology (for example in the work of Miroslav Volf and David Bentley Hart) holds promise of helping teachers and students alike to find their voices in the basic speech course.

Uncanny Affect as Pedagogical Effect in Conventional Textbooks

Uncanny cultural figures might serve as metaphors, such as the robot or horror monsters that are neither alive nor dead; but in this essay we invoke this idea with the term *uncanny* and the types *zombie* and *vampire* to suggest a speech that is animated but, in a manner of speaking, undead. Of course, the speaker continues to live and breathe, but the *speech* approaches engagement with reality, audience, and rhetorical force, without fully arriving. We should like to argue, through close examination of representative textbooks, that uncanniness is an affective effect of well-intentioned pedagogy.

Affect can be a highly elusive reality, but it is nonetheless a force shaped by explicable norms.⁵ One window into the affective-shaping norms of contemporary speech instruction appears in the public speaking textbook predilection for lists of prescriptions—*Speak up! Rehearse 10xs! Arrange your points logically! Envision stunning success! Tense and relax your muscles! Make eye contact for 1.5 seconds at a time! Remember, stage fright is normal!*⁶—are easy to make fun of. But as Matt McGarrity’s examination of communication textbooks suggests, these publications do offer an important chance to notice how pedagogy encourages a particular form to student speech.⁷ Even more importantly, textbooks “record daily peda-

comprehensiveness but representativeness.

⁴Masahiro Mori, “The Uncanny Valley,” *Energy* 7 no. 4 (1970): 33-35. <http://www.android-science.com/theuncannyvalley/proceedings2005/uncannyvalley.html>.

⁵Joshua Gunn puts it this way: “Tone is essentially pointless, but it is not normless.” Gunn, “On Speech and Public Release,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 13 no. 2 (2010): 28.

⁶For representative instances of such prescriptive-saturate coverage see the following: Cindy L. Griffin, *Invitation to Public Speaking*, 3rd ed. (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2003), 157-174; Dan O’Hair, Hannah Rubenstein, and Rob Stewart, *A Pocket Guide to Public Speaking*, 4th ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2013), 37-46; Michael Osborn and Suzanne Osborn, *Public Speaking*, 6th ed., (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2003), 183-205 and 381-384.

⁷McGarrity, “Communication Textbooks: From the Publisher to the Desk,” *The SAGE Handbook of Communication and Instruction*, eds. Deanna L. Fassett and John T. Warren (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2010), 107. McGarrity argues that textbooks “serve as a discipline’s public face,” as they explain “new concepts, provide guidance to first-time teaching assistants (TAs), and serve as reference books for those within and outside the discipline. As such, textbooks highlight how we see ourselves as a discipline and how we project that self-

gical activities," which give us a chance to trace how speech instruction might be forming student voices.⁸

The first thing to notice about these textbooks is their preoccupation with equipping students to control their own affect—an understandable move given the loneliness a speaker can feel behind a podium. But as Nikolas Rose has argued in the Foucauldian tradition, although the pathos of stage fright feels deeply private, such personal feelings have become in late modernity something to be publicly managed through techniques and technologies.⁹ In public speaking courses, these would include mindfulness, relaxation, positive envisioning, workshop exercises, reflection journals, digital recorders, cameras, supporting DVDs, and websites with model speeches. Rose notes that late moderns have been encouraged and equipped "to act upon our bodies, souls, thoughts, and conduct in order to achieve happiness, wisdom, health, and fulfillment."¹⁰ Accordingly, this "expertise of subjectivity" aims in the public speaking classroom to empower stage-stricken students by addressing them with accessible, personable prose and vibrant graphic design—all of which evokes a pedagogical apparatus that guarantees that anyone can manage the chemistry and psychology of communication anxiety. In many cases, this therapeutic technique includes a series of empowering counsels for getting control over one's own nervousness through bodily and mental techniques.¹¹ Perhaps the most common device is to normalize the practice of public speaking by comparing it to an everyday communicative practice. "In many ways," notes Stephen Lucas, "public speaking requires the same skills used in ordinary conversation."¹² Steven Beebe and Susan Beebe similarly note that public address has "has much in common with conversation, a form of communication in which you engage every day."¹³ This therapeutic move uses an illuminating comparison to empower the apprentice speaker by strengthening her self-knowledge.

A second aspect to notice in speech textbooks is their emphasis on mandatory confidence. It is not sufficient that professionals be able to speak; they must also speak with confidence. Despite the tolerant and friendly discourse that characterizes textbook instruction, the demand for confidence presents urgently: "If you didn't realize just how important this class could be to your professional success," notes textbook author Deanna Sellnow,

conception to others."

⁸Ibid., 109.

⁹Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Soul: the Shaping of the Private Self*, London: Routledge, 1989, 10-11.

¹⁰Ibid., 10

¹¹A representative instance of this appears in Cindy L. Griffin's *Invitation to Public Speaking*, which includes exhortations to thorough practice, modest expectations, positive self-talk, and audience identification.

¹²Lucas, 8.

¹³Steven Beebe and Susan Beebe, *Public Speaking: An Audience Centered Approach*, 5th ed. (Boston, MA: Pearson, 2003), 5.

You must realize it now....Employers know they will train their employees again and again as new technologies emerge. Communication skills, however, are foundational. Once learned, they prove beneficial regardless of your role in an organization.¹⁴

The anxious student behind the podium probably never thinks to ask why so many resources—salaried professors, numerous course sections, expensive textbooks, supportive websites—come to the frank aid of her fearful subjectivity. But Rose’s analysis of the contemporary pervasiveness of therapeutic technique suggests to us an economic urgency behind calls for speakerly confidence. Neoliberal society depends on “the form of relations of exchange between discrete economics units pursuing their undertakings with boldness and energy, ever seeking the new endeavor and the path to advantage.”¹⁵ Applying Rose’s account to the public speaking classroom, we note that confident speech helps to “produce the most social goods and distribute them in the manner most advantageous to each and to all.”¹⁶

It might be objected that although public speaking textbooks do emphasize the usefulness of speaking well for getting a good job, the economic motive is countered by the civic. Hence, a representative textbook discussion of “citizens [who] gather to discuss issues affecting them” practicing “discussion characterized by certain assumptions about the need for cooperative action and subjective judgment to resolve a problem.”¹⁷ Similarly, another popular textbook argues in good civic fashion, “Public speaking is a primary mechanism for bring people together, for getting them to share perspectives and values, so that they can recognize who they are or can get something done.”¹⁸ Does not this make public speaking pedagogy, with its emphasis on good citizenship, a site for resistance to merely economic accounts of civic life? Unfortunately, as these quotations suggest, speaking textbooks tend to subjectify and individualize public-mindedness, by blurring the lines between the public and the interpersonal. Textbooks cast public communication as a kind of “public intimacy” best described in a dialogic model in which a speaker and a hearer offer each other respectful feedback as they address an agreed-upon predicament, examine rational solutions, and seek consensus.¹⁹ What Jenny Edbauer Rice says of public sphere theory appears to apply to public speaking pedagogy as well: both are “informed by a conversational model that

¹⁴Deanna D. Sellnow, *Confident Public Speaking*, 2nd ed. (Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2005), 7. An extensive discussion of public speaking’s usefulness for professional employment appears in W. A. Kelly Huff, *Public Speaking: A Concise Overview for the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 9-17.

¹⁵Rose, 226.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁷David Zarefsky, *Public Speaking: Strategies for Success*, 4th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2002), 442.

¹⁸Kathleen German, Bruce E. Gronbeck, Douglas Ehninger, and Alan H. Monroe, *Principles of Public Speaking*, 15th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2004), 7.

¹⁹One discussion of private subjectivity in public places emerges in Natalya N. Bazarova, “Public Intimacy: Disclosure Interpretation and Social Judgments on Facebook,” *Journal of Communication* 62 (2012): 815–832. See also discussing of the blurring of publicity and privacy in Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst, *Audiences: A Sociological Theory of Performance and Imagination* (London: Sage, 1998), 68-76.

imagines a back-and-forth civic discourse among multiple participants."²⁰

We might sum this analysis by saying that public speaking pedagogy today creates calm public speaking subjects by making affect therapeutically supervisable. These norms appear in a professionally and politically recognizable mode of effective delivery that might be characterized as a level-voiced, neutrally toned, interpersonally focused exchange of ideas. But sometimes this pedagogy results in more than it pursues or prescribes, including what we are calling *uncanny speech*.

Keep Calm and Deliver Uncanny Speech

In our experience, there are two moments when, during an oral presentation, professors and students find themselves in the uncanny valley of nearly-alive public speaking. Envision first, an eerily quiescent student speech made by someone that everybody thinks of as a "good student." She may well be a skilled writer, a logical thinker, a double major, an honors student with a 3.8 cumulative. Her presentation is well organized, exhaustively rehearsed, and yet emotionally—strange. The student may be smiling, nodding, gesturing, looking around, and clicking through PowerPoint slides with precision, but there is a peculiar emotional quality to the presentation. At times, it looks detached or manufactured; in other moments and from other parts of the audience, it looks like barely repressed emotion. To its credit, the delivery has no conspicuous marks of stage fright. It meets every expectation on the assignment protocols and earns the compliments of other students, even those who find themselves on the edge of an impolite yawn. We call this the *Zombie Speech*.

Now consider a second, apparently unrelated problem not uncommon in the public speaking classroom: student speakers who look only at the professor as they speak. The often high-achieving student, mindful of scholarships, anxious to maintain a top-level GPA, reduces the complexities of audience interaction by staring a little fiercely at the one person who doles out the grade. We call this the *Vampire Speech* because everything that the speaker says sounds eerily, unnervingly like, "I want to get an A." Like zombified address, vampiric delivery is a problem of affect because the speaker is alienated from the immediate and complex particulars of the speaking situation. In other words, in a class dedicated to public speaking this is speech devoid of publicity.

Both of these modes of uncanny speech can baffle the speech instructor, as she stares down at her rubric wondering how to describe what has just happened. We believe that one persuasive theoretical account of uncanny delivery arises, somewhat indirectly, in Joshua Gunn's essay about "public release" of private sounds in civil society.²¹ Pundit chatter about tennis players who grunt (Maria Sharapova) and political candidates who scream (Howard Dean) or cry (Hillary

²⁰Jenny Edbauer Rice, "The New 'New': Making a Case for Critical Affect Studies," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 94 no. 2 (2008): 209.

²¹Gunn, "On Speech and Public Release," 1-42.

Clinton) suggests that there are unspoken rules about permissible noises in public. Public release of inadvertent speech or sounds, in other words, norms how we define eloquence.

The trick is to understand involuntary or uncontrolled speech as that which measured speech always threatens to reveal—that every time we witness masterful eloquence, there lurks the possibility of a hiccup or belch waiting to rupture the ruse of public propriety.²²

Gunn argues that gender essentialism tends today to define eloquence in terms of moderate tones and deeper pitches.²³ We believe that uncanny delivery in the public speaking classroom registers a similar problem—speakerly affect governed by dubious cultural norms—although such speech looks more like “public withholding” than public release.

“Solving” such a problem can foster the Zombie or Vampire Speech. By managing the trembly knees and shaky voices, the pedagogical discourse also filters out the complex particularities of full-voiced, fully relational speech. The uncanny result is discourse that could be delivered by anyone to anyone at any time and anywhere. We believe that this blandly universal delivery, though it looks subtractive, actually exhibits an affective excess. Like Gunn’s analysis of public release, we suggest that the public withholding of uncanny speech indexes pedagogical norms of control, confidence, and interpersonal warmth. But enforcing these norms can be counter-productive. As Jonathan Crary has noted, efforts to govern subjectivity—such as the just-described public speaking norms—eventually fail. At some point, the squeezing of subjectivity into a particular culture norm starts “squirting” whatever you were trying to contain in the first place, in this case speakerly affect.²⁴

So, what should the speech instructor do when faced with uncanny speech? The uncanny speech creates a problem for contemporary pedagogy’s therapeutic technology: how does one distinguish clearly between effective and zombified public speaking? Should the professor simply say that the Zombie Speaker simply needs to warm things up by being more personal? But then, what if this prescription in turn produces the Vampire Speech and becomes *too* personally directed? Tell the student to pull back from her too-direct eye contact? Eventually this kind of critique depends on a secret sliding scale with the result that students are crafting their speech toward an ideal only tangentially related to their immediate speaking situation. In such cases the effect of the uncanny speech is an effect of conventional speech pedagogy.

Years ago Richard Rorty used to shrug off his critics with the dismissive remark, “Stop talking that way.” His ironic prescription against prescriptiveness implied a way of being an individual in public as an alternative to the rational-

²²Ibid., 5.

²³Ibid., 10-14.

²⁴Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2001), 45-46.

ist, universalist citizenship of conventional Enlightenment political theory.²⁵ Materialist rhetoricians like Barbara Biesecker have been saying much the same thing to rhetoricians for the past several decades, as they critique rationalism and individualism in idealist rhetorical theory. In contrast with a modernist model of public communication that "implicates a morally autonomous self,"²⁶ Biesecker redefines the rhetorical situation not as one stable subject (the speaker) interacting with another (the hearer) but instead as a collection of subjects and discourses being made and remade through the encounter.²⁷ Her construal reflects the "molecular" rhetorical materialism of Michael Calvin McGee for whom speakers and hearers and speeches and situations and desired changes are all immersed in an immanent plane of rhetorical action.²⁸

Unfortunately, this rhetorical theory has not made much headway into the public speaking classroom, perhaps because a Rortyan stop-talking-that-way approach to speech instruction has a hard time saying, "And *start* talking this way." But starting is really more what we desire than stopping. Though we have pointed to a weakness in the neoliberal/therapeutic discourses of the public speaking textbook, we do not wish to abandon its goals fully. We certainly still want our students to grow toward more competent citizenship and perform well in their jobs but we also seek something in excess of those goals, something canny rather than uncanny, alive rather than undead. This essay puts forward Christian theology as a way to start talking in a new way without resorting to prescriptive idealism. That new way is quite simply a matter of starting to speak Incarnationally.

Canny Affect and Incarnational Pedagogy

Sometimes in the name of Incarnational theology, Christian speech textbooks have offered little more than a theological paraphrasing of the therapeutic prescrip-

²⁵See Rorty's contrast between the metaphysician's rationalist universalism and the liberal ironist's minimalist pursuit of public kindness in his *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 73-95.

²⁶John Durham Peters, *Speaking into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1999), 20.

²⁷Barbara Biesecker, "Rethinking the Rhetorical Situation from within Thematic of *Difference*," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 22 no. 2 (1989): 110-111.

²⁸For McGee, speakers, listeners, speeches, situations, and desired changes bond to each other like atoms in a molecule. The speaker may feel alone at the podium, believing that the speech's success depends entirely on her. But she performs, says McGee, in a mutually influencing set of relations, just as in a molecule each atom affects all the others. The speaker has actions to take, but so does the audience. So, too, does the situation, which can take on a life of its own. (Think of speeches delivered in rooms too hot for anyone to stay awake.) Even the speech itself can do things apart from the speaker: the language used may have emotional resonance that the speaker is unaware of; the YouTube video she plays in the middle of the speech might overpower everything else she wishes to say. See her "A Materialist's Conception of Rhetoric," in *Rhetoric, Materiality & Politics*, eds. Barbara Biesecker and John Louis Lucaites (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), 29-30.

tivism in secular textbooks.²⁹ These authors and others are to be commended for at least making the connection between public speaking pedagogy and Christian theology, though we cannot help wishing they had drawn on more sophisticated reflections on theology and rhetoric.³⁰ Instead, Christian approaches to and adaptations of speech instruction tend to promote a perspective Ken Chase critiques as prescriptive idealism.³¹

Chase traces this idealism to an unfortunate analogy between the Incarnation and effective message adaptation. The logic works like this: God adapts God's self in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ; human communicators should go and do likewise. This rather tidy analogy unfortunately supports an essentially modalist account of the Incarnation.³² In contrast, Chase notes that a more adequate account of the Incarnation describes Jesus, not as the Father's adaptation of divine

²⁹Religious books discussing public speaking range across popular Christian nonfiction at least across the last century, stretching from Bruce Barton's *The Man Nobody Knows* (Lanham, MD: Ivan R. Dee, 1924 & 2000) to Joe Carter and John Coleman's *How to Argue Like Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009). But a few representative samples of a broader and (for us dissatisfying) approach to pedagogy are discussable as follows: In his textbook, Quentin Schultze offers a big-picture view of how sinfulness can cause problems in effective communication relationships, thus dealing with speech problems on a larger level than public speaking books typically address. But Schultze's tendency toward tips perhaps most stands out in discussing the religious and public dimension of speaking. For instance, a sidebar "servant speaker tip" recommends that readers "Learn how to dialogue responsibly with people from other faiths as well as agnostics and atheists" (14). Later, Schultze offers an anecdote about unsuccessfully presenting a religious viewpoint to a non-religious audience, but offers a list of "religious terms translated for nonreligious groups" (76) that does not address the very problem his anecdotal interlocutor raised. Quentin Schultze, *An Essential Guide to Public Speaking* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006). Another textbook, N. D. Wilson and Douglas Wilson's *The Rhetoric Companion*, reflects quite deeply about rhetorical practice, especially in their discussion of style, but their comfortable Christianizing of classical rhetoric may best be summed in their dissatisfying revision of Quintilian's definition of "good person speaking well" by switching in "godly" for "good." N. D. Wilson and Douglas Wilson, *The Rhetoric Companion: A Student's Guide to Power in Persuasion* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 2011), 20, 123-127. Bill Strom's brief chapter on public speaking in *More Than Talk* also highlights interrelated factors in a public speaking situation, but does not offer a strong difference from textbooks presenting public speaking without a religious grounding. Indeed, the longest segment on ethics in this chapter uses Kant's categorical imperative, rather than any specifically Christian imperative. *More Than Talk: Communication Studies and the Christian Faith*, 2nd ed. (Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt, 2003), 193-220.

³⁰For religious scholars doing important work bearing directly on our project, please see Calvin L. Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom: The Rhetoric of Augustine's Confessions* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 1999) as well as David Bentley Hart, *The Beauty of the Infinite: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004).

³¹Kenneth Chase, "Christian Rhetorical Theory: A New (Re)turn," *Journal of Communication and Religion* 36 (2013): 25-49.

³²As Chase explains, modalism construal of godhead is a notion that traces to an ancient heresy known as Monarchianism. Modalism construes God the Son as an adaptation of godhead for human understanding (31). But as Chase argues, Jesus is not a role that God plays or a mask that God dons in order to express the divine essence in sundry ways. Such a heresy "sacrifices the plurality of God's triune persons in the task of maintaining God's oneness" (32).

substance for a human audience, but rather as the exact fullness of who God is to humankind. Treating the Incarnation as a kind of universally replicable move misses out, at one and the same time, on the infinity and particularity of Jesus as the speech of God. Jesus *speaks* the inexhaustible life of God but does so in a particular form. But if what matters about the Incarnation is that God the Father found a way to adapt God's self for a human audience, then Jesus himself in all his concreteness is not as important as the idealized message he represents. Jesus becomes a kind of Spark Notes that humans skim in order to be ready for heaven.

This reductiveness makes for bad theology; it also fosters what Chase calls a "truncated view of rhetoric," reinforcing an unfortunate dualism between style and substance.³³ Further, such a thematizing of the Incarnation in terms of "principles of audience adaptation" tends to support an ever-receding ideal for eloquence. McGee sums this conception of eloquence with devastating efficiency:

We judge a piece of discourse to be deformed, imperfect, or perverted. We then imagine it possible to reform, perfect, or recreate it. Using our prescriptive rhetorical "theories," we dream a more effective or more moral speech than the one we have heard. Finally, we turn the world upside-down by thinking that our imaginings are "real."³⁴

Although this essay has already noted that Christian professors are uniquely positioned to address the problem of uncanny delivery, current religious rhetorical theory has tended to reinforce the prescriptivism of contemporary speech pedagogy.

We propose that Christian professors continue to engage the Incarnation, but to do so more robustly. We should like to note the historic Christian confession that Jesus not only reveals God to humans, but also humans to humans.³⁵ Jesus is what God most fully has to say; he is also what humanity has to say. No doubt post-structuralist rhetoricians would warn that construing any kind of speech as the proper sound of human utterance is dangerously totalizing. But, our claim need not set up Incarnational speech as a fixed, flat, and spiritualized ideal, something reducible to the prescriptions of a textbook. Instead, this utterly humane speech is

³³Ibid., 33. Implying an ineliminable contamination in rhetorical practice, this conception of the Incarnation combines dispensable and indispensable elements of the godhead, thereby implying that genuine communication replaces "form and flourish" by supposedly purer expressions of truth (34). Using Christian doctrine in this way to improve public speaking actually leaves it decidedly unimproved, stuck as it is on the wrong side of a sharp dualism between style and substance. Instead, Chase conceives of the Incarnation as the persuasive wisdom of God, in which "salvation is found both by those accepting *how* he speaks and by those accepting *what* he speaks," a conception that in which eloquence entails "*bringing forth (witnessing) the suasory appeal of truth*" (40).

³⁴McGee, "Materialist Rhetorical Theory," 21.

³⁵For this account of the Incarnation's "recapitulation" of humanity, we draw on David Bentley Hart's discussion. Hart speaks not of Christ's delivering humanity, but "narrating" it. "Each person is 'narrated' by and 'narrates' that [human] nature, and each inevitably repeats the pattern of sin that disfigures it; but Christ, in the entire shape of his life, renarrates it according to its original pattern." See Hart, *The Beauty of the Infinite*, 326.

concretely particular—as particular as the lips, tongue, and teeth of a first-century Jew who combined pitch, cadence, force, and quality in a delivery that humanity had forgotten was possible. But in Jesus, who is the very form, the very speech of God, this particularity is also infinitely varied. The Incarnation takes up and delivers the church into truly human speech that unfolds polyphonously, endlessly varied, constantly idiosyncratic, ceaselessly new.

This need to give voice to an eloquence that is at once utterly particular and inexhaustibly varied helps explain a dynamic of differentiation throughout the Bible. The God of Holy Scripture is constantly calling people to use unique aspects of their identity or social position to articulate his life and word in the world: think of Ehud's left-handedness, Esther's beauty, Gideon's timidity, even Moses' stutter. We believe that this biblical attention to diverse capacities should shape speech pedagogy by calling speech students to testify in their own voice. This call counters traditional pedagogy's tendency to pursue universal, abstract modes of speech, like those critiqued by McGee. Miroslav Volf might describe a tendency to elide distinct voices as a regrettable move "from the particularity of the body to the universality of the spirit."³⁶ Volf describes this ecclesial embodiment vocally when he argues that the gospel calls believers "[t]o speak in one's own religious voice," by which he means "to speak out of the center of one's faith" in a way that is both responsive to other faiths and resourceful for those faiths.³⁷

What this emphasis on particular voices suggests to us is that the uncanny speech, for all its tediousness and oddness, is not merely a technical problem, a failure to meet set criteria on a universally recognizable rubric for Effective Public Speaking. It is an aesthetic failure but it is also an ethical failure, a grievous distortion of the eloquently human speech of Christ. When speakers forget what this sounds like and fall into zombified address, teachers and students alike feel disappointment at the undead speech; all had quite reasonably hoped for more, hoped for some quality of humanness and aliveness irreducible to a rubric item or an assignment description. Christian teaching might suggest that what we had hoped for is a participation in Christ's eloquence, in that truly human speech that is not a fixed ideal but rather a live event of Incarnational exchange. The nature of this exchange is most frequently experienced as gift, as an act of self-giving relation between speaker and audience. Chase imagines a "fully immersive view of the rhetor-audience relationship," in which "[a]udiences are not so much 'adapted to' as they are 'participating with' the rhetors' own formative processes."³⁸ Speech as imagined by the gospel need not be a demonstration of relational or rhetorical mastery, a trumping of other voices, but is instead a participation in the eloquence that Christ embodies and calls us to extend. We describe this eloquent form as *publicly immanent speech*.

³⁶Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1996), 48.

³⁷Miroslav Volf, *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2011), 133.

³⁸Chase, "Christian Rhetorical Theory," 46.

Historically, theologians have used the term *immanence* to refer to God's intimate involvement with the creation.³⁹ Such a conception of God's immanent voice shapes Volf's description of Abraham and Sarah's own immanent response to God from a contextually specific, culturally particular "belonging."⁴⁰ The God of Abraham and Sarah, in other words, calls people into redemptive work from within irreducibly specific cultural conditions. In the public speaking classroom, professors and students can practice this immanent involvement, this particular belonging, as a mode of delivery characterizable as *speaking-from*. This term, adapting Michael Polanyi's "from-to" knowing, names the way audiences can sense a speaker's "indwelling" of the speaking situation through a demonstration of careful presence and attentive belonging.⁴¹ *Speaking-from* acknowledges one's belonging, one's embeddedness in the concrete, contingent, and resourceful aspects of a given situation. Think for a moment of the simplest elements of vocal production: questions about force (How loudly should I speak?), pitch (How much of my registers should I use?), quality (How do I want my voice to feel to my hearers?), and time (How should I cadence my speech?). These questions entail that I *speak from* my own identity and within a particular situation.

In contrast speech that could have been spoken by anyone; speech that seems to come out of nowhere; speech directed toward nobody in particular can turn a public speaking classroom into the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel's vision. We might call the Zombie Speaker's delivery *speaking-at* because it tries to transcend immanence to the specifics of identity, register, place, and time. But this attempted universality misses what immanent theorist Gilles Deleuze would call "a plurality of centres, a superposition of perspectives, a tangle of points of view" that goes with richly situated discourse.⁴² Immanent speech begins, we argue, by noticing how speech webs speakers into a dynamic belonging to the speech's ever-shifting situation. Immanent delivery entails speaking *belongingly*.

So much for immanence; now what about publicity? For Volf, belonging is not enough. One also needs what he calls *distance* from one's own cultural context—hence the call of Abraham to leave his ancestral home and, in the company of Sarah, Lot, and a small host of others, to go to an unforeseen country.⁴³ "To be a

³⁹Stanley Grenz and Roger E. Olson, *Twentieth-Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1992), 11.

⁴⁰Volf, *Exclusion*, 37.

⁴¹Polanyi describes a mode of attention in terms of knowing *from* and knowing *to*: "Whenever we use certain things for attending *from* them to other things, in the way in which we always use our body, these things change their appearance. They appear to us now in terms of the entities to which we are attending *from* our body" (16). This attending *from* and *to* as a way of inhabiting the particulars of embodiment, situation, and relationship is highly suggestive for rhetoric involvement. Michael Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1983).

⁴²Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 56.

child of Abraham and Sarah and to respond to the call of their God means to make an exodus, to start a voyage, become a stranger."⁴⁴ The public speaking classroom constantly reminds teachers and students of the interval between speakers and hearers—not only in the experience of stage fright itself but also in the constant pressure of misunderstanding and the sometimes strangely disparate ways various people experience a given speech among audience members. In the public speaking classroom professors can encourage their students to venture across the communicational interval between speakers and hearers by the practice of *speaking-to* a public.

To get at the publicity of public speaking think again of questions speakers must answer about their own vocal production, questions about force, pitch, quality, and time. These are not only questions about immanent relation to a situation; they are also unavoidably social questions. Student speakers cannot answer such queries without recourse to the public they are *speaking-to*. If all they have is what they are *speaking-from* they may well have affectively charged discourse that is nothing but an intensely dyadic address—the Vampire Speech. This just-you-and-me approach to speaking can generate the charisma we might associate with a heart-to-heart mode of speaking but its uncanny focus makes hearers uncomfortable. Such immanent speech secretes; it does not address.⁴⁵ What a Christian eschatology could bring to speech instruction and practice, then, is a commitment to the possibility of *speaking-to* a public. Indeed, such publicity finds a model in God's self-giving life, especially in relation to his church. What may be most striking about the publicity of God's speech is that the calling-out of the *ecclesia* is contextually situated without being situationally determined. We appropriate and redirect Michael Warner's rhetorical scholarship on publicity in order to assert that what makes God's people a public is not an ethnicity or a constitutional document, so much as the simple fact that they are addressed by and addressing the Triune God.⁴⁶

If we can engage our students with elemental questions about delivery, we quickly begin making decisions about affective investment and social involvement.

⁴³Volf, *Exclusion*, 37-39.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 39.

⁴⁵Deleuze would almost certainly rejoice in this! He would restore the complexity of the rhetorical situation, but only by construing it as "a theatre where nothing is fixed, a labyrinth without a thread." See Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 56. We note with Volf that Deleuzian immanentist theory goes nowhere because it tries to go everywhere: "just as streams that flow in all directions at one and the same time are not streams but, in the end a swamp in which all movement has come to a deadly rest." Volf, *Exclusion*, 41.

⁴⁶Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 2002). Warner is interested primarily in "the kind of public that comes into being only in relation to texts and their circulation" (66). Noting that a public is self-organized and that "it exists by virtue of being addressed" (67), he insists (in a way that at least does not contradict and may actually support our ecclesial/theological claim) that "it must be organized by something other than the state" (68).

And this distance-and-belonging decision-making turns our attention to those voices that are shaping our *speaking-from* and our *speaking-to*. Such immanently public speech involves the speaker in the relational particulars of a given speech world while being attentive to excess of any one of those relationships. In contrast with the detachment of the Zombie Speech or the narrowness of the Vampire Speech, immanently public speech is fully involved with a situated audience without reducing to a merely interpersonal exchange.

Conclusion

We began this essay by asking a question: how might Christian theology intersect effectively with a basic skills course like Public Speaking? We have proposed that teachers can help students participate in the human speech of Christ by learning to speak in their own voice within complex publics. Is this essay proposing a *distinctively* Christian approach to teaching public speaking? Hardly. Our argument depends, in fact, on significantly overlapping insights from affect theory and post-structuralist thought. Accordingly, our Christian approach to speech instruction need not be limited to religious topics only, not least because the Incarnation takes into itself all of creation, all of human life. But by focusing on the Incarnation's consequences for delivery—that is, for the material, embodied, pre-cognitive aspects of speechmaking—professors make possible a complex attention for the ethical dynamics of eloquence and effectiveness. If our essay's wager wins out, our proposed approach to speech problems should spark affective questions in other disciplines and courses. Our hope is that this essay will serve as a provocation for other professors to notice immanent problems, to articulate those problems in keeping with Christian theology, and then to use such re-articulations to guide students toward a more robust Christian obedience.

The alert reader has surely noticed that, for all our discussion about uncanny speech, we have been chary about identifying what canny speech would sound like. Some of our reticence is probably traceable to our critical allergy to thematizing a specific sound or totalizing a particular voice. But in Incarnational theology, Jesus as the speech of God and humankind gives the infinite a particular sound.⁴⁷ Jesus' particular voice, after all, finds inexhaustible variegation in the speech of the church. What might this infinitely varied particularity sound like? For starters, think of someone speaking with grief or humor or indignation, so much so that the audience sensed at any moment that she could give way to unmanageable tears or laughter—and yet did not.⁴⁸ Such speech, no matter its subject, can exhibit both the particularity of immanent relation and the complex wildness of publicity.

Our discussion of immanently public speech has emphasized the importance of particular voicings in and from the Incarnation. A little counter-intuitively,

⁴⁷Hart, *Beauty of the Infinite*, 320-325.

⁴⁸Gunn, "On Speech and Public Release," 22.

this emphasis on vocal particularity arises from doctrine about the infinity of Christ's voice. As Hart observes, "its infinite character is expressible only in being committed to others, to the tradition that bears forward the gesture of Christ's presence, entrusted to the Spirit's power to repeat the gift across time."⁴⁹ Clearly, Christians' enactment of Christ's speech will slur and stutter at times, but that possibility for rhetorical zombification does not eliminate the urgent need in the church to give voice to God's life in the world.⁵⁰ Translated into public speaking pedagogy, that means that each student needs to learn to speak in her own voice, which further suggests that classroom work depends integrally and constantly on vigorous instruction about oral delivery.

Most speech textbooks begin with a big-picture view of the speech process, followed by discussions of research, arrangement, style—and then, finally, get around to delivery. Part of this delay to discuss delivery traces all the way back to Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*, which dedicates barely three pages (out of two hundred and twenty-three pages in George Kennedy's English translation) to the subject of delivery.⁵¹ Contemporary textbooks carry on this reticence about delivery, at least in part because the field of communication studies has sought disciplinary legitimacy by turning away from orality toward more scientifically determinate aspects of human exchange.⁵² Given our incarnational commitments to embodied and material life, we think this pedagogical reticence about delivery is an unfortunate business. What would happen to public speaking instruction if delivery were its constitutive practice?

For one thing, making speech integral to the classroom would upset the unquestioned authority of writing as the preferred modality of college instruction and as the most reliable marker of educatedness. Instructors could instead privilege speech by replacing low-risk writing assignments with low-risk speech assignments. Asking students to deliver responses to reading assignments orally in two-minute prepared remarks would make the work of finding their own voices an ongoing project. Instead of concentrating an individual's anxiety on "presentation days," students would come to see speech as a communal activity

⁴⁹Hart, *Beauty of the Infinite*, 339.

⁵⁰Volf's insight find support in the New Testament letter to the Ephesians, where the communicative gifts Christ gives to the church—apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, pastoral, pedagogical—aim toward a maturing differentiation in saintly utterance: "speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ." Ephesians 4:15, NRSV. We are indebted to David Ford's discussion of this passage, in which he lays out "a pervasive concern in Ephesians with transformative language as a constituent of salvation." See David Ford, *Self and Salvation: Being Transformed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 108. Ephesians thus suggests that Christian spiritual and ecclesial formation entail that each of us learn how to participate in the good speech of Christ in our own redeemed voice.

⁵¹Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, 2nd ed., trans George Kennedy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 195.

⁵²Joshua Gunn and Jennie Edbauer Rice, "About Face/Stuttering Discipline," *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 6.2 (2009): 216-217.

whose expressiveness spans a broad range of affects. A delivery-oriented classroom might become a place where new voices develop.⁵³

⁵³The authors wish to thank Trinity for funding this research and their colleague Mark Peters for proposing helpful revisions.

The Ethics of Everyday Life: Moral Theology, Social Anthropology, and the Imagination of the Human— **An Extended Review**

By Bryan C. Hollon

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In September of 1999, an organ harvesting scandal erupted in the United Kingdom when, during an offhanded remark at a public inquiry, professor Robert Anderson praised the quality and quantity of heart specimens held at Alder Hey Children’s Hospital in Liverpool. Although the matter seemed uncontroversial to Anderson, the revelation caused a stir with the general public and especially among parents of the thousands of babies whose organs had been harvested without consent or knowledge. Moreover, in addition to the 3,500 children whose organs were secretly removed prior to burial, it was discovered that 400 fetuses were being stored in the University of Liverpool laboratory without parental consent and that thymus glands had been surreptitiously removed from living children and sold to a pharmaceutical company.

In the midst of the scandal, administrators at Alder Hey hospital agreed to return children’s organs to parents, but they conspired to retain tissue samples of the returned organs, again without consent. It was this dimension of the scandal that piqued the interest of Cambridge scholar, Michael Banner, the author of the text currently under consideration. In his own words, “the parent’s requests for the return of their children’s body parts were deeply opaque to the official understanding of the hospital” (199). In the minds of hospital administrators and physicians, parental concern over this matter entailed little more than “confusion, error, sentimentality, or emotionalism” – a kind of pathology (199). For Banner, the inability of hospital officials to empathize with parental outrage was mirrored by incapacity in the field of bioethics to bring moral clarity to the scandal. Bioethicists, it seemed, could do little better than engage the dilemma as a contest between the rights of two opposing parties: the medical field and those who might benefit from its research on the one hand, and parents whose sentimentality over the harvesting

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of their children's organs led to a lapse in reason and an inability to submit to the greater good, on the other. "Very often," Banner tells us, the work of bioethicists justified the medical profession's disdain for the "sentimentality" of parents.

More specifically, Banner was troubled by the tendency among philosophical ethicists (and moral theologians working in conversation with philosophical ethicists) to engage in a kind of "ethics of hard cases" (9). Ethics practiced in this way has little if anything to say about the everyday experience of humans and steps in, only on occasion, to pronounce judgment when some exceptional difficulty arises. Is abortion right or wrong? Should it be legally permitted and under what circumstances? Should euthanasia be legally practiced? Should doctors be compelled to offer assistive suicide procedures when patients request them? What about harvesting fetal tissue for research? According to Banner, "the hard cases tradition...is always in danger of effectively satisfying itself with telling us that the good is good and the bad is bad" (12). Although hard questions cannot be avoided, they can hardly be thought to entail the entire scope of moral theology. Banner argues that "the dominant conception which sees the asking and answering of difficult questions as at the very core of moral theology diminishes the subject, and specifically stands in the way of taking up the task of shaping an everyday ethics" (9).

In addition, the "difficult questions tradition" is "inherently Pelagian" in that it acts

as if the good is natural in such a way that it needs no well-developed or considered narrative context to explain its character and existence – nor as if the bad, although perhaps in some way more mysterious than the good, does not itself require or deserve such a contextual understanding. (12)

What Banner would like to see instead of the dominant, hard cases approach is a moral theology interested in and able to explicate the "deep character and logic of different forms of life" (12). Moral theology must be concerned with a sustained articulation of the notion of a "good life" as conceived from within and from without the Christian faith in order to shed light on the differences between them. Ethical decisions are not made in a vacuum, so the purpose of moral theology is "not only to judge, but to understand and characterize the lives out of which our actions, good or bad, plausibly, persuasively, or even compellingly arise" (12). Although this far more nuanced and contextualized approach to moral theology offers a greater challenge than the "hard questions tradition," it also has greater potential to serve the Christian faith by taking on a winsome and evangelical character, proposing the Christian way of life as compelling, therapeutic, and even redemptive. Moral theology, like all theology, is simply off-track if it fails to propose the Christian way of life as a more beautiful and compelling alternative to people bound by the contemporary culture of self-interest, self-destruction, and death.

In order to get moral theology back on track, Banner contends that theologians need a new discipline to serve as partner in dialogue. As with the medical

professionals involved, philosophical ethicists had demonstrated an astonishing “social incomprehension” during the Alder Hey scandal and had proven themselves essentially worthless in Banner’s mind. However, he discovered a more illuminating approach to the controversy in the literature of social anthropology, and initially in a book by Lesley Sharp titled *Strange Harvest: Organ Transplants, Denatured Bodies and the Transformed Self* (University of California Press, 2006). Unlike philosophical ethics, the work of social anthropologists is more mindful of an entire cultural ethos, and their work tends to illumine the “moral code that guides human actions, thoughts, and language within a particular social group” (201). Banner contends that social anthropology is more likely than any other discipline to uncover the inner logic and significance of morality because it considers morality from within the context of comprehensive social narratives—various “forms of life,” which can be compared and contrasted with other social narratives or “forms of life.” Banner’s contention, incidentally, reminds me of my late mentor, James Wm. McClendon Jr. who so aptly described the work of the ethicist or moral theologian as an engagement in a “tournament of narratives.”

The work under consideration is, therefore, an attempt to articulate the narrative milieu of everyday ethics and reinvigorate moral theology through a dialogue with social anthropology so that it might reclaim its place in this tournament of narratives. The book’s chapters were originally delivered as the 2013 Bampton Lectures in the University of Oxford, which, according to the will of John Bampton who died in 1751, should deal with the “Articles of the Christian Faith, as comprehended in the Apostle’s and Nicene Creeds” (2). Brilliantly, Banner has honored the requests of John Bampton by framing his everyday ethics around the “paradigmatically human” moments of Christ’s life as articulated in the Creeds. Employing the methods of social anthropology, the book’s eight chapters seek to answer this question: “how does the Christian imagination of conception, birth, suffering, death, and burial bear on the human life course, and envisage and sustain a Christian form of human being” (5)? The degree to which a traditional “ethics of hard cases” tends to focus on controversies surrounding just these points in the course of life is fascinating and suggests that Banner’s approach is especially pertinent.

After chapter one’s blistering critique of moral philosophy and theology as practiced in the hard cases tradition, Banner seeks to illumine controversies surrounding conception and birth in chapters 2 and 3. He focuses on suffering in chapter 4, death and dying in chapter 5, burial and mourning in chapter 6, and remembering in chapter 7. Chapter 8 offers some concluding thoughts on “seeing Christ in the world.”

This book is dense and somewhat difficult reading since it was delivered as a series of academic lectures and has not been substantially altered for book publication. The various arguments offered in support of a distinctively Christian way of regarding conception, birth, suffering, death, burial, and remembering are complex and cannot be adequately explained in a few paragraphs. Accord-

ingly, rather than a comprehensive review, I will address just one representative example of Banner's overall argument with some specificity in order to show how his engagement with social anthropology places ethical "hard cases" in an illuminating context and creates a canvas on which the beauty and compelling nature of the gospel can be more clearly imagined.

Taking conception as our representative illustration, we may observe that ethicists in the hard cases tradition typically proceed as though it were their job to help potential parents sift through the various options regarding Assisted Reproductive Technologies. Should couples use in vitro fertilization or should they not? Philosophical ethicists and moral theologians working according to contemporary conventions attempt to pass judgment in order to declare the practice "good" or "bad." Often missing from current ethical debates is a thoughtful discussion about motivations, an attempt to understand why parents turn to the practice in the first place.

Citing several studies from the field of social anthropology, Banner introduces us to a rich and complex social matrix within which "the once-born and wanted child of the modern West is especially significant as an emotional and sentimental asset, completing and creating the family, as the site of truly affective relationality" (70). For complex reasons, couples imagine a "child of their own" that will complete and fulfill them and solidify their marital union. It is this desire for biological kinship that undergirds the rising demand for various forms of reproductive technologies. Banner quotes social anthropologist Gay Becker, who writes that "a wealth of cultural phenomena coalesce to create and foster a desire for the new reproductive technologies, but it is the drive for biological parenthood that could be said to be the crucial mainstay of their use and uptake" (50).

Banner believes that moral theologians must go much further than simply pronouncing the use of reproductive technologies licit or illicit, so he excoriates the Roman Catholic document, *Donum Vitae*, which offers a particularly egregious example of a failure among Christian moral theologians to overcome an ethics of hard cases in relation to reproductive technologies. This document leaves couples in a "double-bind – they are forbidden to make use of technologies that might assist them in realizing their desire for parenthood, fully biological or otherwise, while that desire is left solemnly in place on its contemporary pedestal" (57).

The question, which should have guided the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith as it produced *Donum Vitae*, is this: *should* a longing for biological offspring consume the imaginations and forms of life embraced by Christian couples? Or should they rather imagine other futures and cultivate other desires? Is there an alternative conception of kinship and form of life illumined by the gospel narrative? Might this alternative form of life offer the church a compelling testimony in the midst of a confused and desperate world? As you might expect, Banner believes that the Christian form of life does offer a compelling alternative grounded in the conception of Jesus Christ.

Indeed, the Christian gospel actually subverts traditional notions of kinship

and especially the idea that couples should chase after a “blood tie” based on the belief that a “child of one’s own” is an “inevitable or desirable” means to marital fulfillment. Banner makes the bold and compelling claim that, from a Christian perspective, “biology does not give one a child of one’s own” anyway (58). Instead, Christianity reconfigures traditional notions of kinship entirely. Christianity “commends a kinship framed...in the light of the conception of Christ, to whom Joseph was truly a father. Christian rites intend to unkin us, only to rekin us with new bonds that dispel childlessness as much as they eliminate orphanhood” (59). Banner offers a sustained commentary on the Christian tradition of God-parenthood, which was once a powerful and subversive practice suggesting that, in baptism, persons enter into a new form of kinship – one much deeper than a “blood tie.” In baptism we obtain new brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers, and children. Likewise, the Christian celebration of Eucharist subverts biological kinship by “making us kin to Christ, and thus to one another by sharing in his blood” (59).

Banner thus demonstrates, through an engagement with social anthropology, that preferences for biological kinship are at the heart of increasing demand for reproductive technologies. He then demonstrates, with reference to the Christian gospel and its traditional reception, that Christianity subverts preferences for biological kinship and thus offers hope to couples suffering from the culturally produced “desperation” of childlessness. Such desperation is not necessary. The church, Banner reminds us, has good news for couples facing infertility, since we can recommend different configurations of kinship such as adoption, God-parenthood, and even radical communities like L’Arche as manifestations of the “countercultural form of non-biogenetic” kinship available to all in Jesus Christ. Regarding the meaning of the rite of baptism, Banner remarks that children “are only properly received when they are received as gifts from the hands of God – which is why adoption might have some claim to model an archetype of parenthood for those who are themselves children by adoption” (80-81).

In the center of the book, beginning on page 123, there are four pages containing six full-color prints of Christian paintings depicting scenes from each of the paradigmatically human moments of Christ’s life as narrated in the creed: conception, birth, suffering, death, and burial. Banner offers commentary on each of these paintings as the book unfolds in order to illustrate important Christian re-imaginings of human personhood from the tradition. What Banner recommends in this book, Christians have always done, and artwork offers a powerful defense of his thesis. For example, in a chapter addressing human suffering and humanitarianism, Banner makes reference to a painting of the crucifixion by Grünewald. In that painting, “Christ is depicted with the characteristic marks of the disease which afflicted the patients of the hospital for which the altarpiece was painted – so we are to find these sufferers in Christ” (102). The painting suggests that Christ’s suffering provides a framework to illumine the suffering we see in the world around us and shape our responses to that suffering. His comments on paintings by Campin, Rembrandt, El Greco, and a panel from a Late Roman ivory

casket offer equally compelling insight into Christian imaginings of human life.

In the final pages of chapter 8, Banner's concluding analysis of a painting by Sir Stanley Spencer titled *Travoys Arriving with Wounded at a Dressing Station at Smol, Macedonia*, is brilliant, memorable, and supports the book's argument perfectly. This is a painting of a dressing station witnessed by the artist during the bloodbath of World War I. The dressing station is portrayed in such a way that it recalls the nativity scene from the gospels. The doctors and nurses stand over a patient in an illumined room, as other patients pulled on stretchers by horses look in on the work being performed. At first glance, it recalls the animals and visitors looking in on the scene of Christ's birth as we see in nativity paintings. The entire image seems to signify that the incarnation of Christ gives meaning to the work performed by the medics in that dressing station. Because Christ came into the world to heal, they labor in the most impossible of circumstances to do the same. Did they labor in vain? Was it sentimentality that inspired their pursuit of a hopeless cause? Though an ethicist focused on hard cases might answer yes, an ethics of everyday life, illumined by the gospel of Christ, will answer quite differently.

Banner recommends that moral theology return to the "Christian imagination of the human in ritual, art, literature, prayer, hymns, sermons, and so on" in order to discover a "script" that can make sense of everyday ethics (204). He not only makes this recommendation; he also offers a wonderful model to be followed. This book is must-read for anyone working in ethics and moral theology, and it is highly recommended for all who care about the Church's witness to Christ in these confused times.

Adam and Eve: An Evangelical Impasse?—A Review Essay

By Hans Madueme

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Karl Giberson. *Saving the Original Sinner: How Christians Have Used the Bible's First Man to Oppress, Inspire, and Make Sense of the World* (Boston, MA: Beacon, 2015). ix + 212 pp. \$27.95, ISBN 9780807012512.

William VanDoodewaard. *The Quest for the Historical Adam: Genesis, Hermeneutics, and Human Origins* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2015). x + 359 pp. \$30.00, ISBN 9781601783776.

John Walton. *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2-3 and the Human Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015). 255 pp. \$17.00, ISBN 9780830824618.

North American evangelical academic institutions are at a fork in the road. Developments in the natural sciences have raised, and continue to raise, difficult questions about the viability of traditional formulations of Christian doctrine. Mainline scholars have long made their peace with the modern world, but because of recent disputes these questions have reached a fever pitch for evangelicals. Tenured faculty, once sacrosanct, have been fired or forced to resign, extinguished professors lying about the cradle of evangelicalism as the strangled snakes beside that of Hercules.¹

The casualties are many: Peter Enns, Westminster Theological Seminary; Karl Giberson, Eastern Nazarene College; John Schneider, Calvin College; Howard Van Till, Calvin College; Jim Stump, Bethel College (Indiana); Michael Pahl, Cedarville University; Richard Colling, Olivet Nazarene; Anthony Siegrist, Prairie Bible College (Alberta, Canada); Bruce Waltke, Reformed Theological Seminary; Stephen Barnett, Bryan College; Steven DeGeorge, Bryan College; Brian Eisenback, Bryan College. The list will likely keep growing.²

What might all this portend for confessional institutions and Christian scholars? As Niebuhr pointed out, the dynamic between Christ and culture is an enduring problem that provides the broader context to these debates. Each

generation of Christians is confronted with that perennial struggle—"what is ultimately in question is the relation of the revelation in Christ to the reason which prevails in culture."³ Confessional colleges and seminaries embody varied ways of reconciling commitment to a tradition with inevitable developments in the academic disciplines. Christian scholars, working at those institutions, live within that tension, regularly evaluating the deliverances of their disciplines in the light of their own theological commitments. Pursuing academic knowledge within God's rich creation magnifies a sense of God's glory. But it can sometimes feel like walking a tightrope. On the one hand, there is a danger in always resisting genuine advances in knowledge just for the sake of preserving the past; on the other hand, always seizing on newer ideas and moving too quickly to overturn received traditions is fraught with danger as well. There lies the pickle.

In many respects, then, the current controversy over Adam and Eve is only the latest instance in which understanding about the world from extra-biblical sources has prompted a reexamination of traditional assumptions about what the Scriptures intend to teach. Much of the discussion that brings doctrinal claims into dialogue with relevant areas in science takes place in the science-religion discipline.⁴ Organizations like the Templeton Foundation, BioLogos, The Colossian Forum, and other affiliated groups are stimulating research agendas and new perspectives. In the midst of all this scholarly production, there is difference of opinion among Christians. Though the issues are complex and multi-faceted, some of that disagreement turns on how contemporary scientific views should impact hermeneutical, pastoral, and theological considerations. We take each in turn.

Prior to Copernicus in the 16th century, hardly any orthodox Christians believed that the earth revolves around the sun; in the 21st century, virtually no one denies heliocentrism. So, what happened? In light of the new cosmology, Christians saw occasion to rethink familiar biblical passages that had been widely misinterpreted. There are, then, legitimate instances when scientific developments *should* prompt hermeneutical revision. We may have misread the Bible. Déjà vu, is that the case here? Are we in a similar situation today, recent insights from a number of scientific disciplines urging us to revisit familiar passages about Adam and Eve, passages that the tradition may have misinterpreted? Judgments are deeply

¹The allusion is to Thomas Huxley in his review of Darwin, published anonymously: "The Origin of Species," *Westminster Review* 17 (1860): 556: "Extinguished theologians lie about the cradle of every science as the strangled snakes beside that of Hercules; and history records that whenever science and orthodoxy have been fairly opposed, the latter has been forced to retire from the lists, bleeding and crushed if not annihilated; scotched, if not slain."

²The scholars on this list are very different theologically from each other and represent views spanning the theological spectrum (for example, some of them clearly endorse a historical Adam and Eve); what they share in common is the experience of leaving their institutions over the human origins controversy. For one perspective on the broader issues, see Brandon G. Withrow and Menachem Wecker, *Consider No Evil: Two Faith Traditions and the Problem of Academic Freedom in Religious Higher Education* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014).

³H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951), 11.

divided on this point—for example, what bearing, if any, do specific biblical texts have on scientific disciplines dealing with origins? On what grounds do we decide *how* to read relevant passages, “literally,” “metaphorically,” or some nuanced combination of the two? In what sense does a doctrine of accommodation that recognizes the dual nature of Scripture—divine *and* human—shed light on interpretative questions at the interface of science and theology? These hermeneutical questions are easily multiplied, and they remain contested.

Then there are pressing pastoral questions. More than any previous generation, today’s teenagers and millennials are immersed in the world of science and technology. We live in a culture of science.⁵ They desire a faith that is able to make existential and intellectual sense of the sciences. Many of them are repelled by popular notions of science and religion locked in eternal warfare, iconic images revived by the New Atheists and their allies. Thanks to the fine work of historians, however, we know that rhetoric is deeply flawed.⁶ The worry is that resisting the scientific consensus on human origins only plays into this conflict narrative and raises unnecessary barriers to coming to faith. The Christian faith is thus perceived as an anti-scientific, anti-intellectual, obscurantism, the mindless ostrich with its head in the sand. Not only does this posture confirm Mark Noll’s scandal of the evangelical mind, it also contravenes the spread and power of the gospel. Pollsters inform us that young people are leaving the church and the faith, often because of its anti-scientific image; and yet, in some cases, genuine pastoral needs may be better served in the long term by staying the course with the received theological tradition.

This situation is one reason for the argument to update, or simply retire, old theological formulations. Such moves are warranted, we are told, given the clear truths that science has delivered (general and special revelation do not contradict; all truth is God’s truth). These arguments should not be summarily dismissed. At the same time, there may be good reasons to resist changing some doctrines, a stance that is not necessarily driven by an “anti-scientific” agenda. Perhaps there are occasions when theological judgments, judgments handed down to us from the church, should be considered more reliable, more trustworthy, than the latest consensus views in particular scientific disciplines. But how would we know? And are there any criteria?

Three recent books have ventured into this contested terrain.⁷ None of them

⁴For introduction, see Peter Harrison, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Science and Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); and Christopher Southgate, ed., *God, Humanity and the Cosmos*, rev. and enl. ed. (New York: T&T Clark, 2005).

⁵See David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church ... and Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011), 131-148.

⁶See, for example, John Hedley Brooke, *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

⁷Karl Giberson, *Saving the Original Sinner: How Christians Have Used the Bible’s First Man to Oppress, Inspire, and Make Sense of the World* (Boston, MA: Beacon, 2015); William VanDoo-dewaard, *The Quest for the Historical Adam: Genesis, Hermeneutics, and Human Origins* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2015); and John Walton, *The Lost World of Adam*

says so explicitly, but each volume appears to be written for an evangelical audience interested in the human origins debate; taken together, they offer a helpful window into the key issues in play.

Giberson on the Invention of Adam and Original Sin

Karl Giberson's book is a soaring narrative with a simple premise: "There is no original sin and there was no original sinner" (176). His exposé recounts how the biblical Adam has been misunderstood, abused, and transformed throughout church history. This "Adam" is an ecclesial construction; he was instrumental to the rise of modern civilization and lies at the root of Western assumptions about gay marriage, race, keeping the Sabbath, sexual ethics, and more. Giberson tells us that Adam and Eve never existed; the early chapters of Genesis are irrelevant to the origins of the cosmos. The human species arose from billions of years of evolution, a process that generated the traits we now associate with sin (such as selfishness and greed). "The culprit is not Adam but the process of natural selection that has shaped our species over the long course of evolution" (177). Our sinfulness is a deep, inescapable part of our evolutionary history.

The tale is engaging, full of twists and turns, the biblical figure of Adam construed down the ages in many conflicting, sometimes disturbing ways. Giberson does not ignore recent controversies among evangelicals, but his main quarry is the long view. The book's strength is to remind us of the larger history of contested interpretations and to help us resist parochial, myopic views of the biblical Adam. We were not the first to puzzle over this enigmatic first couple. Giberson's book popularizes well, making important scholarly monographs and their key insights accessible to a wider audience.⁸

The best chapter addresses views about Adam and their relationship to racism. The idea that all men and women are united with Adam, Giberson writes, "could have given birth to a paradigm of human *equality* if Christians had not understood human diversity within the racist imperialism of Western Europe" (138). Many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Christians believed that Adam and Eve were the first (and only) ancestors of all humanity; they also believed that climate differences caused ethnic diversity. But their sinful racism led "Christians to interpret the distinctive African, Asian, Indian, and American races as *deteriorations* rather than *variations* of a superior white race" (138). As Giberson indicates, it is ironic that conservative biblicists, despite believing that all humanity descended from Adam and Eve, often held problematic views on race.

and Eve: Genesis 2-3 and the Human Origins Debate (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015). Henceforth, references to each book are included parenthetically in the text.

⁸See, for example, David Livingstone, *Adam's Ancestors: Race, Religion, and the Politics of Human Origins* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); and Philip C. Almond, *Adam and Eve in Seventeenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Readers will likely take exception to parts of the story Giberson tells. He claims, for instance, that few Christians in the late 19th century were “necessarily put off by the idea that life had evolved...over long periods of time from a common ancestor” (124). But that is misleading. In the wake of Darwin’s *Origin of Species* and his *Descent of Man*, many pastors and theologians debated vigorously the theological implications of common ancestry.⁹ Giberson’s account of the doctrine of original sin also needs historical nuancing. He drives a wedge between the Augustinian doctrine and early Christian interpretations of sin (see chapter 3), in part by magnifying Augustine’s mistranslation of Romans 5:12. It is true that the early church emphasized libertarian freedom, not least in reaction to the fatalism and Gnostic determinism of their cultural milieu—but there *were* antecedents to the doctrine of original sin.¹⁰ Augustine also drew on a wide range of scriptural texts and theological motifs (such as infant baptism); the doctrine does not stand or fall on this mistranslation.¹¹ While those may be mere quibbles, Giberson’s account of church history was more troubling; a sense of God’s providential working is virtually absent. Church history, as he tells it, barely transcends the idiosyncrasies of fallible men, the fluke mishmash of personalities and politics, egos and eccentricities—Pelagius was the better theologian, but Augustine outplayed him.¹²

If Romans 5 and other passages assume Adam’s historicity, are we not obliged to do the same? Giberson’s response is to situate Paul within his literary tradition, “a tradition [that] licensed theological creativity and ... paid little attention to historical accuracy” (38). Paul appealed to a historical Adam because “he wanted to universalize Christianity to include non-Jews ... And what better way than to make the story of Adam the story of every man, the singular ancestor on everyone’s family tree?” (30). Modern readers are permitted to reject Paul’s beliefs about Adam by relativizing them to his historical context.¹³

In my view, a core problem underlying Giberson’s book is an insufficiently robust concept of the divine authorship of Scripture. He depicts the Bible as primarily a collection of fallible, historical documents, limited to a merely horizontal, naturalistic, historicist axis. He is thus able to challenge Paul’s interpretation

⁹While Giberson cites Jon Roberts’s book frequently in chapter 8, his use of it is hard to square with Roberts’s text. These matters were vigorously contested among North American pastors and theologians. See also Jon H. Roberts, *Darwinism and the Divine in America* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988).

¹⁰For some of the evidence, see Peter Sanlon, “Original Sin in Patristic Theology,” in *Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin: Theological, Biblical, and Scientific Perspectives*, eds. Hans Madueme and Michael Reeves (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 85-107, esp. 86-88.

¹¹See, for example, Jesse Couenhoven, “Augustine’s Doctrine of Original Sin,” *Augustinian Studies* 36 (2005): 359-396.

¹²On the early church’s rejection of Pelagianism, Giberson strikes this typical note: “Politics played a role, perhaps a large one” (70). Such a non-providential approach can be used to deconstruct conciliar Trinitarian formulations (as Jehovah’s Witnesses often do).

¹³See the similar moves in Peter Enns, *The Evolution of Adam* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 119-135. Given Giberson’s acknowledgments, I assume he is indebted to Enns at this point (see, for example, page 179).

of Adam, as if Paul is writing merely as a fallible rabbi in the 1st century. In his conclusion he asserts,

No received wisdom from the past—in *sacred texts*, confessions, creeds, statements of faith, or *anywhere else*—is immune to challenge from the advancing knowledge of the present. Christianity emerged in a different time and must be prepared to evolve like everything else. (176, my emphasis)¹⁴

My worry is that he inverts the biblical pattern of authority. Scripture is no longer God's supernaturally inspired Word, and the reader is "liberated" to doubt the reliability of the divine testimony. In effect, Giberson's filter for what can or cannot be accepted in the Bible are selected claims of historical-critical research, shaped by modern assumptions and plausibility structures, including the inviolability of his construal of the scientific consensus.

On the subject of young-earth creationists, Giberson has a score to settle (see chapter 10). He lambasts their lack of scientific expertise. On one level, he is surely right that one can find examples of inferior scholarship among young-earth creationists. Serious theologians and scientists who reject the mainstream position on deep time must address this problem with ruthless honesty (see below on VanDoodewaard's contribution). From reading this book, however, it is unclear whether Giberson always understands what he critiques. Going after Ken Ham and Henry Morris is fair play, of course, but his account would have been sharper had he taken on reputable scientists (such as Leonard Brand, Arthur Chadwick, Paul Garner, Andrew Snelling, Kurt Wise, Todd Wood) and respected theologians (such as Douglas Kelly, John Mark Reynolds, Iain Duguid, Todd Beall, John Frame).¹⁵ The point here is not to defend these creationists, but rather to signal a cardinal rule when assessing views with which one disagrees. If you do not engage them at their strongest, "critique" can come across as laziness or rhetorical bluster.¹⁶

If you want to understand why a growing number of Christians no longer believe in a historical Adam and Eve, this book is a helpful guide. The prose is concise, wide-ranging, and always stimulating. The book's main weakness, however, is that it abandons the historic understanding of Scripture in order to update the faith in light of science. Giberson's approach to the Bible tends toward naturalism and Christian doctrines are adjudicated at the bar of a methodologically naturalistic conception of science. His book is perhaps best seen as a clarion call to old-fashioned liberalism, enshrining a theological picture that would not be

¹⁴To state the obvious, "sacred texts" includes Holy Scripture.

¹⁵His sole mention of Kurt Wise on page 148 is *ad hominem*.

¹⁶My suspicion was heightened when in his conclusion Giberson describes C. John Collins as "a leading fundamentalist theologian" (175). According to Giberson, fundamentalism is "an elaborate anti-intellectual mixture containing a rejection of mainstream science, a simplistic biblical literalism, and a quixotic attempt to create an alternative 'creation science'" (128). Collins, of course, is nothing of the sort. Apparently, Giberson's use of "creationist" and "fundamentalist" is purely rhetorical—see, for example, Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 245.

recognized by any of the major branches of Christianity (historically understood).¹⁷ His arguments leave the reader with a mini-canon within the canon, an eccentric canon for a non-catholic, sub-biblical, stripped-down Christianity.

VanDoodewaard on Reading the Bible Literally

The Quest for the Historical Adam is a bracing frontal assault on the mainstream position within evangelical institutions. Take no prisoners. The book draws a parallel between the eighteenth/nineteenth-century quest for the historical Jesus and the current quest for the historical Adam; in both cases, scholars show more interest in the world behind the text than the world of the text. VanDoodewaard thinks this is a mistake and writes to address an imbalance in the literature, demonstrating that most Christians in the history of the church interpreted the early chapters of Genesis literally (not figuratively). The idea of an original, historical, specially created couple from whom all of humanity descended is an eminently catholic doctrine.

Few theological traditions come away unscathed in his analysis. Polls indicate that most lay believers are young-earth creationists. On the other hand, most evangelical scholars are committed either to an old-earth or some version of theistic evolution. Young-earth creationists are rarely taken seriously within academia; to many, that would be intellectual suicide. If you took your cues from the literature or private conversation, you might wonder how any thoughtful Christian, or someone with half a brain, could believe that the earth is young. Scholars like VanDoodewaard can thus be forgiven for some defensiveness about accepting a historical Adam within a young-earth creationist framework (of the three books under review, VanDoodewaard's is the strongest theologically).

The term "young-earth creationism" is itself ambiguous. The image that usually comes to mind is that of "scientific creationism" (à la Henry Morris and John Whitcomb), Christians who try to defend a young earth scientifically. Another overlapping image is that of the independent, populist, creationist ministries that defend a young earth by enlisting the expertise of a wide range of people (many of whom, quite frankly, are not academically qualified in the most relevant areas). VanDoodewaard is engaged in a different project. We might call it "theological" or "dogmatic" creationism, a position rooted in the tradition and biblical exegesis; within *that* tradition, he argues, Adam and Eve as sole ancestors of humanity is a non-negotiable.

¹⁷See also J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (New York: Macmillan, 1923). Machen believed that "the many varieties of modern liberal religion are rooted in naturalism" (Ibid., 2); he went on to say: "the liberal attempt at reconciling Christianity with modern science has really relinquished everything distinctive of Christianity, so that what remains is in essentials only that same indefinite type of religious aspiration which was in the world before Christianity came upon the scene" (Ibid., 6).

In a fascinating critique of Ronald Numbers' leading account of young-earth creationists, VanDoodewaard rejects the claim that in North America the literal hermeneutic is inseparable from the Adventist George McCready Price.¹⁸ He shows that all sorts of Protestants stood in the line of "the millennia old tradition of a literal Genesis hermeneutic" (157), including Scottish Presbyterians in the Northern States (such as Moses Stuart and Richard Dickinson), Southern Presbyterians (such as Robert Dabney and J. H. Thornwell), the Dutch Reformed in North America (such as Geerhardus Vos, Louis Berkhof, and Foppe Ten Hoor), and Lutheran theologians affiliated with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. This observation is a welcome counterweight to Numbers' account.

In addition to righting scholarly distortions of young-earth creationists, VanDoodewaard defends a particular construal of "literal" exegesis. Repeatedly he classifies interpretations of Genesis as either literal or figurative; the two are mutually exclusive. Interpreting Genesis 1 and 2 *literally* means we should interpret the text "as a nonfigurative, detailed, historical record of events and existence narrated as they actually were" (6). In a similar vein, he writes: "The crux of current division on creation and human origins is found where evolutionary theory stands in conflict with the traditional, literalistic reading of Genesis 1 through 5 common to the history of Christianity" (3); he speaks affirmatively of "literalist exegetes" (see 10n1).

The word choice is baffling. "Literalism" connotes a flat, monolithic, simplistic reading strategy.¹⁹ To be sure, VanDoodewaard recognizes that many patristic and medieval exegetes endorsed deeper typological, figurative meanings within the text, but he tends to downplay that reality. The dominant impression he gives is that interpretations are either literal or figurative. But that presents a false dilemma. Why would VanDoodewaard undermine his position and play into the hands of his critics? Surely an important lesson of VanDoodewaard's historical retrieval is that Christians embraced the basic historicity of Genesis 1-3 *and* also recognized rich, typological, even figurative, elements within the text.

The book has a wealth of historical detail, and VanDoodewaard is at his best when addressing the Puritan-Reformed tradition. But there should have been broader engagement with the scholarly discussion. My sense is that VanDoodewaard wrote the book for the widest possible audience, and yet there is no engagement with influential interpretations that undermine his thesis, such as Peter Harrison's *The Bible, Protestantism and the Rise of Natural Science* (Cambridge

¹⁸Ronald L. Numbers, *The Creationists: From Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design*, expanded edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006). VanDoodewaard only cites from the first edition—*The Creationists: The Evolution of Scientific Creationism* (New York: Knopf, 1992).

¹⁹Mormons ignore Scripture's anthropomorphic language and read passages like Genesis 3:8 as teaching God's actual physicality. Does VanDoodewaard really wish to place himself in that literalistic company?

University Press, 1998).²⁰ He does spar with Reformed scholars like Max Rogland and Robert Letham,²¹ but those exchanges reflect conservative Presbyterian debates and give the book an in-house, parochial feel. Similarly, his discussion of the Protestant reception of Darwin largely ignores the work of Jon Roberts, Brad Gundlach, David Livingstone, Mark Noll, and others. Their scholarship bears directly on the argument of VanDoodewaard's book.

He also does not give us the whole story on racial attitudes and how they related to the Adamic question. After reviewing Isaac La Peyrère and his descendants (chapter 4), he concludes that past thinkers who held to pre- and co-Adamite theories were often racists. Africans were considered an inferior race. On the flip side, the contemporary critics of racism endorsed a literal interpretation of the early chapters of Genesis. "While mistreatment of non-European ethnicities was not limited to proponents of pre- and co-Adamite theory," writes VanDoodewaard, "opponents of such mistreatment during this period were most commonly proponents of the special immediate creation of Adam and Eve as the first parents of all humanity" (121). That sounds good, but much of the force of his observations evaporates when we recognize that many Christians in the 19th and 20th centuries gladly affirmed VanDoodewaard's literal hermeneutic *and* were racists. I agree with him that anti-racism is entailed in our Adamic unity, but I wish he had laid out all the historical warts and wrinkles.²²

The author has given us a powerful narrative of decline. Throughout the story, his theological position is no secret. The reader is never in doubt about the good and bad guys. This style has the virtue of transparency, but rhetorically it is unlikely to persuade anyone unless they already agree with VanDoodewaard. Perhaps that is always the way with this genre of writing. Still, one wonders if it would have been more effective simply to tell the historical story, with a much lighter prescriptive hand, reserving dogmatic implications for the final chapter. I am not endorsing the myth of neutral history-writing; my point is only that VanDoodewaard is more compelling when he shows sympathy to the different factors *motivating* the other side (and I say this as one who believes the declension story is essentially correct).

One more stylistic comment—the historical method is almost entirely limited to the textual material, those clues left by protagonists in written publications. This is bread and butter, to be sure. But the narrative sometimes misses the social, cultural, and personal factors that help contextualize these men with their different burdens and convictions (for example, on pages 89-90, we miss most of La

²⁰See, for example, Jitse M. van der Meer and Richard Oosterhoff, "The Bible, Protestantism and the Rise of Natural Science: A Response to Harrison's Thesis," *Science and Christian Belief* 21 (2009): 133-153; and Peter Harrison, "The Bible, Protestantism and the Rise of Natural Science: A Rejoinder," *Science and Christian Belief* 21 (2009): 155-162.

²¹The book's index does not indicate all his interactions with Letham (for example, see also 60n39 and 67n62).

²²In the concluding chapter, he missed another opportunity to make the point when he argued that unity of race is one of the benefits of holding to a literal hermeneutic (see 294-296).

Peyrère's fascinating biographical details that help us understand his attraction to the pre-Adamite thesis). As much as I appreciate the textual detail, the social and biographical elements would have strengthened the analysis.²³

VanDoodewaard is partial to the mature creation position. "God's original work of creation," he writes, "produced an immediately mature creation" (314). He also speculates that the present condition of the created order is a result of the global flood and supernatural effects of the fall. Ultimately, he suspects that special revelation is our only epistemic access because modern science cannot offer reliable answers about ancient history. These sensible suggestions deserve further exploration. Some historians, however, will wish that VanDoodewaard had wrestled more deeply with a historical twist that may strain against his position. Early Christian scientists (or natural philosophers), men with the same young-earth beliefs as VanDoodewaard, were unable to fit what they were discovering in creation with traditional readings of Scripture; that growing inconsistency gradually led them to adopt methodological naturalism in science and to abandon their literal hermeneutic. They might have been wrong to make the moves they did, as I would argue, but the fact is they did.²⁴

How successful then is this book? Readers who disagree with VanDoodewaard and know the history of exegesis will concede that the tradition had a more or less literal approach to interpretation. VanDoodewaard's main thesis will not strike them as controversial. They would likely rejoin: had these men known what we know scientifically today, they too would have interpreted the early chapters of Genesis differently. Stated as a question, had they been alive today, would these earlier interpreters have resisted the mainstream scientific options? VanDoodewaard does not address this question. For that reason, I suspect that some of his readers will remain unmoved by the substantial evidence he has marshaled.

At the very least, this work throws down the gauntlet on behalf of young-earth creationists (see 279, 287-291, and *passim*). Those like Giberson who think that scholars cannot seriously entertain (much less defend) young-earth creationism will have no further to look than this work of serious scholarship. VanDoodewaard's account also suggests that once hermeneutical latitude was allowed for the early chapters of Genesis (for example, gap and day-age theories), it was impossible to stymie the liberalizing of theologies of creation and human ori-

²³In addition, I wish he had probed more deeply the underlying theological and philosophical currents swirling during the 16th and 17th centuries to situate the issues within a larger, more textured background. Debates over the early chapters of Genesis and Adam's historicity were symptomatic of broader intellectual forces that are sometimes absent in VanDoodewaard's narrative. In his defense, however, the book is long enough as it is. On the larger context, see Klaus Scholder, *The Birth of Modern Critical Theology: Origins and Problems of Biblical Criticism in the Seventeenth Century*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM, 1990).

²⁴For an account of how Christians, ironically, were instrumental in the rise of methodological naturalism, see Ronald L. Numbers, "Science without God: Natural Laws and Christian Beliefs," in *When Science and Christianity Meet*, eds. David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 265-285.

gins. The slope was too slippery. Readers who reject six-day creation, but share VanDoodewaard's high view of Scripture, need a strong counterargument if they wish to negate this historical conclusion.

Walton on Genesis as Ancient Cosmology

This new book by the acclaimed OT scholar John Walton builds on his earlier work.²⁵ Genesis, he reminds us, is less familiar, more foreign, than we sometimes recognize. He restores the early chapters of Genesis to their ancient Near Eastern (ANE) context, emphasizing the *functional* dimensions of Genesis 1-2 over against readings that construe those chapters as a proto-scientific narrative of material origins: "Ancient cosmologies had little interest in material origins, though they recognize that the material cosmos is that which is ordered so that the functions can be carried out" (34). Walton also retrieves neglected motifs in the tradition as he probes linguistic and textual connections between creation and temple passages. In Genesis 1 and 2, the cosmos and the Garden of Eden are both depicted as sacred space. This book aims at a mediating position between Giberson and VanDoodewaard. Adam and Eve were "real people in a real past" (184), but they were not the first humans, they were not created *de novo*, and not all of us are their direct descendants.

Walton is a welcome voice in the interdisciplinary dialogue on how to relate Genesis and modern science. However, I am not persuaded by the book's overall argument, largely for two reasons. The first is tied to his functional-material opposition; the second is methodological; that is, his use of Scripture. On the first reason, Walton argues that creation in the ancient world—and thus in Genesis—is a functional, not a material, concept. He defends this opposition in earlier work and throughout the present volume. Alas, his distinction is unhelpful and ultimately unconvincing.

Consider his handling of the scriptural Adam. Walton makes the observation, as others have before him, that *'ādām* is used in various ways in Genesis—for example, sometimes with a definite article, sometimes not. He argues that *'ādām* in most cases should be taken as generic, archetypal, or representative; in each of these instances, "the representational role is more important than the individual." According to Walton, "Only in the cases [i.e., Gen 5:1, 3-5] where the word is indefinite and by context being used as a substitute for a personal name would the significance be tied to the individual as an individual, historical person" (61).

These subtle distinctions play down the individual, historical Adam. They are also reflective of a tendency in Walton toward disjunctive reasoning. Why cannot the representational *and* historical elements be equally implied in specifying *'ādām*? My concern is not that Adam had a representative role—that is old news—it is that

²⁵John Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009); and *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011).

Walton thinks representation somehow competes with historicity. According to his analysis, most verses about 'ādām in Genesis 1-5 have primarily representational force with far fewer verses intimating a historical individual; these grammatical observations are doing too much theological work, the distinctions are too tidy. One further reason to demur is that while his thesis implies that 'ādām in Genesis 2:7 and Genesis 2:22 is primarily archetypal rather than historical (see table on page 61), Paul in 1 Timothy 2:13, citing both Genesis 2:7 and 2:22, straightforwardly assumes Adam as a historical individual with no reference to archetype.

These unnecessary disjunctions become more apparent in his further analysis of Genesis 2:7 and 2:21. Walton denies that God created Adam from the dust, Eve from his rib. The phrases “forming from dust” and “building from rib” are archetypal claims, not claims of material origin. His argument proceeds in four steps. First, the word translated “formed” in Genesis 2:7 does not imply a creative act, a claim he justifies by appeal to how the word is used in other parts of the OT. Second, the word “dust” should not be understood materially but as a clue to our mortality (based on Genesis 3:19, “For dust you are and to dust you will return”). Walton knows that traditionally Romans 5:12 is taken to mean that Adam was not *created* mortal; his response is that God placed the tree of life in the garden, suggesting “they were mortal” (73). Paul connects death to sin not because the first sin *caused* death, but because Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden, thus losing their access to the Tree of Life—they “were doomed to die” (74). Third, Walton interprets Genesis 2:7 archetypally, not materially, because everything said about Adam and Eve is true for all humans; Genesis 2:7 is about Adam as Everyman. And finally, Genesis 2:21 describes a *vision* that Adam had, not something that actually happened; that is, Eve was not materially created from Adam’s rib.

The evidence Walton gives for taking Adam in Genesis 2 as exclusively archetypal regarding material origins is not convincing. That Genesis 2 uses poetic, literary language is not at issue; the question is whether those passages exclude material creation. Walton is right that later biblical passages that mention “dust,” “formed,” “breath of life,” and so on, may be extending an archetypal metaphor, but there is no good reason to think that material origin is thereby excluded. The burden is on Walton to prove otherwise.²⁶ Interestingly, when he assesses the NT for evidence of his archetypal-not-material thesis, the only genuinely archetypal examples he finds are Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15. In every other instance in the NT, Walton concedes that Adam and Eve are not treated as archetypal. Given the disproportionate emphasis he places on the archetypal-not-material reading of Adam, this admission should give reason for pause.

²⁶His fellow OT scholars have critiqued him on this point—see the responses by C. John Collins, Todd Beall and Richard Averbeck in *Reading Genesis 1-2: An Evangelical Conversation*, ed. J. Daryl Charles (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2013), 170-181. See also Richard Averbeck, “The Lost World of Adam and Eve: A Review Essay,” *Themelios* 40.2 (2015): 226-239; and John Walton, “Response to Richard Averbeck,” *Themelios* 40.2 (2015): 240-242.

Apart from this problem of disjunctive analysis, I am also reluctant to accept Walton's thesis for methodological reasons bound up with how he uses Scripture. In his introduction, the reader is warned not to "blindly accept the scientific consensus if its results are questionable on scientific principles"; and "that regardless of whether the scientific conclusions stand the test of time or not, they pose no threat to biblical belief" (13). In the same introduction, he writes: "I will not give very much attention to the question of the legitimacy of the scientific claims" (13). These statements invite the methodological question: what is driving this project?

The question becomes more pressing in the first chapter. There Walton says much that is helpful, but an ambiguity runs through the whole. The chapter, in effect, takes Stephen Jay Gould's NOMA principle and contextualizes it to OT biblical scholarship.²⁷ Science answers "how" questions; the Bible answers "why" questions. Keep the two separate. This hermeneutical approach is constructed to prevent any conflict between science and Scripture. Walton insists, repeatedly, that we should read the Bible *on its own terms* without imposing modern scientific questions, but the irony is that his approach is only conceivable in light of science. No early, medieval, Reformation, or post-Reformation theologian would agree to any number of claims advanced in this chapter (or in this book, for that matter). They are peculiarly modern, plausible to Walton precisely because we live on the far side of Copernicus, Newton, and Darwin.

But let us tread cautiously. I am not saying that Walton's book is driven *solely* by extra-textual, scientific pressures; my worry is about the imbalance. He argues, for example, that Genesis 2:4-24 is a *sequel* to Genesis 1, not a recapitulation of day six. Genesis 1 describes God's creation of an unspecified number of human beings, whereas Genesis 2 relates the subsequent creation of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve were not the first human beings. Right here some readers might dismiss Walton, condemning his rereading of Genesis 1 and 2 as a solution made to fit scientific precommitments. That would be too hasty if not uncharitable. There *are* genuinely intra-textual, exegetical questions raised by the early chapters of Genesis. In Genesis 4 specifically, how does one make sense of the remarkable technological and cultural development (for example, Bedouin life, city-building, metallurgy, and so on)? Taking those textual features to reflect a Neolithic culture, many have interpreted Genesis 4 non-literally.²⁸ The benefit of Walton's reading, then, is that it gives us plausible answers to old conundrums: Who was Cain's wife? Who is Cain afraid of in Genesis 4:14? Who lived in Nod (Genesis 4:17)? Stipulating that God created a mass of pre-Adamite humans in Genesis 1 solves the problem. As Walton recognizes, Isaac La Peyrère was one of the first to float

²⁷Gould argued that science and religion cover different domains of inquiry; in principle, there can be no conflict between them (so-called NOMA, "non-overlapping magisteria"). See Stephen Jay Gould, *Rock of Ages: Science and Religion and the Fullness of Life* (New York: Ballantine, 1999).

²⁸See, for example, Derek Kidner, John Stott, John J. Davis, and Henri Blocher (see Blocher, *Original Sin: Illuminating the Riddle* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997], 40).

this theory (see, for example, 217n2 and 217n4).

Let us grant, then, that Genesis 4 prompts difficult questions, questions that find some resolution in Walton's new reading of Genesis 1. That counts for something. But is it enough? Genesis 4 notwithstanding, I know of no intertextual canonical reference to Genesis 1 that has anyone in view other than Adam and/or Eve. The individual Adam is the referent of *'ādām*. The idea that other human beings are implied in Genesis 1 is difficult to square with the rest of the biblical story (see, for example, the genealogy in Luke 3:23-38). Second Temple literature—representing Jews who were culturally closer to the ANE context than Walton—universally believed that Adam and Eve were the first human beings, as Walton himself concedes: “even very early interpreters undoubtedly considered Adam and Eve to be the progenitors of the entire human race” (181). The New Testament authors believed that Adam and Eve were the first human beings; most Christians since the closing of the canon have believed that Adam and Eve were the first human beings. I am doubtful that Walton's proposal can overturn that exegetical consensus.

The methodological concerns intensify when Walton interacts with the Pauline material. Part of the problem, of course, is that Paul's understanding of Adam and Eve is in tension with Walton's reading of Genesis—for Paul believed that Adam and Eve were the first, the only, and the universal ancestors of humanity. Walton affirms the inerrancy of Scripture, so what to do? He appeals to a nuanced model of accommodation, one that allows him to reconcile Scripture and human reason (that is, science).²⁹ On this view, God accommodated his Word to the erroneous beliefs of the biblical authors; Paul's background beliefs are theologically irrelevant because they were part of his (fallen) cognitive environment. That allows the reader to separate Paul's explicit statements from any assumptions or background beliefs in the relevant passages. We are free to discard the background beliefs, but we must retain Paul's explicit statements. The problem here is that once you open the door to such critical moves, there is no turning back. As Ernst Troeltsch put it, “Give the historical method an inch and it will take a mile. From a strictly orthodox standpoint, therefore, it seems to bear a certain similarity to the devil.”³⁰

In Walton's exploration of Romans 5, Paul's theology of sin is made consistent with the existence of co- or pre-Adamites. Romans 5:13 is the loophole that provides a textual basis for pre-Adamites: “for before the law was given, sin was

²⁹Walton's understanding of accommodation appears to be more Socinian than classical. For example, see Glenn Sunshine and Martin I. Klauber, “Jean-Alphonse Turretini on Biblical Accommodation: Calvinist or Socinian?” *Calvin Theological Journal* 25 (1990): 7-27; and Hoon J. Lee, “Accommodation—Orthodox, Socinian, and Contemporary,” *WTJ* 75 (2013): 335-348. For a helpful systematic overview, see Theodore G. Van Raalte, “Another Wax Nose?: Accommodation in Divine Revelation,” in *Correctly Handling the Word of Truth: Reformed Hermeneutics Today*, eds. Mees te Velde and Gerhard H. Visscher (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014), 226-251.

³⁰Ernst Troeltsch, “Historical and Dogmatic Method in Theology,” in *Religion in History*, trans. and ed. James Luther Adams and Walter Bense (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 16.

in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law" (NIV). Citing Walton at some length:

This reasoning suggests that even though any human population possibly preceding or coexisting with Adam and Eve may well have been engaged in activity that would be considered sin, they were not being held accountable for it: where there was no law or revelation, there was no sin (no consciousness of relationship, no immortality). In that scenario, the sin of Adam and Eve would be understood as bringing sin to the entire human race by bringing accountability. From Romans 5:13 we infer that, in Paul's view, sin comes into the world when accountability comes into the world. Any humans prior to Adam did not have a personal, conscious relationship to lose...(155)

This interpretation of Romans 5:13 echoes La Peyrère (in fact, that verse was the exegetical crux of his pre-Adamite thesis). In both cases, I must confess difficulty distinguishing exegesis from eisegesis. Paul has already clarified what accountability would mean for a gentile without the law (see Romans 2:1-16). It has nothing to do with pre-Adamites.³¹

What is going on? I suggest that the scientific consensus is having an undue methodological influence on Walton's approach. Consider his basic strategy. Scripture is an ancient document, so we should set aside those parts that reflect what other ancient people believe. Such beliefs were part of their shared cognitive environment but not the intended message. Walton's schema here raises questions. After all, ancient people believed in God or gods, that they exist, that they act in the world, that they engage with humanity, and so on. He is counseling readers of Scripture *ex hypothesi* to dismiss *those* portions as an incidental part of their cognitive environment. Presumably Walton would reply that his methodology only applies to those parts of the Bible that relate to scientific questions; that is, issues in cosmology, biology, and so on. But that proves my point—modern science is having an undue influence. Is this biblical scholarship with a Kantian twist, Scripture within the bounds of a naturalistic science?

Walton at the end of his book gives four reasons that the dialogue on human origins should move forward—creation care; ministry; evangelism; and considering the future. All of that is well said, and powerfully too. Indeed, as I reflected on the shape of the book, it struck me that the argument could be made more compelling with a couple of modifications: The Conclusion and Summary on pages 198-200 should be read as part of the Introduction, the book's *raison d'être*; the body of the book is then taken as a speculative exercise—certainly not dogma or even *theologoumenon* (theological opinion)—a hypothetical way the Bible could

³¹Walton invited N. T. Wright to contribute chapter 19 ("Excursus on Paul's Use of Adam," 170-180). Wright builds on an Adam-Israel typology to suggest "that just as God chose Israel from the rest of humankind for a special, strange, demanding vocation, so perhaps what Genesis is telling us is that *God chose one pair from the rest of early hominids for a special, strange, demanding vocation*" (177). The typology is helpful, but Wright's tentative proposal is implausible: While there is copious evidence that Israel failed in her vocation on behalf of the other nations, there is no biblical evidence of Adam failing in his vocation on behalf of co- and pre-Adamites.

be read to minimize tension with science. The argument may not be true, but it is *logically* possible, and that is sufficient for a minimalist approach. Granted, reconceiving the book as a piece of minimalist apologetics changes its genre, but such a shift might alleviate some of its present weaknesses.

In its current form, the book addresses genuine pastoral worries by theological revisionism. Walton and Giberson are unlikely allies here, despite their differences. Giberson is reflecting on Scripture and theology, and he jettisons those parts he can no longer believe; Walton seeks to show that a high view of Scripture can accommodate the scientific consensus—in practice, however, both Walton and Giberson end up shrinking the scope of God's Word to us. Walton uses the language of ANE studies and speech act theory, but his argument unwittingly implies a "neo-Gnostic" view of Scripture—regarding human origins—which is to say the Bible has less and less to say about *material* things and science sets the rules of play.

Walton is partly motivated by the need for evangelism and tolerance of theological differences. He wants those who insist on a historical Adam to "not consider interpreters who are trying to be faithful to Scripture to be denying inerrancy if they arrive at different conclusions" (202). It is one thing to believe in the *de novo* creation of Adam and Eve, or that they were the first two humans from whom we are all descended, but let us not "be committed to those traditional beliefs as the only acceptable interpretation" (204). I hear you, brother. But this well-intentioned advice is not as innocuous or "tolerant" as he thinks. Walton is effectively asking those who *do* think there is more at stake theologically to moderate their convictions, not to be as dogmatic, live and let live. In other words, they should simply admit they are wrong *or* they should adopt an evangelical latitudinarianism. That is not a promising way forward. I would argue instead that Christians need not apologize for holding dogmatic convictions, even insist that some of those convictions are a matter of biblical urgency, while at the same time insisting on public, courteous, charitable discourse with those with whom they disagree.³² As I see it, anyone who would go so far as rejecting Adam's historicity and the fall would be dogmatically inconsistent; and yes, better by far to be a Christian who denies these doctrines than to be, say, atheist or agnostic. Nevertheless, based on the lessons of history it is an unstable position that, within a generation or two, will likely devolve into more regressive forms of faith.

Concluding Reflections

So what are evangelical institutions to do? Is the historical Adam important enough to warrant hemorrhaging professors at confessional institutions? These are complex, difficult, even painful questions, and there are multiple, intermingling, and competing factors—for example, poor handling by university administrations;

³²My comments here are primarily with reference to cross-denominational settings.

unwise belligerence by professors too quick to defend their rights; academics needing a livelihood to feed their families; fewer jobs available for PhDs; institutions pandering to the more conservative pole of their constituencies, and so on. Surely we can do better; surely we *must* do better, God help us. But we should also recognize that “academic freedom” in a *confessional* setting is a different creature from the one that roams the halls of the broader academy. Having meaningful continuity with a tradition entails privileging particular theological commitments. If we think otherwise, do we not cease being confessional?

The three books under review invite several reflections. I shall set them out in terms of the hermeneutical, pastoral, and theological triad invoked earlier in this essay. Let us begin with hermeneutics. In the face of scientific pressure, we cannot rule out the possibility that we have misinterpreted the biblical text. This is at least one implication of the Protestant principle of *sola scriptura*. This hermeneutical option, however, can become a cure-all, a panacea, whenever conclusions from a scientific discipline undermine traditional readings of Scripture. God’s Word becomes a wax nose, scriptural authority an epiphenomenon.³³ While there are genuine instances when new scientific insights should prompt a rereading of Scripture, they can also be entirely spurious. Moving forward, scholars need to be much more vigilant about that distinction, perhaps offering guidelines and criteria for responsible, faithful reading strategies.

The appeal to hermeneutics arises in part from the belief that the findings in science and the teachings of Scripture should harmonize. This impulse to concordism insists there is no conflict between the two spheres. The one caution is that views in science often shift. We may court failure if we hitch our theology to the latest deliverance of science; once the scientific position is overturned, the theology becomes obsolete. It does not therefore follow that science is epistemically worthless (see, for example, antirealism), only that in a fallen world it is necessarily imperfect. Some level of concordism, I would argue, is entailed by Christian orthodoxy—for God’s redemptive actions happened within our space-time history—but human creaturely finitude and the noetic effects of sin demand that it be a chastened, humble concordism.³⁴

This debate over Adam and Eve recalls the importance of pastoral wisdom. In the post-Christian West, seekers and doubters often reject the faith because they perceive our doctrinal disputes as anti-science. We cannot ignore that; while we should not apologize for the offense of the gospel, there is nothing virtuous in adding offense to it. God is sovereign, to be sure, but we are also called to be responsible. For instance, some young-earth creationists should stop demonizing

³³Consider, for example, Martin Luther who routinely bemoaned how exegetes in his day dealt with Scripture, “making whatever they want out of it, as if it were a wax nose to be pulled to and fro” (*Luther’s Works*, vol. 39 [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970], 81). Luther was not alone; the complaint was common in the wake of the Reformation.

³⁴Hans Madueme, “‘The Most Vulnerable Part of the Whole Christian Account’: Original Sin and Modern Science,” in *Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin*, 243-244.

others who interpret Scripture differently. Over time, such habits only foster an unsightly culture of misinformation, hyper-suspicion, and anti-intellectualism. Bring on the disagreement, yes; offer critique, yes—in love!—but always recognize that they too are brothers and sisters in the faith who are striving to follow Jesus faithfully.

Pastoral sensitivity works in the other direction as well. Young-earth creationists are treated very poorly in the evangelical academy. Given that most lay believers in North America embrace some kind of young-earth creationism, the dismissive attitude among many Christian scholars toward such views only aggravates the situation. A wiser approach gives thoughtful young-earth creationists a seat at the table, not as a gesture but on principle. This would significantly reduce the level of suspicion and feelings of persecution; such scholars can now focus on the burden of producing first-rate, substantive work. In the process, we dethrone an academic worldliness, a specious elitism that is rife within the evangelical academy. In the *Christian* guild where we seek to please the Lord rather than the idols of Babylon, scholars should be judged by the quality of their work, the theological integrity of the arguments, not by unholy prejudice or academic peer group pressure. If young-earth creationists are mistaken in their views, then excluding them ideologically only feeds a martyrdom narrative that galvanizes their position, paradoxically. Instead, play fair. The truth will out.³⁵

At the theological level, our core disagreements often turn on different intuitions about dogmatic rank and the epistemic status of scientific judgments. Biblical scholars and theologians who participate in the science-religion dialogue typically have no expertise in the relevant sciences. They are dependent on the testimony of qualified scientists. By those lights, many have concluded that the church was wrong about Adam and Eve. Those doctrines have lost their dogmatic status and are no longer plausible given what we know from evolutionary biology, population genetics, and so on. The reason that others disagree—and I count myself among them—is that they have judged those doctrines as so central to the biblical narrative that they cannot be abandoned without fundamentally altering the shape of the story. They are integral to the redemptive-historical narrative, grounded in biblical exegesis, and widely affirmed by earlier Christians who did not have our blind spots. We rank them high dogmatically, humbly recognizing that some theological realities by their very nature are more secure than the best of what we know, or can know, from scientific investigation.³⁶

Tell me, is it any wonder that these matters are highly contested within and outside evangelicalism? In my own judgment, Giberson's proposal has the virtue of candor; it has the virtue of avoiding any conflict with the broad consensus on evolutionary biology, but it marks the death knell of anything but a very minimalist kind of Christianity. VanDoodewaard offers a fresh retrieval of

³⁵Some of the work of The Colossian Forum, for example, is worth emulating in this regard.

³⁶Consider as an example Madueme, "Most Vulnerable Part of the Whole Christian Account," 225-249.

the pre-Enlightenment tradition of reading early Genesis—an underrepresented position among scholars—but his book is too parochial and is unlikely to sway the wider evangelical academy. Walton's thesis, a creative reading of Scripture, is a speculative proposal for reconciling Genesis 1-3 with science—at its best, it shows that evangelical biblical scholarship has the resources to engage difficult questions raised by modern science; at its worst, the picture that emerges is a theologically anemic, hermeneutical mirror dancing to the scientific consensus. These three authors have ventured into an area where angels fear to tread, and we are indebted to them for their courage. No doubt it is far easier to examine critically such proposals at the intersection of science and theology, much harder to lay out a positive, constructive way forward. And that is precisely what the church needs. Happily, on the evidence of these very different books, a vigorous dialogue is well underway.³⁷

³⁷I am very grateful to several colleagues, Tim Morris especially, who commented on an earlier draft.

Reviews

Daniel L. Brunner, Jennifer L. Butler, and A. J. Swoboda. *Introducing Evangelical Ecotheology: Foundations in Scripture, Theology, History, and Praxis.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014. 272 pp. \$26.99, ISBN 9780801049651.

Reviewed by James R. Skillen, Geology, Geography, and Environmental Studies, Calvin College

Over the last 20 years, evangelical Christians in the United States have become increasingly active in national debates over environmental protection. From action to protect the federal Endangered Species Act from revision in the mid-1990s to the statement “Climate Change: An Evangelical Call to Action” a decade ago, a growing number of evangelical Christians have found that their theology and faith support robust environmental protection measures. This is not to say that evangelical Christianity is now a uniform shade of green, however, since some prominent evangelical leaders continue to see environmentalism as a basic threat to the Christian faith and to American freedom. To see this internal debate, one has only to look at the diverging work of the Evangelical Environmental Network on the one hand and the Cornwall Alliance on the other.

In this context, *Introducing Evangelical Ecotheology* is a welcome addition to the literature on Christian faith and the environment. The authors choose not to focus on the deep divisions that have formed in the evangelical church over environmental issues, explaining that this type of conflict “exhausts us. We are more interested in engaging and embracing the wide stream of the body of Christ, seeking common ground to discover what our own tradition might teach us” (18).

In this spirit, the book unfolds in three parts. Part one, “Why Ecotheology?,” addresses basic methodological issues in reading God’s two books—Scripture and creation. “Scripture is inspired,” they explain, “but our interpretations are not” (22). Thus, they return to the biblical text and to the Christian tradition with pressing environmental questions, asking, as Jürgen Moltmann once put it, “Who really is Christ for dying nature and ourselves today?”¹ The physical creation also requires interpretation, and the authors argue that it should be interpreted in dialogue with or in tension with Scripture. “Our method,” they explain, “is rooted in listening to God’s Creation and to those who speak on its behalf, exploring Scripture and our historical tradition...and placing high priority on living out our values through

¹Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 68.

praxis" (25). The remainder of part one illustrates this method through a survey of various biblical environmental principles and numerous environmental problems.

Part two, "Exploring Ecotheology," outlines key ideas in Christian history and theology that have direct bearing on environmental questions. The authors find an ambiguous legacy in Christian history. From Irenaeus and Augustine to Calvin and Luther, the authors identify constructive resources for ecotheology, particularly the affirmation of a theocentric worldview and the goodness of creation. At the same time, they argue that these convictions existed in tension with dualistic modes of thought and eventually succumbed to a modern, scientific worldview in which humans dominate the rest of creation. They celebrate the rise of contemporary ecotheology out of the Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox traditions—including contributions from feminist theology, liberation theology, and the ecojustice movement—while lamenting the fact that "evangelical and Pentecostal voices have been curiously missing from the broader ecotheological conversation" (94).

The rest of part two explores the ecological implications of Trinitarian theology and the biblical-historical arc of creation, fall, and redemption. Trinitarian theology, the authors argue, leads Christians into an appreciation of mystery, both the mystery of God and the mystery of creation, and it challenges the tendency of Western Christianity to overemphasize God's transcendence and underemphasize God's immanence. Particularly in the incarnation and in the upholding presence of the Spirit, Christian theology affirms that God is in and with creation. The theology of creation, sin, and redemption, they insist, emphasizes humanity's calling to image God in the care of the whole creation and to hope for God's peace not in some distant heaven but here on earth.

Part three, "Doing Ecotheology," applies these theological insights to contemporary environmental questions. As the authors put it, "A thoughtfully constructed Christian ecotheology *must* lead to a renovated spirituality and praxis" (146). In particular, they argue, a Christian ecotheology rejects the gnostic tendency to value the spiritual over the physical and points Christians to lives that promote sustainability and resilience for both the human and nonhuman creation. They provide examples of how an ethic of ecojustice might transform the Christian environmental witness. From centering prayer and honoring the Sabbath to gardening and water conservation, the authors suggest practical steps for living out Christian ecotheology, and they end part three with ways to institutionalize environmental practices in the church.

The book ends with a short chapter on hope in the face of discouraging environmental problems. Hope is not escapism, the authors insist. Rather, "Our first step toward hope is to become rooted in gratitude. Gratitude is fundamental, first, because it recognizes the centrality of grace and of our dependence on God" (243). This kind of hope allows Christians to live into God's promises for the whole of creation.

Introducing Evangelical Ecotheology has much to commend. It is an accessible volume that leads readers through important topics in Christian history, theology, and practice. Perhaps most importantly, it models dialogue and collaboration. In addition to the unified voice found throughout the main text, the authors highlight their ongoing disagreements in inset discussions of "tension points." Many of these are familiar friction points among evangelical Christians—gendered language for God, evolution, politics—and the authors work to model hospitality with one another. The tension points are incredibly valuable in subtly undermining the culture wars over environmental issues; they are valuable in separating concern for the nonhuman creation from entrenched political and social ideologies.

The one potential limitation of the book may simply come down to its title, *Introducing*

Evangelical Ecotheology. The book is not, as the title might suggest to some readers, a systematic introduction to or survey of evangelical ecotheology. In other words, it does not survey what evangelicals are doing in the field of ecotheology or in creation care. Rather, it is the record of three evangelical authors exploring the broad field of ecotheology and practice, within and beyond evangelical Christianity. As they write in the introduction, "Like a walk in the woods or a hike up a mountain, this book has unfolded as we have walked with it" (11).

The result is occasional ambiguity as to the map that the authors use for their exploration and their intended audience. For example, when the authors summarize their biblical reasons for creation care—earthkeeping, mutuality, artistry, character, the underprivileged, harmony, and the future—it is not clear if this list represents some established body of evangelical environmental thinking or is primarily the reasons that the three authors found important in their collaborative exploration. They note that the list is not meant to be comprehensive, but readers might still wonder what led them to these particular principles and what guided their selection of material in other parts of the book. And sometimes it is not clear what evangelical audience the authors have in mind. For example, their discussion of biblical hermeneutics, their description of an overarching environmental crisis, and their use of scholarship from wide reaches of the Christian tradition certainly will certainly make a significant number of evangelicals nervous, and their discussion of praxis seems to assume a middle-class or upper-class lifestyle. Perhaps more surprisingly, the authors explain that they embrace evangelicalism's emphases on the crucifixion and conversion, yet these do not appear to be particularly dominant themes in the book.

Despite these ambiguities, *Introducing Evangelical Ecotheology* deserves a wide audience. It is the collaborative testimony of three thoughtful and knowledgeable Christians who are less interested in providing a comprehensive and definitive evangelical ecotheology—much less in arguing with fellow evangelicals over environmental questions—and more interested in sharing their considerable experience in exploring Christian faith and the environment. They invite readers to consider for themselves what Christian theology and faith might mean for the environment, and they identify a wide range of topics for further exploration. And if readers do follow the example of hospitable environmental dialogue and praxis in *Introducing Evangelical Ecotheology*, they will strengthen the church's witness in caring for God's creation, human and nonhuman alike.

Thomas M. Crisp, Steve L. Porter, and Gregg A. Ten Elshof (eds.). *Christian Scholarship in the Twenty-First Century: Prospects and Perils*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014. xii + 196 pp. \$16.66, ISBN 9780802871442.

Christopher Gehrz (ed.). *The Pietist Vision of Christian Higher Education: Forming Whole and Holy Persons*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015. 236 pp. \$20.72, ISBN 9780830840717.

Reviewed by John W. Hawthorne, Sociology, Spring Arbor University

As a sociology professor and administrator serving several Christian universities over the last three decades plus, I have been fascinated at how institutional ethos varies from school to school. A university may be celebrating a centennial, yet the hiring of people who "fit," the priorities placed on certain aspects of academic life, and the strategic priorities of administrators all seem to reflect the DNA of the particular institution.

Institutional ethos is clearly evident in the two books covered in this review. The first, by Thomas Crisp and colleagues, arose from the Biola University Center for Christian Thought. A series of semester discussions and a year-end conference provided the impetus for the essays in the book. Similarly, the Gehrz book came out of faculty discussions and a workshop at Bethel University in Minnesota.

Both books deal with serious issues within Christian higher education, albeit from the perspective of unique vision of these two fine institutions. I will first attempt to summarize the central questions of each of the books and then devote the balance of this review to the contrasting assumptions.

Christian Scholarship is a collection of ten essays: two from Biola faculty and the balance from scholars invited to the year-end conference. The fact that most of the authors come from somewhere other than Biola may weaken my institutional ethos claim somewhat, but the structure of the workshops and the editing of the essays still reflects a Biola stance. Consider this framing of the volume from the editors:

Paul instructed those in his churches to “take every thought captive to Christ.” In the context of the academy, following this injunction will require careful and sustained reflection on the nature of Christian scholarship. The essays that follow are an example of such reflection, and we pray that they will push forward the ongoing conversation on the prospects and perils of Christian scholarship in the twenty-first century. (xii)

Two things stand out to me in this statement. First, there is a recognition that Christian scholarship is something over which one wrestles. The idea is that we should be very aware of what it means to be a Christian scholar as an expression of faith. Second, Christian scholarship offers both positive and negative outcomes for the Christian scholar.

The book opens with excellent essays from Nicholas Wolterstorff and Alvin Plantinga. These two essays seem to set the parameters for those that follow. To Wolterstorff, scholarship is a natural expression of the faculty member’s Christian commitments even when engaging with the broader academy. But that scholarship is less a special work than an outgrowth of the Christian mind within the scholar. For Plantinga, on the other hand, Christian scholarship requires a vigilant defense against the default assumptions of the academy. He critiques the default assumptions of science, social science, and physics around which the scholar must navigate. Where Wolterstorff sees interactions with secular scholars as an outgrowth of one’s work, Plantinga sees Christian scholarship as never quite fitting in to establishment paradigms.

Several of the other essays in *Christian Scholarship* provide “over the shoulder” excursions into particular disciplinary areas. Paul Moser explores how a philosopher would do “Christ-Shaped Philosophy.” Jonathan Anderson examines how art criticism can reflect key theological principles. Natasha Duquette discusses how understanding the sublime and the beautiful allows an interpretation of dissent in literature and art.

Another set of essays attempts to craft a definitional structure for the project of Christian scholarship. For example, psychologist M. Elizabeth Lewis Hall explores “scaffolding” for understanding scholarship. Amos Yong examines the impact of the role of the Holy Spirit in enlivening and advancing scholarship. George Hunsinger suggests that a Barthian methodology is particularly valuable for the Christian scholar.

Any edited volume has the weakness of a sense of unevenness to the essays. Some are more centrally connected than others. In addition, some of the disciplinary specifics of the perspectives offered make it hard for the over-the-shoulder effect really to work. Frequently I was struck with the awareness that I did not have the background to engage the

writer's argument fully. Finally, it would have been helpful if the authors had been asked to address similar themes from their various perspectives. While it is possible to make some contrasts and similarities, it is left for the reader to do that (at the risk of forcing contrasts where they might not exist).

Still, *Christian Scholarship* does achieve the goals it set for itself. The editors had a substantive teleological aim:

[I]f there *are* Christian approaches to the various academic disciplines, it might be that by approaching them in these ways, we can better manifest the gospel, better image the manifold wisdom and beauty of God, better serve a suffering world. If there are distinctively Christian ways of approaching our scholarship, it would be good to know. (viii, emphasis in the original)

It is safe to say that this aim was evident throughout the essays. The book would be a valuable resource for a faculty reading group, particularly an interdisciplinary one. It might be heavy sledding for a new faculty Faith-and-Scholarship workshop, but more experienced scholars will find it valuable source for discussion.

In contrast, *Pietist Vision* takes a broader view than simply Christian scholarship, focusing on the greater enterprise of Christian higher education. In the introduction, Christopher Gehrz lays out a common understanding of what Pietism is about:

Pietists in all times and all places seek a more authentic Christianity: not inherited or assumed, coerced or affected, but lived out through the transformative experiences of conversion and regeneration. Suspicious of "dead orthodoxy," Pietists subordinate doctrine to Scripture – with an irenic or peaceable spirit prevailing in matters where the Bible leaves open a range of interpretations (or where Pietists encounter those of other or no religious faith). Clergy and laity alike form a common priesthood actively engaged in worship, education, evangelism, and social action, in the firm hope that God intends "better times" for the church and the world. (20-21)

Every one of the seventeen authors in *Pietist Vision* has a Bethel connection. They graduated from Bethel, taught there in the past, or currently teach there. All attempt to frame the implications of Pietism for Christian higher education from the author's unique perspective. They do rely heavily on a few key individuals as jumping-off places: Philip Spener, August Francke, and Carl Lundquist are used by most of the authors as grounding perspectives.

Pietist Vision, like the Biola book, represents a broad range of disciplinary views. Authors come from theology, philosophy, English, communication, the natural sciences, and the social sciences. The book is organized into four sections: some definitional issues on the nature of Christian higher education, a section exploring social responsibility, consideration of how the Pietist vision is expressed in the natural sciences, and discussion of the challenges and opportunities of the Pietist approach. While section three is interesting, the other sections have broader appeal so I will unpack them a little more.

The first essay in the opening section has philosopher David Williams suggesting how Pietism reshapes the "Faith-Learning Integration" concept so central to much of Christian higher education. Because conversion is at the center of the Pietist understanding, integration language gives way to transformational character shaping. The work of Christian higher education becomes community centered and character forming and not simply doctrinal or philosophical.

Katherine Nevins and Roger Olson underscore the centrality of community in their essays. The former examines the ways in which Christian education in the classroom is contingent upon humility. The latter places the work of Christian higher education in service to the mission of God, in which our role is to be whole people in community.

Two other essays in the section put some distance between Pietism and more philosophical perspectives. Phyllis Alsdurf contrasts the Christian university vision of Carl Henry with that of Bethel president Carl Lundquist. Janel Paris explores the limitations of the integrationist model, using her field of anthropology as an illustration.

The second section of the book explores some of the implications of the Pietist approach. Dale Durie examines how the priesthood of believers has implications for our classrooms. Christian Collins Winn discusses the unique role of civil discourse within a Christian university. Marian Larsen and Sarah Shady suggest that the Pietist perspective offers tools for dealing effectively in interfaith dialogue.

The final section considers how the Pietist approach is challenged by contemporary social changes and how it might be better nurtured. Raymond VanArragon describes the challenges of pluralism and how a life of discipleship mitigates against these challenges. Joel Ward reminds us that modern efficiency moves in higher education run counter to Pietist assumptions and that institutional identity must be nurtured. Samuel Zalanga echoes Ward's concerns, suggesting the Pietist vision, though highly valued, is threatened by neoliberal assumptions in modern society.

The final essay is a summary piece by Christopher Gehrz. Challenging the temptation of Christian universities to chase the newest trends and structures, he suggests that embracing "Institutional DNA" is key.

It is possible, Gehrz argues, that Pietist higher education may prove too difficult in the face of the challenges presented in section four of the book. Perhaps the small Christian liberal arts institution is a relic of another time, as its critics claim. Yet Gehrz ends on a hopeful note, recognizing that God works in ever-renewing ways:

For his good reasons, God chooses to accomplish that renewal of the world through renewed persons gathered together as a renewed church. May Pietist colleges and universities – finding new life in their usable pasts – continue to take up their share of that mission, in hope and with joy. (233)

Pietist Vision suffers the same challenges noted earlier; edited works wind up with uneven coverage and at times I wanted more elaboration of themes. In addition, by relying so heavily on some key foundational voices it can be repetitive at times. A fully developed chapter on Spener and Lundquist that later essays referenced would have improved readability at times. Yet its overarching strength is the articulation of a grounding focus that provides Pietist institutions like Bethel with significant touchstones when confronting changing social circumstances.

As someone who has studied Christian higher education for over three decades, it is intriguing to consider how these books differ in focus. *Christian Scholarship* is primarily directed at the work of the individual scholar within the context of the larger disciplinary guilds. This is an important consideration. As scholars engaging academe in general, it is important that the Christian voice and values are neither marginalized nor overly politicized. Knowing how to ground scholarship in Christian ethos is important as is knowing how to communicate that ethos to our colleagues who do not share it.

It is one thing to work out such ethical and theological dilemmas in theology, philosophy or psychology. Other fields like anthropology, as Janel Paris argues, may find it much harder to work through such issues.

While *Pietist Vision* may raise some of these same concerns of working through the demands of Christian learning, the issues the authors examine are more apt to be found within the context of students and faculty together in a particular educational setting. The

importance of place is especially important here. Issues of civic engagement or educational innovation may run across institutions, but the Pietist ethic is centered in a particular set of interactions. Samuel Zalanga makes clear that some innovations, like advanced technology, may run directly counter to the personal encounters in community so central to the Pietist ethos.

These two approaches to Christian higher education may illustrate one of the key issues for faculty members in the Christian university. One book defines the work of the individual scholar while the other defines the work of the teacher/mentor/colleague. It is a difficult reality that as Christian academics that we operate in both of these roles and live with the ensuing tension on a regular basis.

There are other perspectives that could be explored. There are the administrative challenges of seeking new efficiencies and mitigating costs. There are the concerns of students and student life professionals for developing character outside the classroom as part of the transition from home to the larger society. As I have explored in my own work, *A First Step Into A Much Larger World: The Christian University and Beyond* (Wipf & Stock, 2014) there is also the dynamic of the student attempting to navigate his or her new world as a Christian college student.

And yet these multiple perspectives actually underlie a strength of Christian higher education: we believe that the work we are doing is part of larger Kingdom work. In the last essay of *Christian Scholarship*, Amos Yong calls us to imagine the Christian university focused on the work of the Holy Spirit:

In the end, such a renewalist approach to the Christian university will gain traction *only if it can specify the difference the Holy Spirit makes to empowering teaching and imbuing research and scholarship with vitality*. If this can be delineated, then the results ought to be relevant for all Christian – and especially evangelical – educators. (177, emphasis mine)

Christian Scholarship and *Pietist Vision* each raise slightly different challenges for Christian higher education in the early 21st century. Somehow, those of us who are so invested in Christian universities must continue to find ways of faithfully pursuing God's call on our institutions in the years to come.

As we work together on that task, these books provide some valuable fodder for the important conversations that lie before us as the Holy Spirit gives us guidance. There is therefore room for us to pursue our institutional distinctives expressed through ethos and also our commonality as Christian educators.

Timothy Larsen. *The Slain God: Anthropologists and the Christian Faith*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. 1 + 245 pp. \$39.87, ISBN 9780199657872.

Reviewed by Ryan McIlhenny, History, Providence Christian College

Within the last few decades Christian intellectuals have spent many a conference paper and journal article articulating the relationship between their faith and their professional work as scholars. While I enjoy the occasional rehearsal, I find myself, as a historian, more often bored with the question almost as much as I am with discussions about "objectivity." In his latest book, *The Slain God*, Timothy Larsen uniquely approaches the issue not by offering a solution to this recurring debate, a final synthesis, but by examining a handful of

intellectuals, the pioneers of modern anthropology—Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917), James George Frazer (1854-1914), E. E. Evans-Pritchard (1902-73), Mary Douglas (1921-2007), Victor Turner (1920-83), and Edith Turner (1921-)—whose scholarship and discipline were shaped by the existence of the Christian faith.

Sitting on the “fault line where doubt and faith collide,” according to Larsen, *The Slain God* is in part a study about those pioneering anthropologists who lost their faith while advancing the discipline (10). Tylor and Frazer discredited Christianity in the process of developing their anthropology. Tylor, the “father of anthropology,” abandoned his Quaker heritage “while working on *Researches into the Early History of Mankind and the Development of Civilization*” (17). He held that all religions “were based on the crude animalistic theories of savages” (40). Likewise, in utilizing religious terminology “to describe rituals from across the globe,” Frazer—whose *Golden Bough* (though sadly not Frazer himself), remains “the most popular and influential book in the history of the discipline”—assumed that his readers would become less committed to Christianity after reading his 1859 *Passages of the Bible*, a book that endeavored to “destabilize scriptural authority.” Yet his “covert efforts to undermine faith,” especially in the later edition of *Passages*, “were not effective” (78). Both thinkers examined the habits of societies and the development of cultures from positivistic lenses: beliefs and practices related to the supernatural were indicative of minds atrophied by metaphysics—minds that failed to advance toward a higher more positivistic stage. Religion and science, in Larsen’s words, stood as “competing explanatory views” (56). The latter was destined to replace the former.

Despite the deicial tendencies of the founders, Larsen contends, “the slain God” would “not remain entombed” (223). Not all the representatives in Larsen’s book lost their faith; in fact, quite the opposite occurred. The turning point came in the work of E. E. Evans-Pritchard, the son of an Anglican clergyman, who discovered anthropology through Tylor’s *Primitive Culture* and Frazer’s *Golden Bough* as a student at Exeter College. One of the first to employ observations in the field, Evans-Pritchard, despite the challenges in his own life, including the death of his wife and his love of drinking, which became “a nightly pattern toward the end of his life,” was a devoted Catholic, exhibiting a “genuine intellectual assent to the principal, historical doctrines of the historical faith” (94).

Evans-Pritchard emboldened later anthropologists to take seriously the atoning God. Mary Douglas, “Britain’s foremost anthropologist,” gained comfort knowing that the Christian faith would not necessarily clash with developments in anthropology. Anthropology was used to strengthen her faith: “Douglas was both fully a Christian and fully an anthropologist” (173). Larsen ends the book with Victor and Edith Turner. Although their journey into the faith was far from easy, the Turners joined the communion of the Catholic Church in 1958, much to the great disappointment, at least in Victor’s case, of the Manchester department of anthropology. The opposition from his own department compelled the Turners to move to the United States, where Victor held a position at Cornell and later the University of Chicago.

Evans-Pritchard, Douglas, and the Turners shared a belief in the commonality or shared features of all religious practices—the “ur-theology” or “underlying universal” as Edith Turner called it—challenging thereby a hegemonic or imperialistic faith-narrative that elevated one form of spirituality over another or that dismisses all religions. What kept Evans-Pritchard near to Christianity was the belief that in a similar way to “those who are colour-blind or tone deaf” deprived of the ability to see or hear elements of the physical, there were those “deprived of a spiritual sense” unable to hear and see in a spiritual sense (100). Douglas did her major fieldwork in the Congo, confronting directly the

depravity of Western imperialism, and articulated the concept of “grid-group analysis” (that is, “the extent to which one’s behavior and options in life are proscribed and confined on the general basis of general, fixed categories of identity” [136]). But what “changed the course of her career most dramatically” was the turn to biblical studies. Surprisingly as an anthropologist, she challenged modern biblical criticism, finding “ways to recast seemingly offensive biblical passages in a more favorable light” (150). The contributions made by the Turners—“pilgrimage studies” and the notion of *communitas*, as delineated in *The Ritual Process*—reflected what they believed to be the seamless interaction between anthropology and Christianity. Edith’s own “co-coined” term “actuality” demonstrates this most directly. “Actuality” refers to “something that is discerned to be a spiritual reality in itself rather than being merely a metaphorical reference to a spiritual reality” (206). Another way to say this is that Edith, in particular, believed strongly in the reality of the spiritual. The line between the physical and metaphysical seemed to be fading. When she claimed to see spirits in a hallucinogenic-induced experience, Edith truly believed she encountered spirits. There is no reason, Larsen contends, “to rule out”—nor does one have the right to do so—“the existence of spirits a priori to wonder when Turner thought she saw a spirit she was actually experiencing a drug-induced hallucination” (208). In this way, Edith’s courageous confrontation of anthropological positivism stands as the “undoing of Edward Tylor” (219).

A couple contextual issues came to mind while reading *The Slain God*—the one relates to Western imperialism, the other to the type of Christianity of the later anthropologists. As an intellectual history, much of the book focuses on individuals and their particular work, but what of the political and cultural milieu? I suspect that some of the changes anthropologists took up post-Frazer related not only to a particular religious commitment but also to the changes in empire in both Britain and the United States. Readers will also notice the importance of Catholicism. In a few places, Larsen shows the appeal of this form of Christianity, which included parallels with indigenous faiths, reinforcing not only commitments to Catholicism but generating a deeper appreciation of their subjects. But did Protestantism conform to the dictates of a kind of modern positivism or that of empire? Further discussion of such a relationship might have added to this already engaging work.

The story that Larsen tells is one that can be applied to other disciplines. The casting off of Christianity has been part of the early developments of professionalization; such efforts have largely—if not ultimately—failed. This should give us pause to consider not so much the place of faith within scholarship, but the juxtaposition of faith in the lives of those engaged in scholarship. It is not the discipline as such that is inherently antithetical to faith, but rather the presuppositions of the scholar. On this note, I am reminded of the great Dutch philosopher Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977) and his transcendental critique of the heart, the pre-rational (please do not read *irrational*) ground-motive that moves individuals, including scholars, in one of two ultimate directions: either submission to God or away from him in sinful suppression. Along with the reliance on intellectual predecessors, scholars must understand that the concentration of being, shaped by an ultimate love, is what guides our intellectual adventures. Academics are never far from conjuring their intellectual forbearers for guidance when contributing to the development of a specific discipline—philosophers commune with Descartes, economists with Smith, theologians with Schleiermacher, historians with Ranke, and so on. In the process, they come to identify what flowed out of the heart of their intellectual ancestors.

Reviewed by Andrew F. Bush, Missiology and Anthropology, Eastern University

Can the global Christian community, divided by its thousands of denominations and regional trends while also challenged by the increased vigor of other religions, be a source of healing to a world wracked by war, poverty, disease, and injustice? This daunting question is the basis for Todd M. Johnson and Cindy M. Wu's *Our Global Families: Christians Embracing Common Identity in a Changing World*. The authors indeed argue that the global Christian community can be a part of transforming the world. This will necessitate, however, that all Christian traditions affirm their common identity with two families: the global Christian family and the global human family.

Johnson, Associate Professor of Global Christianity at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary and co-editor of the *Atlas of Global Christianity* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009), and Wu, a former graduate student of Johnson's with a concern for global diversity and unity, develop their thesis by bringing together a wide body of information related to religious demography. Their goal is to give Christians a perspective of their membership in the global Christian family, and to motivate them to interact with other religious communities for the betterment of the world.

Johnson and Wu develop their thesis by examining four topics which comprise the book's four sections: 1) Our Changing World; 2) Our Changing Identity, 3) Our Changing Relationships, and 4) Changing Our World. Drawing on his work as a leading demographer of world Christianity, in "Our Changing World" Johnson describes dramatic shifts in global Christianity that have occurred since 1900. Sensitive to overwhelming the reader with data, Johnson concisely summarizes the radical growth of Christianity in the Global South (Africa, Asia, Latin America and Oceania) and the relative stagnation of Christianity in the Global North (Europe and North America). Johnson writes, "While 82% of all Christians lived in the Global North in 1900, today nearly 65% of all Christians live in the Global South" (7). Further, in this first section the authors describe the religious composition of the seven billion strong global human family today, noting that Christianity and Islam together amount to more than half of the world's population.

The second part, "Our Changing Identity," discusses the importance of affirming a shared global human identity from the fact that all are created in the image of God. While acknowledging the value of local identity, they argue that this cannot be allowed to divide humanity. As humans we need to embrace our identity as a global family. Similarly as Christians we need to rise above sectarian divisions and affirm our identity as part of the global body of Christ. Who should be identified as 'Christian' is defined as those who identify themselves as such.

Affirming the common identity of all humans as part of a global family, and of Christians as part of the global Christian family, inevitably involves confronting the barriers that exist between peoples. In part three, "Our Changing Relationships," the authors discuss the importance of solidarity among Christians and identify various efforts to achieve a wider ecumenical unity. They acknowledge that such unity does not mean that the distinctives of various traditions are to be erased, but rather greater emphasis needs to be placed on truths that are held in common by all Christians. Affirming our common human identity will necessitate intentional engagement with other religious communities. They offer a

helpful discussion of various perspectives of interfaith dialogue. Johnson and Wu write,

Christians, Evangelicals in particular, will improve their engagement with others through developing a "theology of interfaith solidarity." A theology of interfaith solidarity does not have to concede that all religions lead up the same proverbial mountain trail(s) to God or deny that real conflict will arise. Rather, it is a starting point to focus on building bridges between people of different faiths instead of debating which bridge leads to heaven. It begins with shared values, developing trust first, then working toward deeper conversations and common concerns. (129)

In engaging with Christians' global family the authors explore the importance of practicing hospitality and make suggestions for widening one's experience with other cultures and peoples such as learning a new language and sponsoring a refugee family. They write, "As the branches of our global family tree extend, they will reach new cultures, and consequently we will have to find better ways of relating to one another" (149).

In the final part, "Changing Our World," Johnson and Wu explore wrong conceptions of transforming the world, such as plans that do not take the cultural complexity of the world into account (163), and the fact that our efforts may be misdirected, not to those on the margins of power, but rather to the elite. In seeking to advance the concept in Judaism of *tikkun olam*, or repairing the world, the authors advocate for "faithful presence, God-centered initiative, and humble service to humanity" (163). Changing the world will involve seeking justice that is transformative and not merely a Band-Aid of relief that treats the symptoms of oppression and not the root causes. Seeking justice, the authors note, is not to be set in a false dichotomy over against evangelism, but both are part of one holistic gospel (169).

In their conclusion Johnson and Wu write,

We embrace a vision of our global family being united and of a world transformed by obedience to the gospel. We also embrace a vision of our global Christian family finding solidarity with our global human family to work together for the common good. We believe these visions can change the world. (190)

The authors' compelling, inclusive vision provides an important perspective. Much has been written in recent years about the rise of Christian faith in the Global South and the consequent shift of the majority of global Christianity away from the Global North. Johnson and Wu's vision is a refreshing affirmation of the unity of Christians as part of a global family. In an era of rising global religiosity which more often than not is a basis of conflict and the fragmentation of the human family, Johnson and Wu's call for Christians to reaffirm solidarity with the global human family is a timely, prophetic cry. Especially relevant is their observation of the responsibility of Christianity and Islam, as the two largest faith communities in the world who share a history of enmity and conflict, to engage more intentionally for the sake of humanity.

The painful realities of the sources of division in both the Christian and human families are not minimized. Especially effective are Wu's recollections of her youth and the exclusion she would often experience even from other Asian Americans. Certainly voices of protest will be raised challenging the idea of solidarity with Christians of other traditions and peoples of other religions as dangerous theological compromise. The authors' affirmation that truth may be found in other religions will be a significant challenge to many Christians. Yet, the authors steadfastly and convincingly point to the example of the inclusive love of Jesus and of the implications of the crucifixion which, as the apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 2, have torn down barriers which formerly seemed insurmountable (60).

Johnson and Wu present world Christianity, in spite of its acknowledged divisions,

as having the opportunity of being an agent of healing in a critical day. Their broad and hopeful vision of holistic transformation is relevant to Christians in every walk of life. *Our Global Families* bring together theological, cultural, demographic, and historical strands of the contemporary discussion of the future of world Christianity, weaving them together in a compelling presentation of how the global Christian family is called to be part of the mission of God for the sake of humanity and for the glory of God.

Paul Moes and Donald J. Tellinghuisen. *Exploring Psychology and Christian Faith: An Introductory Guide*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014. ix + 272 pp. \$21.99, ISBN 9780801049262.

Reviewed by Kristina M. Kays, Psychology, George Fox University

Paul Moes and Donald J. Tellinghuisen present the value of exploring psychology through five theological lenses. These respected Calvin College psychology faculty suggest that human nature is best understood through an analysis which combines theological underpinnings and psychological assumptions. *Exploring Psychology and Christian Faith: An Introductory Guide* examines the intersection of psychology and Christian faith through the common chapter headings one would find in a general psychology textbook. A primary frame the authors identify clarifies five themes that illustrate aspects of human nature from a biblical perspective. These themes are:

1. **Relational persons:** We are made in the image of God, meant for relationship with him and meant to steward his creation.
2. **Broken, in need of redemption:** We are sinners in need of salvation through Christ, living in and part of creation that suffers the consequences of all humanity's sin.
3. **Embodied:** We bear God's image in real bodies in a real world.
4. **Responsible limited agents:** We make choices (within constraints) that result in actions for which we are both individually and corporately responsible.
5. **Meaning seekers:** We seek to make sense of our surroundings, our experience, and our purpose through perceiving patterns, creative meaning making, and desire for a deity (ix). These orthodox Christian themes of human nature are explored well and succinctly in chapter 1, and establish a foundation for the remainder of the text.

The rest of the text explores 13 common introductory psychology topics from research methodology, to sensation and perception, to social psychology, and finishes with clinical therapy. This breadth of topics serves the authors' stated purpose of providing a text as "a useful companion to introductory psychology textbooks for students who are interested in the intersection of Christian faith and psychology" (xi).

The book is well written; however, it is written with a higher reading level than the majority of introductory textbooks. This could lead to challenges for some students. Instructors may need to consider this difference and frame the reading carefully, while potentially considering some carefully constructed scaffolding assignments early on in the term in order to assure reading comprehension could mitigate these issues.

Each chapter concludes with a minimum of four discussion or reflection questions which may be included in class assignments or term papers. Many of these questions are typical and expected responses to the specific topics. One example from the chapter that addresses learning asks, "How has modeling from others influenced how you behave?" (106). Fortunately, the authors frequently take it a step further by offering a follow-up question to

provoke the reader to consider how his or her own actions may be a role model for others. In the case of this chapter, a follow-up question asks, "Can you think of situations where you came to a deeper understanding of some issue or problem through 'relationality'—in other words in the context of community or social interaction?" (106).

Some of these chapter questions are quite impactful and could help students understand key aspects of theology, Christian faith, and the integration of psychology. For example, one question at the end of the chapter on psychological disorders encourages the reader to consider, "Why does God allow people to have these difficulties?" (235). This question haunts many of us at times throughout our lives. This matter can be a particular personal challenge when we see people we care about facing such things as cancer diagnoses or unexpected losses. Providing a framework for conversation or personal reflection can establish a much more effective synthesis of learning. Thus, this type of question stands out as a key value of this book.

This text is a recommended companion to traditional introductory psychology texts, particularly for those who want to understand psychology within a Christian worldview. While there are other texts available that consider the integration of psychology and Christianity, there are none available that set out to provide a companion perspective to introductory psychology texts. *Exploring Psychology and Christian Faith: An Introductory Guide* allows a student or reader new to the field of psychology to grasp a number of the psychological essentials from key subject areas, while considering these concepts through an orthodox Christian lens.

As an introductory text, the authors do a sufficient job addressing the subjects with enough material to provide a foundation. It is essential to note that this text is not comprehensive enough to be a replacement for an introductory text. Some chapters are better crafted and more succinct than others. I found the last three chapters on personality, disorders, and therapy to be good examples of effective chapters, while others, such as the chapters on thinking and development, seemed too limited for the topic, perhaps because the authors assumed that the reader will come with some broader background to the subject. Some of this nuancing seems likely to be the result of the authors' specialties, combined with the vast material to cover. Regardless, each chapter provides enough of a foundation in the subject matter for the reader to begin their analysis of Christian perspectives intersecting psychology.

There are times where the authors weigh in more heavily with Calvinistic perspectives regarding the foundation to the Christian viewpoint. However, this is not heavy handed, and there is a clear, deliberate attempt to represent a general orthodox Christian perspective. Some readers not familiar with Calvinistic views may find areas of stronger bias. This bias lessens when the book is read in its entirety. This suggests that a complete reading is a better approach than using isolated selections.

The authors weave the five themes illustrating aspects of human nature into many of the chapters, primarily in the conclusion and application sections of each chapter. One of the more exceptional examples is found in chapter 15, "In Search of Normalcy (Psychological Disorders)." This chapter reviews the common Christian responses to mental health issues and concludes with a clear outline of how these issues are best understood within the five themes found in humankind. The strength of comparing Christian faith and psychology is evident in the framing of mental health issues within the context of (the five themes) relationships, individual brokenness, biological contributions, cognitive/behavioral choice, and existential purpose which mirror the perspective of conceptualizing clinical issues within a biopsychosocial-spiritual framework. In this example, understanding from this themed

perspective broadens the understanding for both those dealing directly with mental health issues and those providing supportive services for those involved.

As an example of the five themes, this chapter addresses the role of both sinful individual and institutional actions alongside the biological influences of mental health challenges. For instance, depression is a mental disorder that can be influenced by genetics, learning, broken relationships, sinful choices, and a lack of understanding that one bears God's image. A larger understanding of influences on human experience can be empowering and place a sense of true agency with those that are equipped to address mental health concerns. The challenge is for readers from Christian foundations to be those who encourage the Christian community to address all of these factors with compassion and intention. This is potentially valuable as a response for readers of all the chapters from this text.

Encouraging Christian scholars and students to think critically about what they learn and read about psychology and other disciplines is the clear purpose of this text. Moes and Tellinghuisen accomplish their goal of providing a companion text for introductory psychology courses. In addition, this text would be of value for faculty in the field of psychology exploring a broader understanding of the integration of psychology and Christian faith. This text could also be included in a Christian institution's undergraduate psychology capstone class as a valuable addition to critical thinking assignments. While not a replacement for an introductory psychology text, this volume fills a unique niche in the field of Christian higher education. *Exploring Psychology and Christian Faith: An Introductory Guide* has the ability to encourage readers to greater understanding, compassion, and intentional action. For Christian colleges and universities ready to include a quality discussion of Christian faith and psychology, this book is an essential read.

Gordon Graham, ed. *The Kuyper Center Review, Volume Five: Church and Academy*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015. xii + 142 pp. \$24.00, ISBN 9780802872456.

Reviewed by Garrett Trott, Librarian, Corban University

Abraham Kuyper's understanding of life was flavored by the sovereignty of God. A statement he made at the inaugural convocation of the Free University summarizes it well: "In the total expanse of human life there is not a single square inch of which Christ, who alone is sovereign, does not declare, 'That is mine!'"² Kuyper desired God's reign to be evident in all areas, particularly the church and the academy. This collection of essays, reflecting the 2013 conference theme hosted by the Abraham Kuyper Center for Public Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, strives to integrate Kuyper's ideology into several different aspects of the church and the academy.

This collection begins with an essay by H. Russel Botman. Botman provides an intriguing picture of how Kuyper's theology played a dual role in South Africa's apartheid, first in the justification of it and later in its expiry. Botman takes Kuyper's ideology and applies it to a more modern issue: globalization. He convincingly argues that the biblical concept of ethical community, which Kuyper advocated, is under attack in the modern efforts of globalization. Botman moves on to argue that many of the assumptions that underlie globalization do not align with Kuyper's ideology. This is an intriguing essay that attempts to look at a modern

²Abraham Kuyper, *Sovereiniteit in Eigen Kring* (Amsterdam: J. H. Kruyt, 1880), 35.

issue impacting both the church and the academy through the eyes of Abraham Kuyper.

The second essay by Dylan Pahman looks at F. W. J. Schelling's impact upon Kuyper's concept of sphere sovereignty, using art as an illustration. Unfortunately, Pahman begins this essay without any explanation or development of sphere sovereignty. While many readers are likely familiar with the concept, for those who are not, this lack of definition makes the essay difficult to follow. Pahman provides a brief comparison between and analysis of Schelling's metaphysics and Kuyper's sphere sovereignty. The chart, provided by Pahman on page 38, delivers an excellent summary of his comparison and analysis. In spite of its brevity, the summary and the brief analysis whet the appetite of the reader. Pahman's essay includes an extensive bibliography providing the reader with the necessary resources to feed their interests.

How would a conversation between Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Herman Bavinck assist in understanding the relationship between the church and the academy? Javier A. Garcia in the third essay addresses this question. Garcia provides an excellent summary of Bonhoeffer's and Bavinck's approach to these questions. In so doing, the author argues that the answer lies in a model established at the University of Cambridge where they have a department of religion serving the academy and a department of theology serving the church. This is an intriguing model which provides one way to look at Bonhoeffer and Bavinck's concerns regarding the integration of the church and the academy.

The next paper in this collection of essays, by Marinus de Jong, touches upon the classic dichotomy of science and religion. De Jong provides an historical glimpse of this topic by looking at the dialog of Herman Bavinck and Herman Groenewegen. While this is an intriguing essay, two specific elements could strengthen it. First, due to the historical context of Bavinck and Groenewegen's work, both of these scholars shared the presupposition that all truths lead to Christ, whether through science or theology. With this presupposition all but eliminated in the postmodern era, the overview of their argument, while intriguing, bears little fruit in modern discussion. Secondly, the brevity of this essay forces de Jong not to go into the depth that a topic like this requires. While it is a constructive essay touching a classical topic, it does not address the complexity of the issue.

Chapter 5 includes an essay by Ad de Bruijne discussing Abraham Kuyper's ecclesiology and how it could contribute to the public responsibility of the church in various contexts. While de Bruijne's essay touches an intriguing topic, in many respects it simply whets the appetite of an interested reader. While the author does provide a list of references that could potentially assist a reader whose hunger has been stimulated by de Bruijne's work, the essay lacks depth. Further analysis of Kuyper's ecclesiology and its relation to public responsibility would intrigue the reader.

In essay number six, Gijsbert van den Brink attempts to use some of Kuyper's work to bridge one of the current issues that appears to divide the church and the academy: evolution. While this is an intriguing attempt to connect two apparent foes, van den Brink uses the term "evolution" without making a distinction between micro and macroevolution. The author does, however, use the term "Darwinism" to refer to the concept of macroevolution. However, the two terms, "Darwinism" and "evolution," have almost become synonymous in modern speech and it would be helpful if van der Brink could begin his essay noting distinctions. While the author does provide notable evidence aligning Kuyper's ideology with microevolution and contrasting it with Darwinism, it may have been helpful to the reader if van den Brink had developed these two terms more fully, noting the distinctions.

In the essay entitled, "A Queen without a Throne? Harnack, Schlatter, and Kuyper

on Theology in the University," Michael Bräutigam discusses how these three scholars developed their theories on how the church should interact with Christian higher education. Adolf von Harnack thought that there should be no connection between the church and Christian higher education. While Harnack suggests that Christian higher education can offer advice and assistance to the church, he argues that the teachings and needs of the church should not play a direct role in guiding higher education. Schlatter, while in partial agreement with Harnack that the needs of the church should not necessarily direct higher education, also saw an urgent need for more interaction between academia and the community. Schlatter argues that the university's task in pursuing truth needs to bear value to the community-at-large. When this happens, Schlatter argues, God is glorified. Kuyper's response to the integration of the Church and academia was stated in his inaugural address to Free University, in which he articulated his idea of sphere sovereignty. In the context of Christian higher education and the church, which according to Kuyper's sphere sovereignty are two distinct spheres, each has been designed and is governed by God, and each has its own distinct responsibilities and competence. In spite of their differing views, Bräutigam notes two areas where these three agreed: first, theology belongs in the university, and second, theology plays a crucial role in the establishing the philosophical undergirding of many disciplines. Overall, this is an intriguing essay and provides great insight into the functions of Christian higher education and the church in the 21st century.

Harry Van Dyke, in chapter 8, provides an essay on Kuyper's understanding of how history should be taught. From Kuyper's writings, Van Dyke shows that Kuyper looked at history from a redemptive perspective. Kuyper did not attempt to narrow his pursuits to a particular era or element of history, as is common in today's scholarly pursuits. Instead, Kuyper made an effort to look at history from an epic perspective, one that inspires action by looking at the bravery and nobility of leaders in the past. Van Dyke provides a brief, but excellent synopsis of Kuyper's view of history.

The final essay in this work by Gordon Graham, entitled "Abraham Kuyper and the Idea of a Christian Scholar," provides an excellent overview of one of Kuyper's key ideologies: the definition of Christian scholarship. Graham begins by summarizing some of the approaches scholarship and Christianity have used to interact. In these models, he suggests, it is difficult to be fully ingrained in each because they tend to rest on ideas that eventually collide. Graham points to Kuyper's comments regarding the difficulty of neutrality. While this is nothing new in the post-modern era, in Kuyper's time this was a novel concept. Kuyper's recognition of this enabled him to play a critical role in what is often labeled "faith and learning": attempting to look at a discipline, from the founding philosophical components to how it is applied in the modern day, from a Christian perspective.

The nine essays in this work, each by different authors, fluctuate in their contribution to scholarship. Some essays, such as Botman's, provide an excellent application of Kuyper's ideology into a modern context. Other essays, such as de Bruijne's and de Jong's, lack depth. An average reader may be disappointed in the brevity of these essays. However, they provide just enough content to whet the appetite of the reader. Other essays, such as Bräutigam's and Graham's, display intriguing analysis of Kuyper's thoughts and their interaction with scholarship. Overall, *The Kuyper Center Review, Volume Five: Church and Academy* is a notable collection of essays, providing a glimpse of how Kuyper might interact with contemporary issues related to the church and the academy.

Paul S. Fiddes. *Seeing the World and Knowing God: Hebrew Wisdom and Christian Doctrine in Late-Modern Context.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013. vii + 396 pp. \$38.95, ISBN 9780198709756.

Reviewed by Roger Ward, Philosophy, Georgetown College

At first glance this text seems eclectic. Fiddes places critical post-modern philosophy in conversation with Christian doctrine and uses both as a basis for a constructive theology that incorporates the wisdom literature in Ancient Israel. According to Fiddes, our contemporary setting, which he describes as the late-modern context, adopted a semiotic approach to meaning, rejecting the subject/object separation and hypostatizations of onto-theology. The desire for wisdom in this context can be answered by a turn to the wisdom tradition of Ancient Israel. Within both ancient and late-modern interpretations of this tradition, however, Fiddes locates an error that casts wisdom as a mythical figure, an idealized entity separate or distinct from Yahweh and the world. Wisdom, Fiddes shows, develops along with the Yahwehistic tradition and reflects a range of knowledge including the nature of wisdom's "hiddenness." This hiddenness is not the opacity of transcendence, but the complexity that enables further inquiry and participation in the very structures of a divinely created universe. Wisdom emerges in this study as the foundation of a common-sense approach to living in the world by observing how things work, discovering the order by which we are able to discern patterns and characteristics that transform our observations into perceiving the signs or traces of God's life in the Trinity.

The first part, "Setting the Scene," focuses on sorting out the late-modern quest for wisdom that turns toward *phronesis*, practical wisdom, rather than *sophia*, a theoretical grasp as wisdom. Fiddes argues that the affinity between the Hebraic understanding of wisdom as *hokmah* and *phronesis* circulates around the notion of living a unified life. But unified does not equate to a fixed or totalized conception of wisdom. Fiddes notes that society is not a stable entity, and neither is the self; "it 'shimmers' as ethical norms, social habits, and forms of language are always changing" (43). While some postmodern thinkers collapse the self into a construct, Jaques Derrida, Emmanuel Levinas, and Julia Kristeva take seriously "immersion in the world, making this their starting point rather than a gap of either knowing or being" (43). Christian theology, Fiddes argues, can work with the elusiveness of the self. As Proverbs 20:5 states, "the purposes in the human mind are like deep water." Fiddes says theology agrees with Sartre that "the self is a dynamic project, always in process of becoming what it is in relation to God and the world in which it is set" (65).

In Part 2, "Wisdom as Observation and Participation," Fiddes delves into ancient texts to show that the "fear of Yahweh" sayings are a deliberate modification of secular sentence wisdom. By comparison, the Egyptian order of things, *Ma'at* is an inevitable 'pressure' exerted upon a person's course as a binding force (116). Yahweh acts righteously and does justice "according to his wisdom" (117) that is not an irresistible *telos*, but the possibility of thinking, or participating in, a divine *telos*. (124).

In the context of contemporary science the question of participation develops into an examination of complexity. Is chaos original, or does complexity originate from human interactions with nature, or extend from possibilities (137)? Fiddes tracks the object of science along the lines of a progression from the undecideability of textual meanings, to wisdom as an object, then a personification, then to a single comprehensive term for the educational enterprise (145). Wisdom as body of knowledge is also something not yet known to a person;

"God must be always committed to the sign of the material world, always involved in its text as God's 'context'" (147). The patristic term *perichoresis* underscores the relational character of God as an interpenetration of each person by the other, in which there is coinherence without confusion (151). Fiddes says "the most adequate, or least inadequate, symbol for God is that of personal relations" (159). The relations between Creator and creatures enter into the technique of wisdom teaching by evoking wisdom within the heart, forming a wise person with a pedagogy of persuasion (163). In a key passage Fiddes writes,

The knowledge of God only arises through being in the world, but this is not the whole story. I suggest that this knowledge emerges precisely because in daily practices, in a created context which is 'other-than-God', we are participating in a self-giving movement of God. This is a giving of God's self which is aptly pictured in the dancing and travelling of Lady Wisdom, who is thus portrayed as an attribute of God. This is why seeing the world is knowing God. (188)

Fiddes focuses on the relationship with Lady Wisdom in three poems from Hebrew wisdom literature (Proverbs 8, Ben Sira 24, and Wisdom of Solomon 6-9). These poems may account for the assimilation of wisdom with the goddess Isis and the error of hypostatization (199). The depiction of wisdom in the poems "offers a much more direct kind of participation, a sharing of the human observer in the very movement of divine seeing" (205). Wisdom does not bridge a gap between transcendence and immanence, between Creator and created. The spirit of wisdom that stands over against the world as its observer is also the same spirit that is within the world. Fiddes writes, "wisdom flows forth from God so that human beings can participate in that same flowing movement" (211). In a complex treatment of presence and place, Fiddes connects the 'no-place' of postmodern thinkers, which challenges the ambitions of the conscious mind to dominate the arena of society and symbolic language but where it is impossible to dwell, with the answer to the riddle of Job 28, "where can wisdom be found?" The answer is "no-place," not a single place but the inexhaustible scope of the world that breaks open the confidence of the wise that they have complete control through linguistic codes and metanarratives, such as the dogma of retribution that affirms a hiddenness at the heart of reality (250).

Part 3, "Wisdom in the World," lifts up the way Ancient Israel wisdom literature conceived of the world as a kind of text. This coheres with the late-modern world's search for the 1) sum of things, 2) the text of the world, 3) the process of learning, and 4) the possibility of the rejection of wisdom. There are two moods about a sense of the whole in modern thought. The first urges a necessity of a vision of the whole in order for the fragments of everyday life to be understood. The second protests against oppressive totalities which assert ideology, suppress the other, and close down the expansion of meaning. Fiddes points out that these two contemporary moods converge and are reflected in the bewilderment of Koholeth (Ecclesiastes). The world is envisioned as existing "*within* the communion of a triune God, being given room by God within interweaving relationships which are like those between a Father, Son, and Spirit" (320). Scripture, such as Torah, is like an entire world to itself, which creates a requirement to study it and draw it into one's life, but it is

not an obligation to accept the writers of Scripture as correct or infallible: it is to enter into relation with them...to stand where they stand, to attempt to enter with empathy into their 'otherness,' and to hear the word of God in company with them. (339)

The basis for education (construed most broadly) is that the world is the body of the *Trinity*, that God uses all bodies in the world "to hold us in the embrace of the relations that

make up God's triune life. Bodies are the means by which we connect with the world and participate in God" (342). Knowing Christ as the divine personhood is an instruction to go on re-narrating and re-realizing Christ, where "Christ" is the normative "place" which enables participation in God. Fiddes rejects the notion of a transcendent or hidden wisdom that would necessitate a mediator between human and divine knowledge because that separation sows seeds of domination. Rather, in education there is "an engagement of God in all human wisdom, and the participation of all human wisdom in God" (366). So can wisdom be rejected? Fiddes follows Karl Rahner in that saying "yes" to God as exercising our freedom is the only foundation for saying "no," though that involves a self-contradiction. Rejection of God and the way that the world is constructed is impossible but it is still a reality, and that is "the mystery of evil" (367).

In a Coda, Fiddes explores "Attunement to Wisdom: from observation to participation," focusing on bodily attunement and walking with wisdom as the intersection of ancient wisdom, Christian doctrine, and late-modern thought. The degree of participation in and with God can increase to infinity, in which *hokmah* provides the scope of *phronesis* open to the 'always more' of *sophia*. The question of whether the created world is necessary for God leads Fiddes to the apophatic mystery that God both is, and is not, in need of the world but is engaged in the event of freely giving his being away to the Son:

This eternal self-surrender within the Trinity is continually resolved in "the bliss of the offered and mutually accepted sacrifice." And it might lead us to suppose that while no necessity can be forced on God from outside, from all eternity God is *freely willing to be in need*. (387)

This wisdom theology finds that at the root of participation in others there is participation in God. "Observing an object or another person without trying to control them is a sharing in the flow of love in the triune life of God" (393).

Evaluating this argument breaks into three strands. First, Fiddes' work with texts, traditions, and the critical reading of a wide variety of authors is simply extraordinary. The sensitivity required to detect the shifts in the orientations of distinct voices and 'schools' in the Egyptian and Hebraic traditions is remarkable and convincing. Similar sensitivity to the reading of the post-modern authors, particularly Derrida, Heidegger, and Levinas, is demonstrated in relation to developing Christian doctrine. Fiddes claims these trajectories reflect a "convergence" that establishes sufficient common ground for an examination and critique. It would be interesting to sort out which source of the trajectory – Ancient Israel or the late-moderns – is more 'primary' to his project. My guess is that Fiddes finds the similarities and the possibilities of convergence arising just from his deep immersion in both contexts, without the necessity of claiming either is more primary from a logical standpoint.

The second thread of evaluation leads me to ask: what does this shared trajectory mean? In one sense, a constructive theology built upon the wisdom platform means that the image of revelation grounding both sacred texts and their interpretation into habits and doctrine is one of progress and refinement, that revelation is a modal reality inhabiting the core of religious communities, scholarship, and practices of day-to-day living. The fact that the trajectory is discernable leads to several questions: 1) Is there a common feature in terms of error that enable the differences to emerge between Cartesian modernity and postmodern thinkers as well as in the wisdom tradition? 2) Is there a further *telos* possible beyond the *identification* of this trajectory? How can we project the trajectory forward as a standard or normative judgment for practices of communal life and Christian doctrine? The question

of normativity for a continuing development of practices is what Fiddes demonstrates by delving into Christian doctrine, such as the Trinity. But this begs an important question in terms of the identification of the instructive error necessary for continuing this development.

The third strand leads beyond the textual examination and the logic of trajectory and error within these texts and contexts to the question of reality. What stands beyond thought as its ultimate condition and end? I am anticipating the criticism from others that Fiddes' reliance on post-modern and Continental scholarship may seem like raising the flag of surrender to anything that might be counted as an objective truth. But two crucial links challenge that criticism. First, from an apophatic standpoint, everything we can say or think is always understood as semiotically related to the Real without being equivalent to the Real, without claiming that the Real (or God) is just a figment of imagination, a product of false hypostatization, or a reification of a particular concept. Second, from the hiddenness of wisdom tradition we can take the demonstrable fact of developing wisdom (in all the pragmatic richness of that process) as itself a conditioning of the Real as the elusive but concrete ground of that growth, sustaining a temporally infinite quest. These two aspects of the Real are joined, I believe, in Fiddes' concept of Christ as a space for human dwelling. Believers living into that space re-realize or re-narrate Christ without equaling or making Christ redundant. The obedience of the journey into that space is infinite in its meaning for a human life, and all human lives, and yet the end is not an absence but a concrete person.

Implicit in all these three strands of questioning is the concept of error, and to my reading of this book and others by Fiddes, it remains somewhat opaque. Error is essential for the development of the trajectories, as wisdom was mistakenly elided with Isis, and the moderns, like Descartes, cleaved to a notion of the self and God as fully knowable. But the error of disobedience, or sin, is negative in a different way than an error of conceptual thought. The conception that "God is in all human wisdom, and all wisdom is in God," requires a further articulation of the way error is identified and corrected. Is original sin just the absence of wisdom, or is it an erroneous orientation toward wisdom? Or is the doctrine of original sin an example of error? My criticism is not that Fiddes improperly utilizes a concept of error, just that the ground by which he determines errors of interpretation and development are not fully clear. And the importance of addressing this opacity is heightened by his emphasis on processive inquiry as a means of revelation in his approach to theology.

Fiddes' great gift to the Christian and especially Baptist community is his own display of wisdom, resplendent with charity both in his reading and in his personal and professional life. This book in particular stands as a symbol of a way of thinking about God and human life that will show its dividends in both the individual minds it will inspire and the community that will rise to interpret it.

Rebecca T. Alpert. *Religion and Sports: An Introduction and Case Studies.* New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2015. x + 209 pp. \$28.00, ISBN 9780231165716.

Reviewed by Tracy J. Trothen, Religion, Queen's University

In this very effective and much-needed book, religious studies scholar Rebecca Alpert convincingly argues that religion must be part of the interdisciplinary sports conversation. Through a case study exploration of what she calls "the interconnections" between sports and religion, Alpert aims to introduce students to the growing scholarly field of religion

and sport.

This book is intended as a text for university courses in religion and sports. To this end, after discussing scholarly perspectives on sport and religion, and the relationship between them, Alpert presents a series of case studies designed to engage the student and instructor in further discussion about the theoretical issues raised in the substantial introductory chapter.

The introductory chapter is 38 pages long and provides the base for the subsequent chapters, which are collections of case studies organized by theme. She begins by acknowledging the potential for both moral good and moral bad in world religions and in sports (3). Alpert follows this thread throughout her book, asking questions about values in sport and values in world religions. Next, using a conversational tone, Alpert explains that there is no one agreed-upon definition of religion. Alpert charts the movement of scholarly approaches to defining religion, explaining why there has been an overall shift away from searching for an essence common to all religions, toward a functionalist approach, to even more "all-encompassing" (7) approaches. Similar to well-known scholar of religion and sports Joseph L. Price, Alpert settles on Ninian Smart's understanding of religions as being characterized by varying degrees of six dimensions, combined with a "family resemblance" lens. As she concludes: "Smart's tool is useful for mapping religions and understanding them as living, breathing, changing phenomena that may share characteristics but use and express them quite differently" (7).

The rest of chapter 1 introduces four interconnections between religion and sports. These interconnections provide the structure for the book. Each subsequent chapter (or part) consists of case studies on each of these four ways that religion and sport interconnect.

In part 1, Alpert uses two cases to help the reader explore "why people think sports are a religion." In the introduction, Alpert laid the foundation for this question. Using Smart's dimensions, she suggests that the customary list of world religions is not the sum total of religions. Readers are given an overview of the state of the field as it has historically unfolded. Threaded throughout are the names of noted scholars such as Robert Bellah, Clifford Geertz, Emile Durkheim, Michael Novak, Joseph Price, and David Chidester, among others, as they have informed the field. Two cases are used to illustrate this interconnection: Buzz Bissinger's *Friday Night Lights* narrative of "how sports can become a religion" for a community; and "the story of double amputee runner Oscar Pistorius" (39).

In Part 2, Alpert asks if religion has "a place in sports or sports in religion." In the introduction, Alpert provides a quick historical tour, beginning with sports as they intersected with religion in the ancient world. Her use of examples such as the Mayan ball game (1,000 BCE), and martial arts in China (525 BCE) brings this complicated history to life, illustrating the longevity of the intermingling of religion and sports. She also shows how various religious attitudes to sport have shifted over time and place (for instance, the evolution and manifestations of muscular Christianity). The four cases include Jewish umpires and the Baseball Chapel movement in the United States; controversy over the relationship between Zen and archery in Japan; and the use of juju in African football.

The four cases in part 3 help the reader explore "what happens when religion and sports come into conflict." Using examples from several religions including Daoism, Hinduism, and Judaism, Alpert sketches out the conflicted attitudes regarding the expression of religious practices in sport. Alpert explores what happens when athletes' religious commitments come into the sports venue. Cases include the refusal of the 1930s Belleville Grays, a black Jewish baseball team, to play baseball on Saturdays; basketball player Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf's refusal to stand for the National Anthem on the basis that it conflicted with

his Muslim values; and the wearing of hijab by Wojdan Ali Seraj Abdulrahim Shahrkhani in the 2012 Olympics.

Part 4 considers "religion and ethical dilemmas in sport." The four ethical "dilemmas" in sports that Alpert addresses are gender, sexuality, disability, and race. She also looks at the ethics of enhancement use in sport, and violence in sport. In particular, she asks if "religious groups have an obligation to take responsibility for...[harmful] attitudes and... practices" (34). Cases in this part include: 11-year-old Caroline Pla's determination to play football on a boys' Catholic Youth Organization team and requests for the Catholic Church to condemn bullfighting in Spain.

The pedagogical goal is stated clearly at the beginning of each case. Diverse perspectives are included in each case. Through carefully and creatively crafted classroom activities such as writing a blog or a tweet, engaging in a debate, or small group discussions, Alpert invites students and instructors to think critically about the relevant issues and form their own opinions.

This is an excellent collection of cases and Alpert successfully demonstrates the complex relationship between religion and sport and why this relationship is important to a liberal arts education. There are, of course, some limitations to this otherwise impressive book.

Because Alpert's intent is to introduce readers to the interconnections of sports and religion largely through case studies, she provides an introduction to complex concepts, not a comprehensive exploration. For example, if you elect to use this book in teaching a course on sports and religion, and you want your students to grasp the concepts of civil, cultural, or natural religion, you will need to supplement your desired course with other sources.

On a more fundamental level, after the first chapter, Alpert does not pay as much attention to how sport is a religion itself as she does to how the world religions interact with sport. Part 1 concerns why "people think sport is a religion." However, there are only two cases in this part, unlike four for each of the other three interconnections. I also wonder if one of these two cases – the Oscar Pistorius case – might be better placed in part 4 as an "ethics" case. Alpert frames Pistorius' case – an Olympic runner with prostheses for running – as suitable to part 1 since his case "lends itself to thinking through ultimate questions as expressed in two of the dimensions of religion outlined by Ninian Smart...: the ethical/legal and the doctrinal/philosophical" (48). Her stated goal in introducing this case is for readers to "apply our understanding of sport as a religion to the values connected to human embodiment, justice, and fairness" (48). While Pistorius' case is related to two of Smart's dimensions, it is more about questions of ethics and values than why people think sport is a religion. For this reason, I think it belongs more appropriately in the ethics section of the book.

Alpert's other case for part 1 – Buzz Bissinger's *Friday Night Lights*, which illustrates "how sports can become a religion" for a community – is a very fitting choice for this section. Perhaps a case study on a flow experience in sport would be helpful in exploring why some people experience sport as a religion. Differing perspectives on whether or not flow is a sufficient condition to make the argument that a sport is a religion could be explored. (For example, see Eric Bain-Selbo,³ Graham Ward,⁴ Nick J. Watson and Andrew Parker,⁵

³Eric Bain-Selbo, "Ecstasy, Joy, and Sorrow: the Religious Experience of Southern College Football," *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* XX (Fall 2008): 9.

⁴Graham Ward, "A Question of Sport and Incarnational Theology," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 25.1 (2012): 61, 64.

⁵Nick J. Watson and Andrew Parker, eds., *Sports and Christianity: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 18.

and Kathleen M. Dillon and Jennifer L. Tait.⁶) Flow states are mentioned very briefly at the beginning of the book as belonging in one of Smart's dimensions (12) and toward the end of the book in the final case study (184) but Alpert does not explain the concept.

Regarding the fourth and final interconnection, I do wonder why Alpert chose to frame the question in terms as "how religion might contribute to resolving" ethical "dilemmas" in sport. Certainly, this is one way to approach this interconnection. I may be more inclined to ask how the relationship between sport and religion further problematizes these issues or how an understanding of sports as a religion might affect the ethical conversation. On the other hand, Alpert's framing of this interconnection may be a more accessible way to introduce the topic of ethics as it relates to sports and religion.

One of the strongest features of this book is the way in which Alpert carefully explains the field of religion and sports. Through skillful organization, the use of well-placed examples, and a down-to-earth writing style, Alpert engages the reader and explains complex concepts in accessible terms. Unlike most other books on religion and sport, Alpert intentionally uses cases from diverse religious traditions, diverse sports, diverse time periods, and diverse global contexts. Although the book slightly favors examples from the United States more so than other countries, Alpert does a very impressive job drawing on global examples. Moreover, she manages to introduce student readers not only to the relationship between sport and religion but also to aspects of different world religions.

For those who are looking for texts specifically on Christianity and sport, Alpert's book adds a much-needed contextual dimension to the conversation. The preponderance of books on sport and religion has been restricted to Christianity or focuses mostly on Christian examples and Christian theological reflection. Alpert's situating of the relationship between Christianity and sport within the broader discussion of religion and sport helps the reader to understand better the issues associated with diversity and to perceive some common themes that characterize the relationships of several religions to sport and vice versa. I will certainly use this book as a required text in my undergraduate course on religion and sport, and recommend it strongly to others.

⁶Kathleen M. Dillon and Jennifer L. Tait, "Spirituality and Being in the Zone in Team Sports: a Relationship?," *Journal of Sport Behavior* 23.2 (2000): 91-100.