



Dear Readers:

Welcome to the third issue of *Growth: The Journal of The Association for Christians in Student Development*. The theme for this issue is "Faith Development on the Christian College Campus". We have included a blend of basic research and applied articles that address the role of student affairs professionals in the faith development of students.

We want to thank several persons for their assistance in putting this issue together. Special thanks go to Norris Friesen and Ginny Carpenter for their work on the Editorial Board, to Arna Smith for her service as Copy Editor, to Steve Christensen for his service as Layout and Design Editor, and to the twenty plus individuals who served as peer reviewers of manuscripts submitted this year. Without their assistance this publication would not have been possible.

Finally, we want to encourage you, the reader, to consider submitting manuscripts for consideration for the next issue of *Growth*, which will be published in the spring of 2004. We are particularly interested in receiving manuscripts presenting original or basic research and encourage anyone who has recently completed a graduate thesis or dissertation to submit an article based on your work. The theme for the next issue will be "Service Learning as Student Affairs Practice." If you are interested in submitting a manuscript, please refer to the publication policy and submission guidelines found at the end of this edition or contact us and we will send you the pertinent information.

Thank you for your support for *Growth: The Journal of the Association for Christians in Student Development*. We trust that you will enjoy and be stretched by what you find in these pages.

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Faith Development and Student Affairs

by Barry Loy

INTRODUCTION

As I sit in my office pondering the topic “Faith Development and Student Affairs”, I’ve surrounded myself with a supply of helpful resources spread about the room. In one corner I have the seminal works on faith development by James Fowler (Fowler, 1981) and Sharon Daloz Parks (Parks, 1986). In another corner I have the “Fabric of Faithfulness” (Garber, 1996), “The Abandoned Generation” (Willimon and Naylor, 1995), and “Shaping Character” (Holmes, 1991). In yet another corner I have “Evangelicalism: the Coming Generation” (Hunter, 1987) and “Evangelicalism: The Next Generation” (Penning and Smidt, 2002). In a far corner I have a small pile of “faith development” articles from the NASPA Journal and the Journal of College Student Development. Closer to me I have a thin collection of works produced by members of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) and the Association for Christians in Student Development (ACSD). In the center of my office I have the Holy Bible.

So, here I am, on a holiday weekend, trying to put into words something that might be helpful as we, the members of the Association for Christians in Student Development, seek to help our students “weave together belief and behavior during the university years” (Garber, 1996).

As I look back on my professional life, what once seemed so simple now seems so complex. Let me explain. Thirty years ago as a student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, God had entrusted to me a remedy for all the ills of my fellow students. That remedy was the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The process was simple--share the “good news” with unbelievers. It was their only hope for an abundant life in this world and the world beyond. Once they receive Christ as Savior, provide them with opportunities for growth and nurture. Teach them how to pray, fellowship, study God’s Word and witness to others, all the while pointing to Christ as Lord. By God’s grace, I saw many students transformed and I witnessed in the span of a few years much “faith development” in the context of a university setting. For me, the important ingredients of this experience consisted of a shared faith in Christ, discipleship, outreach, and

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Christian fellowship. Years later, Steve Garber (Garber, 1996), with much eloquence and depth, defined these elements more precisely and thoroughly. Garber states:

"It is those who develop a worldview that can address the challenge of coherence and truth in a pluralist society, who find a relationship with a mentor who incarnates that worldview, and who choose to live their lives among others whose common life is an embodiment of that worldview who continue on with integrity into adulthood" (Garber, 1996).

And isn't that our ultimate goal as we work with students? That their faith would grow with integrity as they move further and further into adulthood. So, what is so complicated? If we are faithful to our calling, the Holy Spirit works in the hearts of men and women, and we are able to observe the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6).

The complexity becomes more obvious the longer we work with students, and it is also defined by where we work. Some of our ACSD members work in non-faith based institutions, while the majority of us work in colleges and universities that have "faith development" (e.g. evangelical Christianity) at the center of all that we say and hope to do. Below I will attempt to describe the challenge of faith development within the academy for those of us who seek to know Christ and make Him known in and through our work as student affairs professionals.

The Status of faith development and spiritual formation in the broader arena of student affairs

Most of us are well acquainted with the importance of the Christian faith in the early colleges in this country. From the beginning of the colonial colleges through the mid-nineteenth century, higher education and spiritual formation were synonymous.

"During this period of higher education, educating the mind was not distinct from nurturing the spirit. Intellectual growth was not properly achieved without a concomitant cultivation of the spiritual life." (Loy and Painter, 1997)

Over the decades this happy marriage between faith and learning slowly eroded in the majority of colleges and universities despite the religious values of many of the early student affairs practitioners. Nonetheless, even as late as 1937, the *Student Personnel Point of View* advocated wholistic development that included "moral and religious values" (Naspa, 1989). However, by the mid-1970s, human development and self-actualization theories focusing on the unlimited potential for human development became the guiding principle for student development work. Discussions of human development in the larger academy were almost always void of references to "faith development". The works of Fowler (1981) and Parks (1986) did receive some notice, but it wasn't until the end of the 1990s that journal articles dealing with faith



development from the major professional associations started to appear on a more regular basis in national publications. According to Love (1999), only one short essay on spiritual development had appeared in a major student affairs journal in a 15-year period. Below I have listed the titles of several articles appearing from 1998 to 2002.

Religion on Campus: Suggestions for Cooperation between Student Affairs and Campus-Based Religious Organizations (Temkins and Evans 1998)

Defining Spiritual Development: A Missing Consideration for Student Affairs (Love and Talbot, 1999)

Purpose in Life, Student Development, and Well-Being: Recommendations for Student Affairs Practitioners (Moran, 2001)

Comparing Spiritual Development and Cognitive Development (Love, 2002)

Changing Worlds, Changing Selves: The Experience of the Religious Self Among Catholic Collegians (Lee, 2002)

The Role of Faith in the Development of an Integrated Identity: A Qualitative Study of Black Students at a White College (Stewart, 2002)

Religious Participation, Spirituality, and Coping Among African American College Students (Constantine, Wilton, Gainor, Lewis, 2002)

I believe this increase in publications suggests an openness to “spiritual formation” that until recently did not exist in our profession outside of faith based schools. Other evidence of a renewed interest in faith development by the larger academy includes the publication in the New Directions for Student Services Series of “*The Implications of Student Spirituality for Student Affairs Practice*” (Jablonski, 2001) and the recent release of “*Religion on Campus*” (Cherry, DeBerg, and Porterfield, 2001). Also, the recent NASPA workshop, *Spirituality on Campus: Reflection and Practice*, held in New Orleans gives more credence to the view that student affairs as a profession is giving more attention to the faith development of college students.

I should also mention the work of the Institute on College Student Values (ICSV). ICSV has been promoting the character development of college students through its annual conference since 1991. ICSV has focused more on civic education and ethical issues while the recent developments in the larger profession are more centered on religious and spiritual elements of the college student’s experience.

It is a new day in the broader profession when student affairs professionals are encouraged to consider the spiritual dimension of its students. Why the change? Until recently, the larger, more influential student affairs organizations have been reluctant to deal with the spiritual dimension of college students. Perhaps our culture’s movement





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into post modernity (a time when ways of thinking about ultimate questions are not limited to reason and science) has fueled the growing interest in God and religion as a valid focus of college student development.

Implications for Christians working in non-faith based institutions.

The truth is that humans have a tendency to “make meaning” about their existence. According to Moers (1992), Parks describes faith as the activity of composing and being recomposed by meaning. This is part of being created in the image of God. College students, in Christian and non-Christian institutions, tend to ask “ultimate questions”. And what are these basic questions? As reported by Hughes (2001), Paul Tillich offered these three basic questions as examples.

- *How can I cope with the inevitability of death?*
- *Am I an acceptable human being?*
- *Is there any meaning in life, and if there is, what is it?*

Hughes (2001) goes on to say that

“getting our students to reflect on the meaning of their finitude, the meaning of their estrangement, and the meaning of their inevitable deaths is absolutely crucial to the task of Christian higher education”.

While agreeing with Hughes, I would say it a bit differently. Reflection on these issues is absolutely crucial to the task of being a good student affairs professional - in a Christ-centered institution or a “secular” one.

So, for the Christian working in a non-faith-based college or institution, what are the benefits of this turn by the larger student affairs profession toward the importance of spiritual development? I believe that it opens the door for Christians to legitimately deal with the ultimate questions about life, albeit from a pluralistic point of view. What was once totally off limits or at least delegated solely to the department of religious affairs, is now fair game for the Christian serving in a wide variety of contexts within student affairs. This topic would make for an interesting discussion group and workshop at the annual ACSD conference. Perhaps the leadership of ACSD would go a step further and consider sponsoring a special institute or think tank to help those working in this setting to explore ways to take advantage of this openness.

Faith Based colleges and universities

At first glance, it would seem as though Christian student affairs professionals working in Christ-centered colleges have a simple task when it comes to faith development. In many ways this is true. Our mission statements and philosophy of education allow us to recognize Christ as pre-eminent in all things having to do with learning. Most of our students enter our colleges desiring to grow as Christians and to learn from



Christian faculty and staff. In fact, the findings of the CCCU Collaborative Research project funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) give us reason to be encouraged regarding the spiritual development of students at CCCU colleges and universities. In *FIPSE Through the Eyes of Student Affairs*, Guthrie and Opitz, (1999) say,

“Based on these data, it appears that things are good on CCCU campuses. Seniors consider developing a meaningful philosophy of life very important and their relationship with God as enmeshed with how they live day-to-day. Moreover, CCCU alumni seem to value these things even more. Something about the ministry efforts of student affairs staff and faculty alike must be working.”

However, even given this interest in spiritual formation, those of us working within Christian higher education are well aware that all is not bliss. Perhaps not at the same degree as the rest of the academy, but at significant levels, our students are struggling with alcohol, drugs, and promiscuity. Likewise, our students are dealing with an array of emotional and personal problems including eating disorders, depression, sexual addictions, sexual abuse, and so on. What about my simple remedy from my college days for all the ills of college students? Doesn't the good news of Jesus Christ deliver our students from these human problems? The answer is yes and no. The rain falls on the just and the unjust. Jesus Christ is sufficient for all believers but His sufficiency does not remove all of the affects of the Fall at least not for now. All the more reason that we should be concerned about faith development in Christ-centered colleges.

In the early eighties, James Davidson Hunter alarmed the trustees and administrators of Christian Colleges with the publication of “Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation” (Hunter, 1987). Based on his research, Dr. Hunter suggested that students in Christian Colleges were becoming less orthodox in their views about salvation, the inerrancy of Scripture and evangelical behavioral norms. More alarming were his questions regarding the role of evangelical higher education in the liberalizing of these beliefs and behaviors. In an interview in *Christianity Today*, he said the following:

“The more it {Christian Higher Education} is committed to genuine intellectual inquiry, where everything is open for examination--as opposed to indoctrination--there will be certain kinds of “contaminating” effects. (Neff and Spring, 1987)

Later in the *Christianity Today* interview, Hunter went on to surmise that Christian students at secular campuses were less susceptible to the undermining influencing of higher education because of their “fortress” mentality. Whereas students on Christian campuses let their guard down because they consider their campuses safe, allowing “secular” ideas to more easily creep into their ways of thinking (1987). If Hunter is correct on this point, those of us working on Christian campuses may have a more complex task than we initially thought.





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Almost twenty years later as a follow up to Hunter's research, Penning and Smidt (2002) replicated the study using a nearly identical survey and with evangelical students from the same nine evangelical colleges used by Hunter in 1982. Overall, the findings of Penning and Smidt do not show erosion of the evangelical beliefs of those attending Christian Colleges.

"These data, therefore, provide no evidence of a secularizing influence on evangelical college campuses at least in terms of agreement with historic tenets of the Christian faith." (Penning and Smidt, 2002) Penning and Smidt (2001) also found that evangelical college students exhibit high levels of religious practice (e.g. praying daily, attending church, daily Bible reading, and witnessing).

Before we allow ourselves to breathe a sigh of relief, we should remind ourselves that right behavior doesn't necessarily follow correct biblical knowledge and pious conduct. How do we measure "faith development" or "spiritual maturity"? The work of Penning and Smidt seems to say that our students believe the "right things" and "practice spiritual disciplines" but what about their behavior? And when I say *behavior*, I mean far more than whether or not they smoke or drink. Penning and Smidt (2002) also reported that evangelical college students believe that the church should focus more on personal morality (54 percent) and less on social justice (12 percent). Do our students value what God values love, obedience, sacrifice, justice, and eradicating oppression and poverty? How do we help our students move from right beliefs to right behavior? How do we help them connect knowing with being and doing?

In Isaiah 58, we have an example of a community, the Israelites, who seem to have correct knowledge about God and even take part in religious activities (e.g. prayer and fasting) but do not show evidence of loving the things that God loves (e.g. feeding the hungry, loosing the bonds of injustice and oppression and clothing the poor). How do we help our students follow the greatest commandment to love God (Matthew 22: 36-40) and to realize that loving God equals caring for the needs of others (1 John 3: 16, 17 and 1 John 4:20). As we are so vividly reminded by the passage in Matthew 25 on the sheep and goats, faith is ultimately measured by what we do for "one of the least of these". Calling Jesus Lord is not enough. Having the right evangelical beliefs is not enough. Having a daily quiet time is not enough. How do we teach ourselves and our students that loving the "least of these" through acts of sacrifice is the way we truly love the Lord our God?

The answer that I have most often heard to this question tends to have something to do with mentoring. In the old days, thirty years ago when I worked in a university setting, the answer was discipleship, with discipleship being defined as a close personal relationship that included teaching younger Christians spiritual disciplines through example and training. People like Robert Coleman (author of the *Master Plan of Evangelism* (1964)) and followers of Dawson Troutman (founder of the Navigators) touted the importance of working one on one in close disciplining relationships.





According to many, especially Garber (1996) and Parks (2000), mentoring is the primary catalyst for spiritual development. Parks (1986) believes that “because faith must be embodied, religious people must reveal the power of their Story and Vision in the forms of their common everyday life.” How are we doing at embodying our faith? The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Are we dwelling among our students (e.g. spending time listening and challenging them)? How are we doing with mentoring? How many of your students have a mentor in the traditional sense of the word - someone close that embodies the Christian faith? Do they have to have a traditional mentor, or will sporadic contact with a faculty member, staff, or administrator who embodies the “faith” be enough?

I would like to close my thoughts with a number of questions and ideas for further reflection, deliberation, and action. My hope is that we will all press forward to gain a greater understanding of what mature faith looks like and how we might foster it within the academy.

Questions and suggestions

- What do we in ACSD have to offer to the larger profession regarding spiritual formation? Are we at the table, or do we let our “particularity” (e.g. Our belief that Jesus is the only way to God) prevent us from dialoging in a broader fashion with the rest of our profession? Sharon Daloz Parks is an example to us. Not only is she a keynote speaker at the upcoming ACSD conference in June 2003, she was also the speaker that NASPA scheduled for the recent conference on “Spirituality on Campus: Reflection and Practice”.
- Are ACSD members aware of the findings of the longitudinal study conducted by the CCCU - “Taking Values Seriously: Assessing the Mission of Church-Related Higher Education”. This FIPSE (Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education) supported project began in 1994 with the purpose of evaluating and improving Christian Higher Education. It has produced many findings relevant to “faith development”.
- What about mentoring? Perhaps someone should gather the “Best Practices” in mentoring from around the country and make them available to ACSD members. It is painfully obvious that student affairs staff can’t mentor all the students. How do we mobilize other staff and faculty, given the heavy load of responsibilities they carry? What are other less time consuming ways of mentoring? And for those in Christian higher education, what are our institutions doing to insure the spiritual nurture of faculty and staff? We can’t embody something before our students if we don’t have it.
- What about chapel? Does it promote the faith development of this generation of college students? What about required chapel versus voluntary attendance?





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- How do off campus experiences (study abroad, short-term mission trips) impact faith development? Stephen Beers (2001) has conducted some important research in this area and has laid a good foundation for others to do future research on the connection of cross-cultural experiences and spiritual formation.
- What type of research is needed to see how well we are doing in Christian colleges to help our students connect their right beliefs about God with right behavior? It seems clear from Penning and Smidt (2002) that our students have “orthodox” evangelical beliefs. However, based on the comments I hear from my colleagues around the country, it appears that many of our students are struggling when it comes to “righteous behavior”. Even more importantly, what evidence do we have that our students are continuing to live out their faith with integrity as they move further into adulthood?
- How do we effectively measure faith development of college students? One example of a comprehensive instrument is the Faith Maturity Scale developed by Benson, Donahue, and Erickson (1993). The FMS attempts to measure faith by examining beliefs, religious practices, and social justice behaviors. What other instruments are available? Are they adequate, especially when it comes to not only measuring beliefs, knowledge and religious practices but more importantly, measuring Christian behavior (e.g. involvement in social justice, righteous living, integrating faith with living, etc.)?

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Kohlberg and Fowler: Two Models for Considering the Moral Progress of College Students

by Tim Herrmann

ABSTRACT

Fostering moral development has been an important goal of American higher education throughout its history. This goal has become especially prominent in light of recent developments related to crime, ethical indifference and deteriorating social structures. This topic is of particular relevance to faith-based institutions as the fostering of moral development is vitally related to their collective mission and purposes.

The literature of moral development contains a number of prominent and plausible theoretical approaches. However, two of the most prominent and highly developed are, Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral judgment development and James Fowler's theory of faith development. Each of these approaches characterizes moral development in distinct ways. In keeping with the uniqueness of these approaches, each model yields distinctive insights and conceptual strengths.

Specifically this review attempts to identify the major conceptual elements of each theoretical perspective in order to consider the implications of using either as a basis for future research initiatives. Additional consideration is given to available methods of assessment and the theoretical fit of the two models with the specific interests of faith-based colleges. Finally, this review explores implications for future research and emerging research questions.

INTRODUCTION

Fostering moral development has been a goal of American higher education since its inception in the seventeenth century. While there was some movement away from this emphasis during the mid to late twentieth century, the issue is once again prompting significant attention within the higher educational community. This resurgence is due in large part to a public demand that colleges and universities do more to address unsettling societal developments related to crime, substance abuse, family structures, school violence, corporate ethics and moral indifference.

Mounting interest in morality and character development corresponds with the growth of enrollment in religious colleges. The increased student population of the 104 evangelical Christian institutions represented by the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities provides an example. Between 1990 and 1998 CCCU institutions

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increased their enrollment by a 36.9%. This compares to a 5.3% growth rate for all institutions of higher education and 15.6% for religious institutions in general (CCCU, 2002, ¶ 3). The individual member schools of the CCCU are characterized by a strong focus on a liberal arts core curricula, community identity, and emphasis on the moral and religious development of their students. Included in the mission of the Council is the goal of “help[ing] its institutions transform lives by faithfully relating scholarship and service to biblical truth.” (CCCU, 2003, ¶ 2) In the broadest sense, the emphasis on moral development reflected in this statement is the backdrop for this review.

In the literature, the phrase “moral development” is used interchangeably with the phrases “moral judgment development,” and “moral reasoning development” all denoting a cognitive process. The most commonly used conceptualizations of this process attempt to describe the development of a system of beliefs, standards, and ethical values that provide guidance and direction for one’s life. At its most basic level, “[m]oral judgment development is ... a transformation of one’s way of reasoning, expanding one’s perspectives to include criteria for judgment that were not considered previously” (Good, 1998, p. 270). Though some theorists do not address the issue directly, implicit in a consideration of moral development is attention to the question of how one’s developed belief systems and moral judgment capacities actually evidence themselves in moral behavior. Although those who have addressed this issue from a purely cognitive perspective have been tremendously helpful, their approach fails to address several very important questions. For instance, what part do emotions, belief systems, and faith play in the process of helping people to become decent and honorable?

Though there is a tremendous body of literature in this field, the work of Lawrence Kohlberg and James Fowler stands out. The comprehensive nature and originality of their work have encouraged great attention from others. However, despite many complementary ideas, each addresses the topic of moral development in a distinctively different manner. Kohlberg who stands preeminent in the field of moral development is of benefit because of his intense attention to the cognitive structures guiding the development of moral reasoning. While Kohlberg is helpful for this sharp focus, Fowler is beneficial because of the breadth of his approach. Fowler’s attention to the construct of faith holds particular promise because it attempts to reach beyond the boundaries of cognition. Thus, these two theorists provide alternative models for considering human development in these realms.

Accordingly, the purpose of this review is limited to the following two purposes: To explore the ideas of Fowler and Kohlberg in order to identify the basic conceptual elements of each theoretical perspective; and to consider the implications of using either theory as a basis for future research initiatives?

KOHLBERG AND FOWLER: MAJOR CONCEPTUAL ELEMENTS

As referenced in the previous section, Kohlberg and Fowler each hold a unique place in the literature of moral development. While admittedly both have borrowed from and built upon those preceding them in the discipline, their contributions are innovative and have generated substantial research and critical reflection. Kohlberg’s theory of moral development is the theory of choice in the fields of moral education and moral psychology. Though not as broadly applied, perhaps because of assumed theological





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underpinnings, Fowler's theory holds a similar stature in the closely related realm of faith development. For these reasons a deeper understanding of the key elements of each perspective, a comparison of conceptual similarities and differences, and an analysis of the implications of using either theory as a basis for future research initiatives will provide significant practical benefit. The following two sections describe Kohlberg's and Fowler's ideas regarding the psychology of moral and faith development respectively.

Lawrence Kohlberg

Kohlberg's work brings a sense of order to the concept of moral development that serves to promote systematic examination and exploration. Gary Sapp, in his introduction to the *Handbook of Moral Development* (1986) illustrates the prominence of this theory when he says,

...Lawrence Kohlberg[s] ...contributions in the area of moral philosophy, moral development, and moral education are qualitatively akin to the broader theoretical ruminations of Freud and Piaget. Indeed, Kohlberg's influence is now so pervasive that a sizable majority of all studies dealing with moral development consider concepts enunciated by him and his students (p. 3).

Thus, regardless of perspective or critical evaluation, no legitimate study of moral development can ignore the ideas, or progress without an understanding of Kohlberg's theory.

Although Kohlberg's ideas are innovative, they are built upon the foundation of the work of many theorists who precede him. While the emphasis of this review relates to the psychology of moral development, it is important to note that Kohlberg's ideas are both philosophical and psychological in nature. To this point, the first volume of his primary work, *Essays on Moral Development* (Kohlberg, 1981), is devoted to presenting his philosophy of moral development.

As a starting point in this consideration it is helpful to understand where Kohlberg lies in relation to other major philosophical and theoretical perspectives. In his work he recognizes four major moral "orientations" or perspectives (Kohlberg, 1984). The first includes those whose focus is on rules and subservience to such. In this group he identifies thinkers such as Kant, Durkheim and Piaget. Kohlberg identifies a second category as those who evaluate moral judgment in light of its congruence with an "idealized moral self." Included here are Bradley, Royce, and Baldwin. His third category identifies those whose primary conceptions of morality consider how the consequences of actions impact others. In this realm he identifies the views of Mill and Dewey. Finally, Kohlberg places himself in a category of thinkers who conceptualize moral thinking in terms of a justice perspective.

To understand Kohlberg's views, one must acknowledge several core notions. First, in his conception, the development of morality is accomplished through a process of socialization, "that it is learning or internalization by the child or adolescent of the norms of family and culture" (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 1). However, though he acknowledges the importance of socialization, he distinguishes his theory from the

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psychoanalytic or social-learning perspectives. He labels his approach cognitive-developmental (1984) and shares the same assumptions as Piaget and others who envision development as discontinuous and progressive. This view holds that growth, or the altering and construction of necessary cognitive structures, occurs in stages and results from the interaction of the person with their environment (Kohlberg, 1984). A second key concept in understanding Kohlberg is to recognize that his theory, like other cognitive-developmental approaches, is a stage theory. Borrowing from Piaget he understands stages as representing qualitatively different ways of thinking and dealing with knowledge, and universal in their progression and hierarchy. The claim of universality is one issue that separates him from Fowler.

A final foundational concept of Kohlberg's work holds that it is the exposure to opportunities to engage in and contemplate moral problem solving that encourages moral development (Kohlberg, 1984). This idea has important potential ramifications for the design of curricular and co-curricular programs within higher education. Though Kohlberg believed that stimulation facilitated growth, it should not be understood as altering the construction or sequencing of stages (Rest, 1980). Nor is it proper to understand moral growth as simply a form of learning as might be true for instance in behavioral or social-learning theory.

Kohlberg is perhaps best known for the stages of moral development identified in his research. Though extensive coverage of these stages is not in keeping with the breadth of this review, a cursory explanation is necessary. These stages represent his attempt to both characterize and quantify moral reasoning capabilities. Kohlberg identified these stages by categorizing participants' responses to a series of ten fictitious moral dilemmas. His original research protocol was based on an interview in which a researcher rated participant responses to these ten dilemmas. Ratings were determined by a coding system that assigned value for various moral concepts that were observed. The elements serving as coding factors were assumed to be present in any culture. There are a total of seven coding categories described by 25 factors or "moral concepts." The seven categories consist of value, choice, sanctions and motives, rules, rights and authority, positive justice and punitive justice. Examples of factors are: considering motives in judging action; identification with actor or victims in judging action; limiting actor's responsibility...by shifting responsibility onto others; and punitive tendencies or expectations (Kohlberg, 1984, p.47-48). Based on the allotted ratings, a stage is assigned to the participant.

Kohlberg's original conception included six stages subsumed under three levels characterized by the basis on which moral judgments are made. Kohlberg's levels or stages are shown below:

I *Preconventional Level*

- a** *Stage 1, Punishment and obedience orientation*
- b** *Stage 2, Instrumental relativist orientation*

II *Conventional Level*

- a** *Stage 3, Interpersonal concordance or "good boy—nice girl orientation"*
- b** *Stage 4, "Law and order" orientation*





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III Postconventional, Autonomous, or Principled Level

- a Stage 5, Social-contract legalistic orientation
- b Stage 6, Universal ethical-principle orientation (Kohlberg, 1980, p. 91-92)

These stages are understood as distinct, universal, progressive, and moving both from an external to an internal orientation, and from rule oriented to principle oriented. There is a tremendous body of research supporting these divisions or understandings. Additionally, cross-cultural research from Taiwan, Great Britain, Mexico, Turkey, support Kohlberg's contention that the first five of these stages are universal. However, after research in Turkey failed to identify any participants who reached stage 6 standards, he combined the last two stages to form one (Kohlberg, 1978).

Though the interview protocol originally designed by Kohlberg is still used, most current research is based on the Defining Issues Test (DIT). This paper and pencil test was developed by James Rest to fit his slight alterations of Kohlberg's theory and has the advantages of convenience as well as very acceptable levels of validity and reliability (Kohlberg, 1984). This instrument has been used extensively in higher education research over the past twenty years.

In summary, Kohlberg's theory helps us to understand the importance of cognition in the development of moral judgment. The ease of measurement, strong research base, and well-developed concepts make this theory an attractive alternative for consideration.

James Fowler

The conceptual shift from Lawrence Kohlberg to James Fowler is substantial. Not only are their theories different, but each also has a distinctively different focus. Fowler does not reject Kohlberg; in fact Kohlberg, Piaget, and Erikson are perhaps the three biggest influences on his work from the realm of psychology. However, while Kohlberg is interested in the development of moral judgment and how one reasons when making ethical decisions, Fowler focuses on the construct of faith development. Though slightly less well known than Kohlberg, Fowler is highly respected for his contribution to our understanding of moral development. "James Fowler and his associates were the first constructive developmentalists to call attention to the full scope and significance of this meaning-making interaction" (Parks, 1993, p. 218).

Though it would be helpful at this point to be able to introduce a straightforward, definition of faith, with Fowler it is not that simple. By faith development he is referring to a concept that is complex and dynamic. Fowler conceptualizes faith as universal, and independent of religion and belief in God (Fowler, 2000). An understanding of Fowler's underlying questions may be more illustrative than a concise definition. These questions ask:

- 1 How do people awaken to and begin to form (and be formed by) life stances of trust and loyalty, belief and commitment that carry them into the force fields of their lives?
- 2 Are there predictable stages or revolutions in the life of meaning making?
- 3 Must we, to become fully adult and fully human, have a deep-going

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and abiding trust in and loyalty to some cause or causes, greater in value and importance than ourselves (Fowler, 2000, p. 40)?

Despite the fact that Fowler's main interest is faith, one must sift carefully through his work in order to find a concise definition of this construct. Though somewhat perplexing, this descriptive approach to characterizing faith is consistent with the richness and complexity of his ideas. He portrays faith as a way of making meaning, relating to others, understanding reality, and connecting to one's world. In *Faithful Change*, Fowler (1996) offers the following synthesized definition:

Faith...may be characterized as an integral, centering process, underlying the formation of beliefs, values, and meanings, that (1) gives coherence and direction to persons' lives, (2) links them in shared trusts and loyalties with others, (3) grounds their personal stances and communal loyalties in a sense of relatedness to a larger frame of reference, and (4) enables them to face and deal with the limit conditions of human life, relying upon that which has the quality of ultimacy in their lives (p.56).

In order to address these questions and explore the nuanced realm of faith development, Fowler and his research partners conducted structured interviews with more than six hundred people over a period of ten years. Those interviewed ranged in age from 3 ½ to 84 years old (Rich & DeVitis, 1994). Interviewees were asked about life histories, beliefs, convictions, and encounters with "existential life-issues with which faith must deal" (Fowler, 1980a, p. 27). Of particular interest to the interviewers was the consistency between a person's stated beliefs and their actions. Parenthetically, this interest corresponds closely with this author's stated introductory concern for understanding the connection between moral beliefs and moral action. Interviews are rated and yield information regarding both the content of the participants' faith and underlying structures used to organize beliefs. Based on this information, researchers place respondents in the most suitable of Fowler's seven stages.

Essentially, Fowler's stages explain the consistent ways that all people experience or are "in faith" (Fowler, 2000, p. 40) rather than describing the content of faith. Fowler "...[is] trying to identify and communicate differences in the styles, the operations of knowing and valuing, that constitute the action, the way of being, that is faith" (2000, p. 40). Paradoxically, this aspect of Fowler's theory may be once problematic and helpful. It is generic enough to consider all forms of faith experience yet it does not embrace any particular belief structure.

Unlike Kohlberg, Fowler does not claim that his stages of faith are universal. However, he does contend that they are unchanging, successive, and hierarchical. By very loosely associating age categories to his stages, he implicitly recognizes the contributions of physical and cognitive growth to faith development. However, he explains that age is not unalterably tied to faith development and that some adults function in ways characteristic of much lower levels of development. In other words, age does not assure movement through his stages. In a manner reminiscent of Piaget's (1954) theory of cognitive development, Fowler believes that the disequilibrium created by threats to one's ways of knowing energizes development (Fowler, 1980a).

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His stages and brief descriptions follow:

I Primal-Undifferentiated Faith

During this period the infant develops a basic sense of trust and "pre-images" of God or the Holy.

II Intuitive-Projective Faith (Early Childhood)

A time in which unchallenged imagination facilitates the creation of images of the divine. Images may be developed which persist throughout life.

III Mythic-Literal Faith (School Years)

Child develops ways of dealing with the world and "making meaning." During this period the images formed previously may be reconsidered or altered. While symbols may be meaningful at this stage, they are understood in concrete ways. It is important to note that some adults never move beyond this stage.

IV Synthetic-Conventional Faith (Adolescence)

With the advent of formal operational thinking, the adolescent develops deeper levels of understanding of abstract concepts and symbols. Identity formation impacts relationships and sense of faith identity. Values, images, and self are synthesized. Relationship to God is understood in ways similar to other relationships.

V Individuative-Reflective Faith (Young Adulthood)

This is a period of self-discovery that occurs when a person begins to understand themselves independent of relationships and the world in general. Authenticity and ideological commitments are important aspects of this stage.

VI Conjunctive Faith (Mid-Life and Beyond)

Borders identified in previous stages are softened. Individuals begin to understand that many unconscious factors and forces impact behaviors and belief. Characterized by an intensified desire to relate to God and willingness to accept mystery. "Alive to paradox" including God's unapproachable-ness and closeness. Desire to relate to those who are different.

VII Universalizing Faith

Few people reach this stage. Individuals reaching this stage have centered themselves in ultimate reality (Fowler, 1996, p. 57-67).

Fowler's concern for issues of identity and existential questions concerning reality and the ultimate meaning of life is highly relevant to study of college age adults. Though his concepts are not simple, they do provide a possible vehicle for understanding this complex aspect of development.

Conclusions and Implications for Future Research

There are numerous points of convergence and divergence between Kohlberg and Fowler. However, the purpose of this brief discussion is to explore those most salient and significant in light of future research possibilities. For this reason, the discussion





will be limited to just two concerns: conceptual fit and instrumentation.

Both theories offer highly organized, empirically supported models for considering issues of moral development. Though each theorist respects the others' contributions and though they trace back to common roots, they employ very different models. Kohlberg's narrow focus on the construct of moral reasoning is closely related to Piaget's conception of cognitive development. While strains of Piaget are also apparent in Fowler's work the construct of faith is much more broad than the construct of moral reasoning. Fowler's model considers how one experiences faith, a concept which subsumes moral reasoning. Though it may be tempting, it would be inaccurate to characterize Fowler's work as simply an extension of moral reasoning. It is more appropriate to understand it as placing moral reasoning in a larger context. While Kohlberg limited his focus to moral judgment, Fowler has attempted to widen this perspective to include an integrated connection to faith, belief, emotion, and value (Fowler, 1980b, 1996).

Though Kohlberg's model has been the basis for a great deal of research conducted on religious campuses, Fowler's extended interpretation offers clear conceptual benefits. A concern for connecting faith and practice is foundational to the purposes of faith-based institutions. Thus, Fowler's model provides a more natural path to an exploration of the connection between faith and one's likelihood of behaving as a good and decent person (Fowler, 2000). While this concern is corollary to Kohlberg's work, it is the heart of Fowlers'.

Although Fowler offers a model that seems to more appropriately fit the desired focus, the broadness of his theory creates some difficulties regarding measurement. Though he has a strong empirical base of support (Fowler, 1980b), his interview protocol is very time consuming. While this method is sound and consistent with the complexity of understanding the nuances of faith, it does not offer the convenience of measures related to Kohlberg's theory. Thus practical, rather than theoretical or empirical, questions raise the greatest concerns regarding the use of this protocol.

The instrumentation used to make assessments associated with Kohlberg's theory is well developed. The Defining Issues Test has become the standard for measuring moral reasoning development and provides an attractive standardized measurement option (Rest, 1993). The DIT is an easily administered and scored, standardized, paper and pencil instrument that allows the researcher to conveniently gauge a respondent's level of moral reasoning. Ease of administration is more than a convenience consideration as it may determine the situations in which a particular procedure may be used to gather data. For instance, by using the DIT a researcher would have the potential to collect a great deal of data very quickly in a setting such as a new student orientation testing session. While Fowler's interview protocol is well developed and allows for a much richer exploration of issues of faith, it is clearly more cumbersome to employ. Research designs based on this protocol must carefully account for accompanying limitations.

Though some may criticize Kohlberg for the narrowness of his focus, it is clearly a result of empirical priorities. Kohlberg's relevance, well-developed theory, and disciplined approach account for the presence of the rich research base that has been established. While research based on Fowler's model is substantial, it does not begin to approach the level of inquiry related to Kohlberg's theory. The presence of this impressive body of knowledge is a key benefit recommending Kohlberg. Any final decision related to the use of either of these theories requires a reconciliation of the advantages





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of the breadth and richness of Fowler's model against the measurement benefits and comprehensive research base of Kohlberg's. However, considering the well-established nature of both models, the congruence between the concept of faith development and the interests of Christian higher education would ultimately seem to support the use of Fowler for future investigations.

Needless to say, a number of questions warranting further consideration have emerged. These questions may be helpful in providing a guide for future research on this topic. First, it would be both interesting and useful to investigate the association between specific elements of the college experience and advanced levels of moral and or faith development. In other words, what are the experiences that one has in college that relate most positively to progress in moral development? Though we now understand that involvement has a strong impact on broader educational goals, it would be very beneficial to investigate the possible relationship between specific forms of involvement and advances in moral development. This consideration has significant philosophical and practical significance to faith-based institutions.

Another area of possible attention is an investigation into the connection between campus culture and moral development. While there have been investigations into the relationship between environment and character development (Kuh, 2000), further study related specifically to the construct of faith development would potentially yield helpful insights into the benefits of the various elements comprising culture.

A third issue raised in this review is the need to further consider differences in the advance in faith development between students in religious institutions as compared to students in secular institutions. The broadness of Fowler's model allows for its application in non-religious settings and with people who have no particular religious orientation. Such an investigation would help to determine the impact that various educational models have on helping students to develop meaningful and congruent belief systems independent of religious commitment. As mentioned in the introduction to this review, moral development, and in particular faith development, is an important priority for faith-based institutions, thus it would be highly beneficial to develop a more complete understanding of possible differences in progress between students from each of the two types of institutions.

This rich topic has tremendous relevance to positively impacting pressing societal needs as well as the broad goals of higher education. This review has attempted to address several foundational issues and raise potential avenues for expanded exploration.

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Faith Development on Christian College Campuses: A Student Affairs Mandate

by Stephen Beers, Ed.D

INTRODUCTION

Today's university is a compilation of various yet distinct departments and divisions. In fulfilling the mandate for faith development that Christian universities share, each department and division has critical roles: faculty utilizing formal and informal instruction integrating faith and learning; administrators integrating core values in the decision-making process while modeling Christ-like leadership; and student development staff intentionally engaging students and fostering teachable moments that facilitate the faith development process. Each division plays a vital role in establishing a Christian college or university.

This article focuses mainly on the role of the student development professional in the faith development initiative. For this work, the division of student development will include all of the departments generally associated with the student development areas on Coalition of Christian College and University's (CCCU) campuses: Residential life, activities, leadership development, campus ministries, athletics, etc. First, this article will overview baseline information of faith development research including definitions and summary statements about leading faith developmental theory. Next, a review of the Christian college's distinctive "call" and what the role of the Christian Student Development Professional (CSDP) might be in the development and continuation of the initiatives outlined will be discussed. Last, the paper will review CSDP programs and initiatives in light of relevant faith development theory.

Definition of Faith

"What is faith?" This question is especially fundamental for colleges and universities that claim to promote and develop faith. To begin the defining process, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989) states that faith is "belief, trust, confidence." The definition continues, "In early use, only with reference to religious objects: this is still the prevalent application, and often colours the wider use." This definition highlights the general "trust" aspect of faith.

A more representative definition for Christian colleges and universities is found in *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words* (1985) which defines faith as follows: "pri-

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marily, 'firm persuasion,' a conviction based upon hearing; is used in the New Testament always of 'faith in God or Christ, or things spiritual'" (pg. 222). This definition aligns faith in relationship with an evangelical Christian world-view.

These two definitions are seen more as a positional definition. This positional definition is appropriate for static applications, but for the purposes of this article there needs to be a dynamic definition- a definition of faith that can be developed or matured. Therefore, Fowler's definition of faith within his books, *Stages of Faith* (1976) and *Becoming Adult Becoming Christian* (1984), is even more appropriate. Fowler states in *Stages of Faith* (1976) that

"faith is a person's or group's way of moving into the force field of life. It is our way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces and relations that make up our lives. Faith is a person's way of seeing him or herself in relation to others against a background of shared meaning and purpose" (p. 4).

Here faith is defined as a person's understanding of his/her own meaning. This definition transcends religious terminology along with being developmental in nature. One problem with the use of this definition for Christian colleges and universities is that it is not religiously distinctive.

Benson and Eklin (1990) define faith maturation as "Maturity of faith - the degree to which persons exhibit a vibrant, life-transforming faith marked by both a deep, personal relationship to a loving God and a consistent devotion to serving others" (p. 9). Of all the definitions presented thus far, this definition is more useful within the Christian college communities because the basic underlying assumptions are more in line with those accepted within that specific Christian community.

Faith Development Theories

The major theorists concerning faith development vary in their approaches to describing the developmental process. Some focus on defining a stage format, others focus on the process, and still others focus on defining the core dimensions and evidences of change.

Leading the major stage theorists are James Fowler, Sharon Parks, and John Westerhoff. Both Fowler and Parks believe that the development of faith is linear and that a fully developed faith is "universalizing faith." Fowler's stages are as follows: 1) primal faith; 2) mythical-literal faith; 3) synthetic-conventional faith; 4) individuating-reflective faith; 5) conjunctive faith; and 6) universalizing faith (Fowler, 1976). Parks accepts much of what Fowler postulates, but goes deeper into theorizing about the individual's faith development during the traditional college years. She adds a stage between Fowler's stages three and four. She refers to this as a time of "young adult." This stage is defined as a time of "probing commitment" and a "fragile self-dependence" (Parks, 1986; Parks, 1982). She also outlines how ten significant aspects of the maturation process develop during the transition from adolescents to mature adulthood.





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A third stage theory is Westerhoff's faith development theory. Westerhoff proposes four stages: experienced, affiliated, searching, and owned (Litchfield, 1995). Though the stages are relatively simple, Westerhoff describes both a macro idea of faith development over a lifetime and a micro view of development that describes the changes within each stage.

Taking a different approach to the research of faith development is James Loder. He presents faith development as a series of "transforming moments." Loder (1982) believes that individuals develop faith as they confront situations. Those situations can then be translated into transforming moments. The process of transformation comes about in five steps. First, the individual experiences conflict or "contradiction." The individual then moves through an "interlude for scanning," basically a time of reflection. Next, the person begins a resolution or a "constructive act of imagination." The fourth step is for the person to have an "opening." During the "opening" time, the individual begins to accept the reality that their faith is changing. After the opening there is a "reinterpretation." This reinterpretation then solidifies the developmental experience (Loder & Fowler, 1982).

Fowler reiterates the importance of the "contradiction" or "crisis" aspect of faith development. He states, "We do not make the transition from one stage to another without disruption, pain, confusion, and a sense of loss. All growth involves pain" (Fowler as cited in Dykstra and Parks, 1986, p. 40).

The last faith development theory paradigm included here comes from Benson and Eklin (1990). Funded by a Lilly Endowment grant, they surveyed several hundred adults from six major protestant denominations. They came up with eight core dimensions of faith. Further development of the Index by Peter Benson, Michael Donahue, and Joseph Erickson resulted in an additional research article titled *Faith Maturity Scale: Conceptualization, Measurement, and Empirical Validation* (1993).

Table 1.

BENSON AND EKLIN'S EIGHT CORE DIMENSIONS OF FAITH

1. Trusts in God's saving grace and believes firmly in the humanity and divinity of Jesus.
2. Experiences a sense of personal well-being, security, and peace.
3. Integrates faith and life, seeing work, family, social relationships, and political choices as part of one's religious life.
4. Seeks spiritual growth through study, reflection, prayer, and discussion with others.
5. Seeks to be a part of a community of believers in which people give witness to their faith and support and nourish one another.
6. Holds life-affirming values including commitment to racial and gender equality, affirmation of cultural and religious diversity, and a personal sense of responsibility for the welfare of others.
7. Advocates social and global change to bring about greater social justice.
8. Serves humanity, consistently and passionately, through acts of love and justice.

This paradigm focuses on the measurable aspects of a developing Christian faith. This model provides a framework for the Christian Student Development Professional to develop and evaluate the programs and initiatives he or she is implementing.

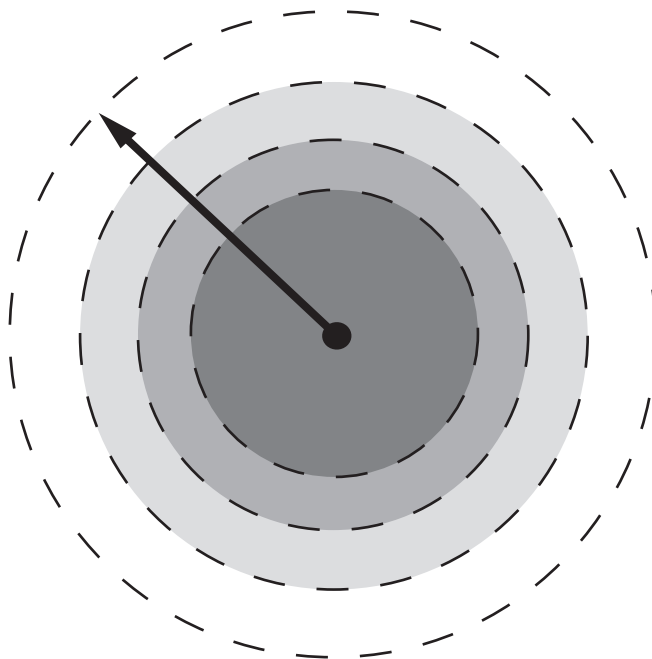




A MODEL FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Every aspect of a student's life can be used for the development of faith. The working model or operational definition of the spiritual formation process was created in order to facilitate better communication and understanding on this topic for the Christian educator. This work centered on defining the spiritual formation process in such a way as to capture the essence of a college student's faith development. This work also enhances the educator's understanding of the process of integrating the student's faith (spiritual formation) and learning across all areas of the university. It is included here because the author believes that Christian spiritual formation is congruent with Christian faith development and that this initial work on a working model will be of assistance in understanding faith in a developmental model context.

A Concentric Circle Model of Spiritual Formation¹



Inner circle - "Altering Self-recognition"

Second circle - "Recognition of a Creator"

Third circle - "Redemption of His Image in me"

Outer circle - "Redemption of His Image in others"

Arrow - "Change and/or Growth"

Perforated circle walls - "Ability for constant change"

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Operational assumptions

The operational model of spiritual formation is made up of four concentric circles. These four circles represent four definable aspects or movements that an individual engages in as they are being transformed into the Image of Christ. There are two aspects of the model that are important to understand:

1. All four circles are needed and necessary for the full spiritual development of each person. The smaller circles are not negative in themselves. Instead, the smaller circles lack the fuller, more complete development of the person's spiritual formation.
2. For a person to move into a fuller development of spiritual formation (to a larger circle), there must be a life situation that creates dissonance within the individual. This experience of dissonance can be negative or positive.

The first or inner circle

The first or inner circle of the model is "Altering Self-Recognition." It represents seeing the world *only* as it relates to the self. This initial aspect of faith development encompasses the "created but fallen" essence of our being. Here the individual is engaged in aspects of the spiritual formation process, but the involvement is limited to a shallow understanding of how truth relates to the self. This initial aspect or circle is important for each person to grasp or understand, but if our spiritual formation is limited to this circle, we remain severely limited in understanding who we are and what God intends for us.

An example of this circle is how a student may initially have a great "ah-ha" experience (e.g., community worship in a chapel service, viewing the Grand Canyon, or learning a mathematical truth). There is an initial "a-ha" experience where the individual is overwhelmed at what she sees or experiences. In this circle there is recognition of the world outside of the self and a sense of how the self interfaces with this world, but there is not a full understanding of how that experience or truth fits with the self (or the collective humanity).

The second circle

The second and more encompassing concentric circle is "Recognition of a Creator." It represents grasping the world beyond the self. The individual recognizes that there is a higher power - a Creator God. In this circle, truth takes on divine order. There is recognition that the individual is separate from God and that God is greater than the individual.

This circle is exemplified by a person who attributes a new understanding of order in the universe to a Creator God or the individual who experiences the "wow" of the Grand Canyon or a moving chapel and then attributes the awesome experience to an experience with God.

The shortfall of the person's experience in this circle is that there is no internalization or change to the person. The focus here is on recognizing God, but it is limited to wonderment. The fuller understanding must include engagement in the developmental





process. In this circle God is acknowledged, but this acknowledgement is limited solely to recognition.

The third circle

The third concentric circle is the “Redemption of His Image in Me.” This circle represents the beginning of an integrational aspect of spiritual formation. The individual works on understanding and integrating the difference Christ as Savior makes in her daily life. The individual attempts to take every thought captive. The individual begins to be transformed by the renewing of her mind. She works with the Holy Spirit to redeem every aspect of her experience.

An example might be the way an individual understands the concept of “created order” and the attempts to integrate this concept into her life. Chapel in the third circle no longer produces just a good feeling of people singing in harmony or an experience of knowing that God is being collectively worshiped. Rather, chapel is both of these plus a place where one gains the supernatural power and a fuller understanding of how to structure one’s life in order to be more fully transformed into the Image of Christ.

The fourth or outer circle

The fourth and largest circle is “Redemption of His Image in the World.” This circle represents the place where the redeemed person’s actions and intentions join the work of God in redeeming His creation. Here the individual sees herself as a co-laborer with Christ. This circle represents the outgrowth or the result of a transformed life. The transformative integration process in the fourth circle allows the individual to cooperate with Christ in His kingdom work.

As an example, the student in chapel who is being redeemed and used by the Holy Spirit helps those around her to move into a larger circle. This individual may also be used in the classroom to challenge and support another individual who is moving from one circle to another. Another concrete way students move into this outer circle is through the living out of a purposed life. Here they see all of their life experiences as opportunities to help others redeem their lives.

Arrows

The arrows within the model represent the change and growth that take place as the student moves from one aspect of their development to another. These changes are a result of the work of the Holy Spirit in concert with life experiences to create growth. Many times these experiences are considered crisis experiences.

Perforated walls

The perforations within the walls of the circles represent the ease and fluidity of movement from one circle to the next.





The Christian University

There is a uniqueness to the educational community that claims to be Christian and is serious about developing faith. Gangel and Wilhoit (1994) suggest in *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Spiritual Formation* that faith development is an "intentional, multi-faceted process that promotes transformation."

This transformation correlates with the "self-realization" that George Coe wrote about in his book *Education in Religion and Morals* eighty years earlier.

Coe (1911) wrote, "If we believe that complete self-realization requires not only human society, but also fellowship with God, then it follows that for us education is the effort to assist immature human beings toward complete self-realization in and through fellowship with both their fellows and God" (p. 22).

It then becomes clear that the Christian educator, and specifically the CSDP, is aspiring to develop a Christian faith in students. It is also clear that this faith development is on at least two planes one plane with God and the other with man (Ortberg, 1995). Therefore, it is clear that as the CSDP develops programs and initiatives she must provide opportunities that address both of these areas.

A commitment to the developmental process of faith maturation is evident within the publications from most Christian colleges. The Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU), whose association is compiled of "Christ-centered colleges and universities of the liberal arts and sciences," state that their membership is comprised of colleges and universities who "are committed to maintaining the highest academic standards in an environment that fosters spiritual growth" (Coalition for Christian Colleges and Universities, 1998, p. 2).

As stated within the literature, a primary goal of a Christian college is to foster spiritual growth (Peterson & Moore, 1994; Ringenberg, 1973; Sloan, 1994). One such CCCC institution promotes faith development in their education goals. The university's catalogue states that all university programs hold to a Christian worldview and are characterized by the integration of faith and learning (1996-1998 Taylor Catalog). A second CCCC institution's catalogue states "spiritual formation has been a part of the mission of SPU since the university's beginning." This, they say, is accomplished by "promoting the spiritual disciplines...fostering spiritual mentoring...modeling a community of love...encouraging an informed and thoughtful faith...and through service" (Seattle Pacific University, 1996 Status Report). What is especially interesting and poignant is that the leadership role for most of these initiatives historically comes from the student development area.

CHRISTIAN STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

The Christian Student Development Professional (CSDP) has a central role in integrating faith development at the Christian university mainly because of the type of educational interaction that the student development office facilitates. Unlike other faculty and staff, the CSDP is able to utilize formal, non-formal, informal and serendipitous learning environments. Specifically, the CSDP has a large and powerful arsenal





of educational tools with which to engage students in transformational learning. The utilization of residential hall programming, spiritual disciplines, club involvement, mission trips, chapel services, service learning, servant leadership training, freshmen year experiences, vocational calling development, mentoring, small group involvement, wellness sensitivity and sports, experiences all provide the CSDP exceptional educational experiences rich with faith developmental opportunities. In many cases these educational opportunities may be a university's primary facilitation of the faith development aspect. In addition, no other campus wide division has the cross sectional campus interaction with students like the CSDP. Last, a hallmark of the CSDP has been strong relationships with individual students. These relationships are critical tools in the faith developmental tool chest. This is especially true as the transformation of values is realized through teachable moments and critical faith developmental experiences that take place through incarnational relationships. This relational ministry focus is even more critical in a post-modern world.

The CSDP must have a working knowledge of how to integrate Christian faith development theory and practice with relevant student development theory. A developmental configuration that does not provide room for Christian theological concepts like sin and redemption will not appropriately lead the professional in providing transformational experiences for the student. The core aspect that differentiates the Christian college program from the non-Christian programs is that the Christian college developmental programs are attempting to partner with God to transform students into the image of Christ. In essence, the CSDP is working to assist the student in moving into the more mature developmental stages of the Concentric Circle model or to fully internalize the eight dimensions of a mature faith.

To illustrate the difference between the Christian and non-Christian's understanding of the student development professional's role, one can look at how Arthur W. Chickering's developmental theory outlined in "Education and Identity" (1969) is utilized differently at each type of campus. Chickering provides a profound and fundamental framework for student development practice. What Chickering neglects to include is a construct of how Christian truth significantly affects where a Christian gains his or her self-image. The first chapter of the New Testament book Ephesians clarifies who Christians are (chosen, predestined, adopted etc.) and where they gain their self-worth (imparted from God). As a CSDP, it is critical to infuse Christian truth into all programming. Without an infusion of truth from scripture and our church fathers, Chickering's framework is inadequate and ultimately leads us in an errant direction.

Benson and Eklin's research along with the Concentric Circles Model provide a faith developmental construct that incorporates evangelical theology and is one that can be adopted by the Christian university. This construct will be utilized as an outline to review the integral role the CSDP plays in student faith development. Below is a list of critical programs and roles that the student development department and CSDP play in facilitating growth in faith dimensions on a Christian campus.





1. Trusts in God's saving grace and believes firmly in the humanity and divinity of Jesus.

The CSDP has a central role in the communication of the gospel of Christ to students who attend their university. Formal programming, for example chapel, plays a central role in communicating the gospel. In addition to the formal programs, the CSDP has significant opportunities to utilize his or her relationships with students to clarify and communicate the gospel. Appropriately communicating the truth about the redemption process is most times done in the teachable moments outside of the formal classroom.

Here the student may need to be challenged to engage in more than the excitement of the community (first circle). There needs to be experiences that lead the student into a transformational, personal relationship with Christ (third circle).

2. Experiences a sense of personal well-being, security, and peace.

Providing transformational opportunities for fostering a sense of personal well-being security and peace is a central premise and focus of programming initiated from the counseling center or the wellness coordinator. These programs along with interpersonal interaction with CSDP create opportunities for this aspect of the faith maturation process. Initiating interventions and being available in times when individual students are struggling with these issues provide some of the richest opportunities for growth.

In this dimension the CSDP needs to assist the student in integrating Biblical truths into their personal lives moving them beyond the second circle and into the third (Redemption of His Image in me).

3. Integrates faith and life, seeing work, family, social relationships, and political choices as part of one's religious life.

The integration of faith and life is most evident in the residence halls of Christian college campuses. The outworking of the transformational life is best developed in real life experiences. The residential setting is full of opportunities for challenge and growth. Additional opportunities come with the student's involvement in ministry outreaches, service learning experiences and being a part of an athletic team. These non-formal educational settings are excellent opportunities for integrating faith and life. Related to this faith developmental dimension is the process of assisting the student in finding a calling. The student development department is in a leadership position to assist students in vocational counseling.

Here the CSDP must challenge the student who has begun the transformational process to allow the new self to partner with God in assisting others. The challenge here is to be careful not to assume the excitement of the ministry experience as a circle three experience when in reality the student is still in the first or second circle.





4. Seeks spiritual growth through study, reflection, prayer, and discussion with others.

Formal mentoring and discipleship are significant programming initiatives CSDPs have initiated for the development of this dimension. Additional student development educational opportunities for this dimension exist in the organization and facilitation of the spiritual disciplines and small group Bible study. For example, working with the religion department on seamless curricular programs that initiate discussion and reflection are powerful tools for this dimension.

In the fourth dimension, the CSDP encourages the student to fully engage in the disciplines, allowing them to transform their minds. This transformational experience is where the student moves from circle one or two to the outer circles of real transformation and ministry.

5. Seeks to be a part of a community of believers in which people give witness to their faith and support and nourish one another.

The campus as a whole, and specifically the residential facilities, are intentional communities programmed to be supportive and nourishing. The CSDP plays a valuable role in facilitating the community aspect of the residential community. Small groups, chapel mission trips, freshmen year experiences, along with outreach ministries may all provide opportunities for a community of believers to give witness of their faith.

Here again the CSDP encourages the student to fully engage in the disciplines and allowing them to transform their minds. This transformational experience is where the student moves from circle one or two to the outer circles of real transformation and ministry. A continued caution is to make sure the CSDP or the student does not confuse the excitement of being part of the community with a transformational experience.

6. Holds life-affirming values including commitment to racial and gender equality, affirmation of cultural and religious diversity, and a personal sense of responsibility for the welfare of others.

Leadership for racial and gender equality is highlighted by student development programming from the minority and international student network and departments. Informal interaction on campus along with residence hall programming provides opportunities for inclusion and understanding among racially and religiously diverse students.

In the sixth dimension, the CSDP provides opportunities for the transformed student to be used of God in transforming the world around them. This is where the student is seen as experiencing the outer circle or the "Redemption of His Image in others."





7. Advocates social and global change to bring about greater social justice.

Here again the CSDP provides leadership in outreach programs, service learning, and mission trips rich with experiences in working towards social justice. Servant leadership and ethical training are hallmark programs for many CCCU campuses that specifically address the development of a deeper understanding of social justice.

Like the sixth dimension, the CSDP provides opportunities for the transformed student to be used of God in transforming the world around them. This is where the student is seen as experiencing the outer circle or the "Redemption of His Image in others." A continued caution is to make sure the CSDP or the student does not confuse the excitement of being part of the ministry with a transformational experience.

8. Serves humanity, consistently and passionately, through acts of love and justice.

The opportunities for CSDP leadership, both interpersonally and in campus wide program development, is at the core of what is provided at the Christian university. Outreach programs, service learning and mission trips provide definable experiences that shape the students. Residence hall living, student government and athletics all provide constant real life experiences of opportunities for students to put their faith into practice.

In the eighth dimension, much like the sixth and the seventh, the CSDP provides opportunities for the transformed student to be used of God in transforming the world around them or "Redemption of His Image in others." As stated earlier in the article, every experience can and does get used in the faith development process. So even if a student is engaged in the process of serving humanity and is acting out of the first or second circle and not from a transformed life, God can and does utilize these experiences to shift the individual. In fact, some of these experiences are the crisis experiences that push the individual into the next circle.

In closing, as demonstrated above the CSDPs provide the leadership in programming initiatives that foster the most significant faith developmental opportunities on campus. This transformational learning outside of the classroom is underscored in current literature. Richard Light in his recent book *Making the Most of College* states, "learning outside of classes, especially in residential settings and extracurricular activities such as the arts, is vital. When we asked students to think of a specific, critical incident or moment that had changed them profoundly, four-fifths of them chose a situation or event outside of the classroom" (page 8). The CSDP must take his or her role seriously as a leader for faith development within program development and be intentional in relationship issues. The CSDP must also see themselves as campus leaders looking for partnerships among campus divisions to maximize the college experience.

CONCLUSION

Faith development is a crucial aspect of the Christian college and university. It is a Christian college distinctive, but more than that it is central to the Christian college



and university's mission. Understanding what a maturing faith consists of and how to develop it remains a critical issue for the Christian Student Development Professional who wants to take a significant role in the developmental process and in the development and execution of programs and relationships that foster a student's faith development. The Christian Student Development Professional must take a leadership role in facilitating and fostering the historical student development programs. The Christian student development professional must take a leadership role in directing all campus recourses to maximize the faith development experiences because the Christian student development professional cannot do this alone. His or her responsibility will include taking a leadership role in helping the faculty and the staff to develop their personal faith. This leadership role includes working with each interaction point where a student connects with the university, such as: workstudy programs, assisting in faculty development, and providing seamless curriculum opportunities for integrating faith development. The task is both formidable and rewarding.

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ENDNOTE

The Concentric Circle of Spiritual Formation was developed in cooperation with John Brown University's Spiritual Formation Task Force (SFTF). The members of the SFTF are: Ms. Tracy Balzer, Dr. Stephen Beers, Dr. David Brisben, Dr. Ron Habermas, Ms. Patty Kirk, Rev. Stan McKinnon and Dr. Jim Worthington.





Assessing Spiritual Development in Business Students: Lessons Learned and a Suggested Process

*by Monty Lynn, Ph.D, Tim C. Coburn, Ph.D,
J. Vincent Swinney and Michael Winegeart*

ABSTRACT

As Christian higher education institutions increasingly engage in continuous quality improvement and outcome measurement, research on spiritual development is filtering down to undergraduate business programs. This paper presents lessons learned from a pilot cross-sectional survey of Abilene Christian University undergraduate business students who completed the Faith Maturity Scale (Benson, Donahue & Erickson, 1993) and responded to other questions about faith development. Based on the results, a number of helpful observations were made for the ACU business program. A method and process for assessing spiritual development at multiple Christian colleges is proposed.

OUR AIM

Regional US accrediting agencies and business accrediting bodies (e.g., The Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), and Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International)) are encouraging colleges and universities to engage in continuous quality improvement, and for good reason. Rather than simply claim—through anecdote, historical belief, and desire—that certain outcomes are produced in graduates, institutions are being pressed to measure actual performance. Once measured, schools are better equipped to know what to improve in the educational process.

Assessment poses a challenge for Christian colleges and their business programs which claim to foster a student's spiritual development. Indeed, many colleges assert that the integration of faith and learning is the single most important quality distinguishing them from public institutions. Some are quick to claim that spiritual develop-

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ment is impossible to measure, and in large part, that's true. We will never see into the recesses of the heart as God does (1 Samuel 16:7), nor can we easily plumb the subtle differences across the patchwork of Christian faith traditions.

But perhaps surprising to some, many scales and instruments measuring various aspects of religiosity have been carefully developed and tested during the past three decades (cf. Hill & Hood, 1999), and much thought has been given to the process of spiritual development. Additionally, Christian colleges have more than a decade of experience with quantitative measures of spiritual maturity since Moberg's (1971) initial conceptualization of spiritual well-being. These quantitative approaches complement qualitative assessment approaches (e.g., Andrews, Bovee, Roller & Walenciak, 2000). Because these scholarly trails have been well trod—though each school cuts its own path, as this study will show—business schools are in an excellent position to make ready use of scales and theoretic perspectives that better inform them of their students' spiritual development.

Our aim in this paper is threefold: To: a) Sample the rich spiritual development literature; b) summarize findings from a pilot test of business students' faith maturity, and; c) suggest a revised process for assessing and fostering spiritual development among college students.

What We Know about Spiritual Development

To use the apostle Paul's architectural metaphor (1 Corinthians 3:9-15), three main aspects of faith construction have been studied: Foundation laying, or introducing people to Jesus Christ; various architectural styles, materials, and trades, or faith building; and demolition, or the disaffection of people from faith. Each of these dynamics has been examined from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Theologies and methodologies of introducing people to Jesus have been labored over by theologians, missiologists, and church growth specialists. Sociologists, psychologists, and educators have addressed various facets of faith building. And social scientists of many ilk have researched the disaffection of members from communities of faith.

Turning specifically to faith development in youth, many scholars have addressed the process and stages of faith in adolescence (e.g., Bisset, 1997; Francis & Katz, 2000; Gillespie, 1988; Hendricks, 1993; Hoge, McGuire & Stratman, 1981; Strong, 1998). Faith development in college students has been examined as well (e.g., Cureton, 1989; Wheeler, 1989), and approaches for enhancing faith development in college youth have been proposed (e.g., Cannister, 1998; Hertzberg, 1994; Powell, 2000).

In large part, however, this research has not permeated life within many Christian traditions, nor broken the surface in many Christian colleges. Not only is there often discomfort on the part of many with the melding of social science and faith, but the notion of spiritual development is surprisingly shallow for many Christian disciples and theologies. Theologian William Hendricks (1993, pp. 276-277) writes:

Over the course of the church's history, some brilliant thinking has been put forward on the nature and process of salvation, or justification. Likewise, good work has been done on the question of our future hope in Christ, or glorification.





But, there's a gap in our theology when it comes to sanctification. What happens between coming to faith and meeting Christ?

If we return to the substance of the aforementioned studies of youth, we find some intriguing observations. Some scholars have wondered whether the Christian college environment provides enough moral and ethical challenge to strengthen a student's character (Holmes, 1991), but research suggests that students in Christian higher education institutions develop in moral thinking (Buier, Butman, Burwell & Van Wicklin, 1989; McNeel, 1991). One study showed that students decline in extrinsic religiosity (religion to serve self), but also decline in their sense of religious well-being (Buier et al., 1989). Another study found that Christian students who attend non-faith-based institutions increase in intrinsic religiosity (heart-felt religion) over their college years at a rate faster than that of Christian college students (Foster & LaForce, 1999). Several of these findings are non-intuitive. Extant studies represent the hem of the garment for institutional research and program assessment on spiritual maturation.

Spiritual development meets some sizable obstacles and may progress at Christian institutions less than many have been assumed. Or, faith may increase dramatically, or even regress. Without data, we are left to guessing, and are unlikely to make effective and efficient improvements in the spiritual nurture of business students.

THE SUBTLETIES OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH: A CASE STUDY

Measures and Method

Abilene Christian University (ACU) students ($n = 264$) enrolled in at least one of seven business classes during the Spring 2001 semester, were asked to complete a survey instrument on spiritual development. (The present cross-sectional study was anticipated to be a pilot for a subsequent longitudinal study wherein we would track individual students' growth over four years). Students completed the 38-item Faith Maturity Scale (Benson, Donahue & Erickson, 1993), and were asked to report their participation in various campus activities. Students also were asked to estimate the degree to which various events and people influenced their spiritual growth while in college. Basic demography questions also were asked. (A copy of the complete survey is provided at the end of this paper.)

The Faith Maturity Scale (FMS) was selected for two reasons: The scale's psychometric construction and performance appeared to be acceptable, and the scale's foundational theology appeared biblical and balanced; that is, it addressed orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthocardia—encompassing love for God and others in belief, desire, and action (Mark 12:33) (cf. Bottom, King & Venugopal, 1997; Clapper, 1997; Sider, 1993).

While several scales of spiritual development and well-being have been used in Christian colleges (Nonneman, 1998), many have not held up well psychometrically (cf. Bassett, Camplin, Humphrey, Dorr, Biggs, Distaffen, Doxtator, Flaherty, Hunsberger, Poage & Thompson, 1991; Ledbetter, Smith, Fischer, Vosler-Hunter & Chew, 1991). We bypassed other instruments because they measured something besides spiritual development, or reflected primarily devotional or doctrinal aspects of Christian





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development, but omitted a measure of social responsibility and stewardship.

The FMS did have a drawback for the present study, however: It was normed in mainline protestant denominations and thus, might not reflect the basis for spiritual maturity as held by a conservative protestant student body. This objection was dismissed again, however, by a judgment that the scale items reflected a generally biblical balance between loving God and loving others (Matt. 22:37-40). The FMS and demography and spiritual growth questions were distributed to students in the seven business classes taught by the researchers at the end of the Spring 2001 semester.

Findings

Since we were interested in assessing the spiritual development of undergraduate business students, we omitted responses from non-business majors and graduate students ($n = 65$). We also omitted responses from students reporting no religious affiliation or a non-Christian affiliation ($n = 7$). Undeclared majors were left in the sample since many, if not all, were freshmen who were considering a business major and would have had curricular experiences similar to the freshmen business majors. This left a total sample of 192 from the original 264 instruments completed.

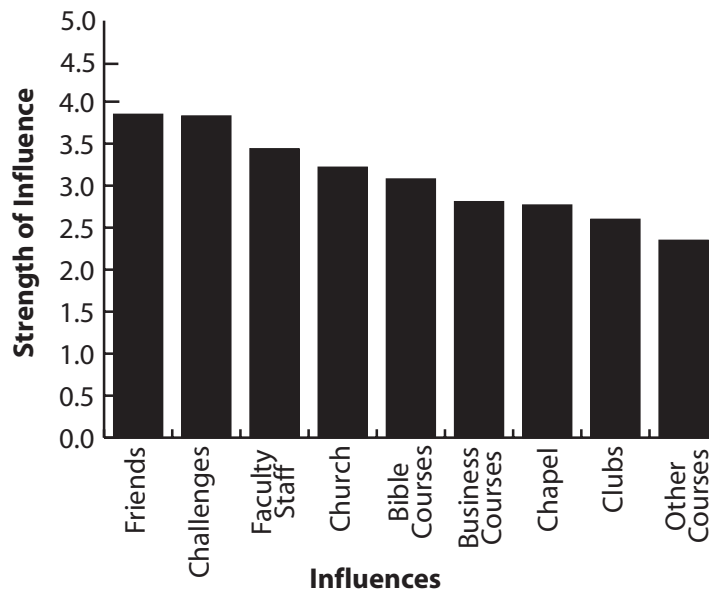
The sample adequately represented each undergraduate student classification with a high of 65 freshmen and a low of 33 sophomores. Females constituted 39% of the sample which is similar to the college's percentage of females (42%). The majority of the respondents (75%) claimed membership in Churches of Christ. An additional 10% were Baptist, 4% were non-denominational in affiliation, 4% were Catholic, and the remainder were associated with other protestant traditions.

Self-reported Faith Development Influences

Students were asked to estimate the degree to which they perceived various influences to have affected their spiritual maturity. Although self-reported, we believed that student perceptions would themselves offer insights on nurturing spiritual maturity. Students self-reported (on a scale of 5 = "very much" to 1 = "not at all") that the strongest influences in their spiritual maturation were ones which have the opportunity to engage them personally and directly in matters of faith (see Figure 1).

Specifically, students ranked close friends ($x = 3.85$; $sd = 1.13$), personal challenges and difficulties ($x = 3.83$; $sd = 1.05$), and faculty and staff ($x = 3.44$; $sd = 1.04$) as the strongest positive influences on their spiritual development. Moderate influences were: Involvement in a local church ($x = 3.22$; $sd = 1.23$); Bible, ministry, and missions classes ($x = 3.08$; $sd = 1.22$), and; business classes ($x = 2.81$; $sd = 1.05$). The lowest but still positive influences were daily chapel ($x = 2.77$; $sd = 1.19$), student club and organization involvement ($x = 2.60$; $sd = 1.37$), and arts and sciences courses ($x = 2.35$; $sd = 0.98$).

Figure 1: Self-reported Influences of Spiritual Maturity



The influences perceived as strongest—friends, challenges, and faculty/staff—are consistent with evidence and argument elsewhere. Morr (2000) argues how friends play a powerful role in spiritual formation. James and Samuels (1999) found that high (negative) stress is associated with an increase in overall spiritual orientation, and for males, in faith maturation. Pargament (1990) and Barrett (1999) provide a broad theoretical treatment of the interplay between religion and coping. Cannister (1998) found faculty mentoring to enhance freshmen student perceptions of their spiritual well-being. Dykstra (1999) argues for congregational influences in faith maturation.

Although students are exposed to some of these influences in different amounts across their four years (e.g., arts and science course enrollment generally decrease during the last two years; club involvement generally begins the sophomore year; etc.), the only influence which differed significantly across student classifications was “business courses”: From freshman to senior years, business courses became increasingly stronger perceived influences on faith development ($\chi^2 = 25.55$; $a = .012$). This increase in effect may occur because students have more business courses as they move toward their junior and senior years, and thus the potential of courses to be influential increases. Or, it could be that there is increased opportunity in upper level courses to engage faith issues and critical thinking. Still, business courses have only a moderately positive impact on spiritual development as perceived by students ($x = 2.81$).

The mean on individual Faith Maturity Scale (FMS) items for undergraduate business students ($n = 192$) is presented in Table 1. All questions were answered on a 5-point scale (5 = “strongly agree”; 1 = “strongly disagree”). The students’ overall mean is 3.67. Disappointingly, this score is lower than the lowest normed score (for youth aged 13-15) measured by the developers of the FMS (see Figure 2), even though the average student age in the present study was 20 years.



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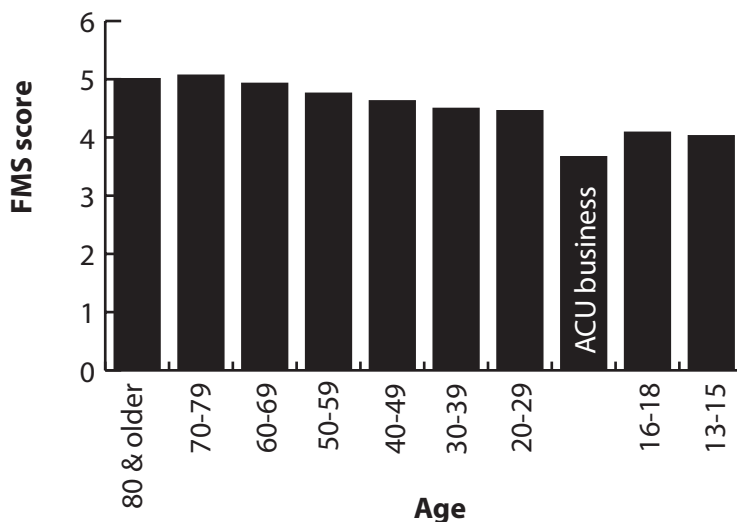
Table 1: Mean Scores of Individual Items on the Faith Maturity Scale

4.92	2	1	I know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who died on a cross and rose again.
4.53	11	2	Every day I see evidence that God is active in the world
4.47	7	3	My faith helps me know right from wrong
4.45	38	4	I am spiritually moved by the beauty of God's creation
4.37	30	5	My life is committed to Jesus Christ
4.28	24	6	My life is filled with meaning and purpose
4.30	19	7	As I grow older, my understanding of God changes
4.23	3	8	My faith shapes how I think and act every day
4.20	27	9	I am confident that I can overcome any problem or crisis no matter how serious
4.15	23	10	I feel God's presence in my relationships with other people
4.09	17	11	I accept people whose religious beliefs are different from mine
4.00	34	12	I have a real sense that God is guiding me
3.98	36	13	I like to worship and pray with others
3.86	4	14	I help others with their religious questions and struggles
3.81	31	15	I talk with other people about my faith
3.71	29	16	I try to apply my faith to political and social issues
3.67	37	17	I think Christians must be about the business of creating international understanding and harmony
3.65	33	18	I go out of my way to show love to people I meet
3.63	20	19	I feel overwhelmed by all the responsibilities and obligations I have
3.64	15	20	I take time for periods of prayer or meditation
3.64	14	21	I seek out opportunities to help me grow spiritually
3.59	12	22	I take excellent care of my physical health
3.59	25	23	I do not understand how a loving God can allow so much pain and suffering in the world
3.54	10	24	I have a hard time accepting myself (R)
3.52	35	25	I do not want the churches of this nation getting involved in political issues (R)
3.52	6	26	In my free time, I help people who have problems or needs
3.42	1	27	I am concerned that our country is not doing enough to help the poor
3.40	28	28	I care a great deal about reducing poverty in the United States and throughout the world
3.37	32	29	My life is filled with stress and anxiety
3.34	9	30	I devote time to reading and studying the Bible
3.26	8	31	I do things to help protect the environment
3.26	18	32	I feel a deep sense of responsibility for reducing pain and suffering in the world
3.13	21	33	I give significant portions of time and money to help other people
3.03	22	34	I speak out for equality for women and minorities
3.00	13	35	I am active in efforts to promote social justice
2.80	5	36	I tend to be critical of other people (R)
2.69	16	37	I am active in efforts to promote world peace
2.00	26	38	I believe that I must obey God's rules and commandments in order to be saved (R)

(R) = Indicates item is reverse scored.



Figure 2: Spiritual Maturity Means for ACU Students and Mainline Protestants



Note: Data except ACU business are from Benson et al. (1993).

Faith Maturity

The mean on individual Faith Maturity Scale (FMS) items for undergraduate business students ($n = 192$) is presented in Table 1. All questions were answered on a 5-point scale (5 = “strongly agree”; 1 = “strongly disagree”). The students’ overall mean is 3.67. Disappointingly, this score is lower than the lowest normed score (for youth aged 13-15) measured by the developers of the FMS (see Figure 2), even though the average student age in the present study was 20 years.

Overall, students followed a pattern of spiritual maturation found elsewhere: They increased from freshmen to junior years and then declined during their senior year (Thayer, 2001) (see Figures 3a and 3b). This pattern may suggest that students carried the secure faith of their parents to college, but began questioning and owning a personal faith in their final year of upper-level collegiate studies (cf. Parks, 1991). But, differences among student classification (e.g., freshman, sophomore, etc.) did not correlate significantly with spiritual maturity ($r = .02$, $a = .79$). Additionally, age correlated significantly but *negatively* with the FMS scores ($r = -.15$, $a = .04$). This finding runs against the current of other work.



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Figure 3: Spiritual Maturity by Classification

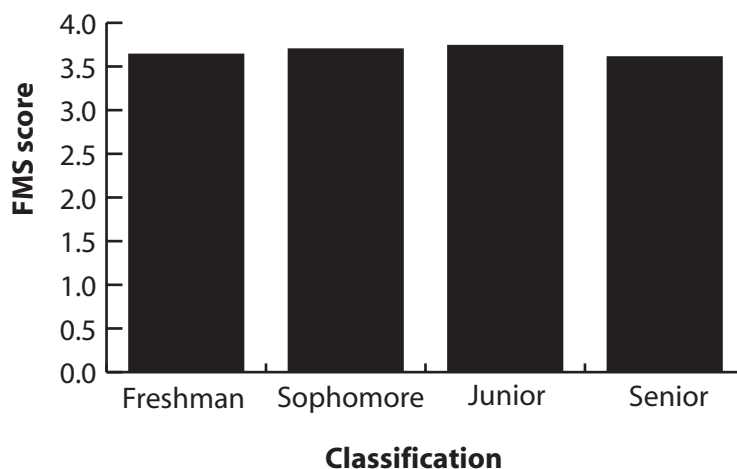
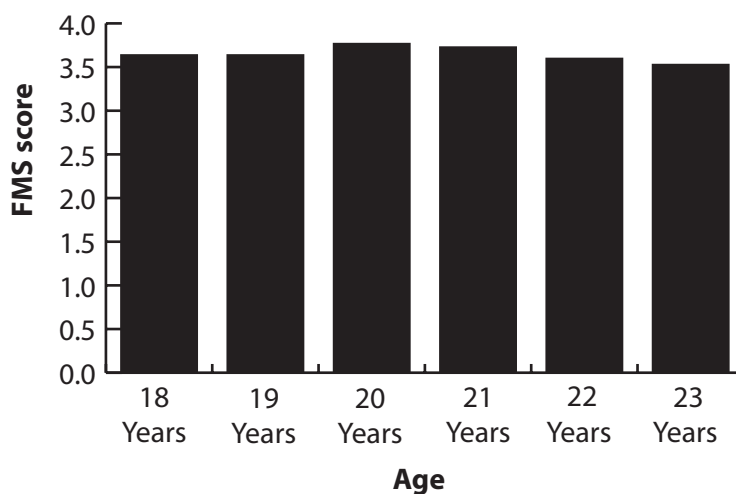


Figure 3b: Spiritual Maturity by Age



FMS Sub-scales

Benson and his colleagues (1993) developed the Faith Maturity Scale items by asking 410 mainline Protestant adults to describe “whether a person has a deep, vibrant, and mature religious faith.” The researchers then generated a taxonomy of eight core faith dimensions using the descriptions, adding items from social science and theological literature, and then filtering all the statements through three advisory panels. The eight FMS sub-dimensions are (quoted from Benson et al, 1993, p. 6):

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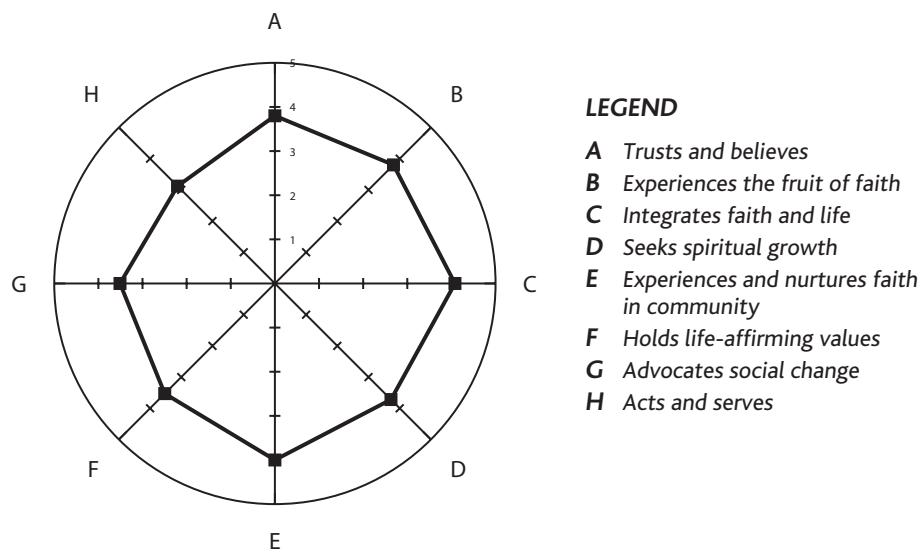




- A** Trusts in God's saving grace and believes firmly in the humanity and divinity of Jesus.
- B** Experiences a sense of personal well-being, security, and peace.
- C** Integrates faith and life, seeing work, family, social relationships, and political choices as part of one's religious life;
- D** Seeks spiritual growth through study, reflection, prayer, and discussion with others.
- E** Seeks to be part of a community of believers in which people give witness to their faith and support and nourish one another.
- F** Holds life-affirming values, including commitment to racial and gender equality, affirmation of cultural and religious diversity, and a personal sense of responsibility for the welfare of others.
- G** Advocates social and global change to bring about greater social justice.
- H** Serves humanity, consistently and passionately, through acts of love and justice.

The ACU student mean sub-scale scores are presented in Figure 4.³ They score highest in "E - Experiences and nurtures faith in community," "A - Trusts and believes," and "B - Experiences the fruit of faith," and lowest in AH - Acts and serves." Once again, no significant differences were identified for any of the eight dimensions when compared across ages or classifications.

Figure 4: Sub-scale Spiritual Maturity Scores



³ The items for each sub-scale are:

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| A 2,11,25,26,34 | B 10,20,24,27,32 | C 3,7,29,30,33 |
| D 9,14,15,19 | E 4,23,31,36 | F 5,12,17,18,22,38 |
| G 1,28,35,37 | H 6,8,13,16,21 | |





WHAT DID WE LEARN ABOUT SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT?

Did We Aim at the Right Target?

First, we must return to the concept of spiritual development before addressing the findings. For those existing in a world of outcome assessment and continuous quality improvement, measuring spiritual development seemed to be a natural and straight-forward task. We discovered along the way, however, a lengthy deep scholarly debate about the theological correctness of developmental psychology and the definition of spiritual maturity. After embracing developmental theories for a decade, many Christian education scholars have argued that “moral development,” or merely “spiritual development” (non-Christian) presents an incomplete conceptualization of the Christian pilgrimage in covenant with God (cf. Drovdahl, 1992; Dykstra, 1981; Ratcliff, 1995; Wanak, 1997; Yeatts, 1992). Although much of the debate addresses Kohlberg’s model of moral maturity, several questions are relevant signposts for the present study:

- *Do spiritual development models provide stages as they occur or as they should occur? Are they sociologically descriptive or theologically prescriptive?*
- *Where are Christian conversion experiences addressed in development models?*
- *Are the work of the Holy Spirit and grace in the Christian disciple’s journey allowed for?*
- *Is holistic Christian life addressed, that is: Intellect, emotion, social relationships, behaviors, volition, and ethics?*
- *Does spiritual maturation follow predictable stages or rather, plateaus, reversals, leaps, and loops?*
- *Is the increasing release of one’s will to God a more accurate reflection of biblical theology than spiritual “maturity” or “development”?*

Did We Use the Right Measure?

Because there was no significant difference of FMS scores across student classifications, and a negative correlation of FMS with age, our findings might suggest that students majoring in business do not mature spiritually while they are enrolled at Abilene Christian University. Furthermore, the overall score was quite low compared to respondents of similar age in the Benson et al. (1993) study, signifying that ACU business majors are at a low level of maturity spiritually when they enter and graduate from the university. Since ACU students often express a vibrant commitment to Christ, participate in many faith-focused activities, and score high on the UCLA annual survey of faith measures (CSS, 2001), these results are both puzzling and disappointing. But further thought suggests that there are lessons to be learned about both the method of measuring spiritual growth and the meaning of the results.

One possible explanation is that the Faith Maturity Scale is flawed in its construction. Indeed, some research suggests this. We factor analyzed data from the individual scale items in our study and found 11 factors with an eigenvalue of 1.0 or higher.





Together these factors accounted for only 65% of the variance. The factors that were produced didn't correspond to the scale's eight sub-factors used by Benson et al. (1993) to design the scale, nor were the items with large loadings within each factor, grouped in any discernable pattern.

Another explanation, however, is that the sample didn't fit the scale. While also finding problems with the scale's construction, Thayer (1993) and Dudley (1994) found that the FMS did not measure spiritual maturity in Seventh-day Adventist university and younger students because the constellation of doctrinal beliefs held by the population did not match the theology of the FMS. We chose the FMS because it reflected a balanced view of loving God and loving others, but individual scale items may not have communicated these two concepts to the students according to their template of belief. The difference is not due to conservative-liberal but to deeply rooted views in the place of politics and economics in faith.⁴

Significant differences between Catholic and Protestant respondents have been found on some spiritual maturity scales (Bassett et al., 1991). Southern Baptists responded so differently from mainline church members on the original FMS study that the authors excluded Baptists from the analysis (Benson et al., 1991). The students in our sample who claimed mainline denomination membership (e.g., Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Methodist) were too few in number to separate them for analysis and compare them to the more conservative Protestant adherents. A look at the average scores on individual items on the FMS, however, sheds some light on the results, although the interpretation is by nature artistic rather than systematic.

Scale items (see Table 1) that ranked 1st, 5th, and 38th indicate an acceptance of salvation through the grace of Jesus Christ and a desire to live under his lordship. Items ranked 7th, 11th, and 36th suggest a modified Calvinistic high view of God and low view of man to discern truth and understand God's revelation. Several other items (ranked 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th, 8th, 9th, 12th) suggest a Wesleyan, pietistic personal application and interpretation of faith. Social justice items were ranked low (25th, 27th, 28th, 31st, 32nd, 34th, 35th, 37th) except for two ranked 16th and 17th, and these may have been interpreted in a personal way rather than organized social action—voting (conservatively probably) and interacting positively with individuals from other countries. Biblical study was (surprisingly) relatively low (30th).

Even if the FMS is not a valid measure overall for an Evangelical sample such as ours, individual items illuminate the faith beliefs and practices of ACU business students. The score on some items seems to fit the historical, intellectual roots of Churches of Christ, such as salvation through Jesus and minimal involvement in social issues. Some reflect more recent trends within the movement, such as a devotional, pietistic dimension of life. And others—such as little Bible study, salvation without works, and a low view of man to discern truth—run counter to restoration movement history (cf. Childers, Foster & Reese, 2000). That Churches of Christ have historically been relatively silent on sanctification additionally may contribute to the lack of movement in FMS scores over time, although the mismatch of the scale and sample obscures a clear measure of this point.

In sum, we believe that the observable indicators of faith commitment, maturity, and action are under-represented by the FMS. While the scale may fit mainline students, it does not provide a measure of conservative students faith maturity. We cannot tell what





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maturation occurs over time without a measure better fitted to the sample's theology. The students' insights on influences of their faith and scores on the individual items of the FMS, however, give valuable glimpses of the beliefs of ACU business students.

A Revised Method for Assessing Spiritual Formation

Although faith development studies have been completed at several Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) schools, few such studies have not filtered down yet to inform and advance the faith development aspects of business programs within these institutions (a notable exception is Andrews, Bovee, Roller & Walenciak, 2000). Insights gained from this pilot study can help other programs leapfrog portions of the experimentation phase of this assessment. Several specific recommendations may be offered under the rubric of three steps.

Step 1: Deepen your understanding of spiritual formation with biblical theology along with an understanding of your students' faith heritage

You don't have to start from scratch on this—Parks (2000) offers a pertinent discussion, as does Loder (1998). Several models of faith development already exist as well, scattered across the twin axes of theology and the social sciences (e.g., Darling quoted in Ratcliff, 1995; Fleck, Ballard & Reilly, 1975; Fortosis, 2001; Fowler, 1981/1999; LaPierre, 1994; Westerhoff, 1976; Willett, 1997). Nor do you have to try to narrow to a single theoretic model of faith maturation. A better informed sense of faith development in college youth is the goal; an understanding that penetrates surface assumptions and impressions with the rich, thoughtful perspectives of the biblical text and of scholars and thinkers.

Such an understanding is not arrived at easily. It inscrutably intertwines elements a biblical theology of sanctification and pneumatology with human cognitive and social development, the social-psychology of a particular generation and culture, and the intellectual history of a particular Christian tradition. There are even thoughtful considerations that the concept of "growth in faith" is foreign to the biblical text. Huebner (1986, pp. 515, 517) makes this point well:

[Faith is] a clearing in the midst of the busy-ness of life, in the jungle of our doings, concerns and worries. It is not mere emptiness. It is a clearing for God's presence, the Spirit... Faith is the openness to God, which is itself a gift of God. It does not grow. The clearing for God in our understanding and our human world may be only a tiny clearing, no bigger than a mustard seed. "How do we make it grow?" is not the question. It is more appropriate to ask "Where faith—the clearing in which we acknowledge, seek, and then God—is located in that part of us that is socially constructed?" and "How it can be located in other aspects of our being?"

Add to this general understanding, an image of spirituality within the Christian tradition represented by students at the host institution. After years of thought, no single



definition of spirituality can be agreed upon by scholars. Rather, there are unique gems of spirituality, colored and cut by the influences of various Christian traditions and historical and cultural influences (cf. Collins, 2000).

Even if the theology of sanctification is not crystal clear, struggling with the biblical text and the mind and belief students will enrich the process. Regardless of what understanding and models are adopted, grabbing a simplistic model of spiritual maturation is almost guaranteed to produce to a poor understanding and assessment of faith development.

Step 2: Pilot test one or more scales which address your understanding of faith maturity, are robust psychometrically, and communicate the intended meaning to students⁵

Spirituality and religiosity can be defined in many ways. Hill and Hood (1999) review the psychometric quality of over 120 religiosity scales, organizing them into the following categories:

- *Religious beliefs and practices*
- *Religious attitudes*
- *Religious orientation*
- *Religious development*
- *Religious commitment and involvement*
- *Religious experience*
- *Religious/Moral values or personal characteristics*
- *Multidimensional religiousness*
- *Religious coping and problem-solving*
- *Spirituality and mysticism*
- *God concept*
- *Religious fundamentalism*
- *Views of death/afterlife*
- *Divine intervention/Religious attribution*
- *Forgiveness*
- *Institutional religion*
- *Related constructs*

Omitted from this list are numerous scales which address ethical reasoning, biblical knowledge, and values, each of which could be appropriate measures for stated institutional outcomes. And new scales are being developed, such as the promising Christian Spiritual Participation Profile and the Discipleship Index (Thayer, 2001) and Regent University's Christian Continuous Improvement Index (<http://www.assess-yourself.org>). RCOPE, a recent scale of religious coping (Pargament, Koenig & Perez, 2000) may be insightful for some college purposes as well. In sum, there are many scales from which to choose.





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The Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) sponsored a National Assessment Conference at Lee University in 1998 to compare the success of measuring spiritual maturation at CCCCU institutions. Several member schools reported using various scales to assess institution-wide spirituality (cf. Nonneman, 1998). Drs. Jane Thayer at Andrews University (thayerja@andrews.edu) and Will Slater at Bluffton College (slaterw@bluffton.edu) are currently studying comprehensive research of spiritual maturity instruments used in Christian higher education. Their groundwork on scales—some of which have been used for decades in Christian higher education—will allow schools just getting into assessment to leapfrog mistakes and build on existing knowledge of students' faith maturity.

Scale reliability and validity are important considerations to insure that what is being purported to be measured is indeed being measured (Rudner, 1993). It is wise to remember that construct validity—whether the scale measures its intended target—cannot simply be indicated by a numerical value. In each application, construct validity is measured by how well the scale fits the respondents. Psychometrics are easy to gloss over, but the adage of “garbage in, garbage out” is prophetic. Sophisticated statistical analysis of student outcomes cannot remedy the ills of a scale which defines faith maturity differently than do the respondents.

Beyond the psychometric considerations, is the issue of whether scale items communicate to students at one's institution. As has been discussed, the FMS may meet all of the above qualifications but may not communicate the same meaning to conservative Christians. We suggest carefully reading each item in a scale for clarity of meaning for the Christian traditions represented in the sample.

One final note about scales. Most spiritual development models depict stages of development; most scales, on the other hand, depict lesser and greater degrees of continuous variables (Bassett, et al., 1991). Thus, in the past there's been a disconnect between the theory and the scales. Both approaches have arguable value. One's model of faith development may provide clarity in resolving this difference.

Step 3: Design an administration-feedback-action loop which will sustain continuous quality improvement for the business academic unit

Rather than administering a scale once, an institution might consider administering measures on an annual schedule. Since data from surveys such as these energize important institutional changes, it is critical that reported data be as accurate as possible. Thus, administrators may want to consider the survey milieu, including: Avoiding survey fatigue—giving the instrument around the time other scales or surveys are given; insuring that respondents are not rushed; avoiding biasing students in the introduction of the scale, and; avoiding giving the scale at a time of spiritual low or high (e.g., shortly after a spiritual retreat, or at a time in the semester when anxiety is high).

The process also needs to address how many students and at what time of year they complete the survey. We administered ours at the end of the year so students could reflect on the year that had passed. It might have been instructive to have surveys from entering freshmen too. Our intent is to follow up this study with a longitudinal





one that will allow us to compare faith maturity for individual students from one time to another rather than across groups of students.

Sizer, Spee, and Bormans (1992) argue that performance measures in higher education can aid in monitoring, evaluation, dialogue, rationalization, and allocation of resources. Thus, "Who is responsible for doing what with the data?" is an important question to clarify so the assessment loop is closed and the process yields continuous improvement in program quality.

Several other steps may be considered as well, including evaluating the undergraduate business curriculum for intentional spiritual formation. Tenelshof (2000) and Coe (2000) report on the implementation of such an approach at the Talbot School of Theology. There are also implications from this line of research suggesting benefits for faculty seeing themselves in a new light, as spiritual mentors (Schroeder, 1993) or coaches (Leyda & Lawson, 2000).

We end with a confession that our understanding of spiritual maturation may be enhanced significantly with assessment, but that we are dependent upon the Holy Spirit as an enabler of spiritual growth.

Future Steps

Payne and Whitfield (1999) describe a process of measuring student outcomes from business programs at state universities in Georgia, and sharing data among the institutions. One idea is for several schools—which emphasize spiritual development and have similar student bodies in terms of Christian belief—to give a common assessment instrument and share data. Raw data could be reported back to each institution, and aggregate data from the all other participating schools could be reported as well. Such a sharing of data might catalyze an avenue for sharing ideas to enhance spiritual maturity.

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FOOTNOTES

¹Appreciation is expressed to Douglas A. Foster and Jan Meyer of Abilene Christian University, and to Jane Thayer of Andrews University, for their counsel on the methods and interpretation of this study. Responsibility for the study, however, remains with the authors.

²After data was collected and analyzed, a study critical of the FMS's psychometrics was found: Thayer (1993). Also see Donahue's (1993) reply.

³The items for each sub-scale are:

A	2, 11, 25, 26, 34	B	10, 20, 24, 27, 32	C	3, 7, 29, 30, 33
D	9, 14, 15, 19	E	4, 23, 31, 36	F	5, 12, 17, 18, 22, 38
G	1, 28, 35, 37	H	6, 8, 13, 16, 21		

⁴In an in-depth study of 42 individuals, Hart (1992, p. 169) concluded: "What the depth-interview respondents tell us...casts grave doubt on the idea that one can disentangle the social implications of faith from other influences by including as truly rooted in faith only certain political views, only those views expressed by particularly 'religious' people, or only those views expressed by people with particular kinds of theological slants. It is clear from the respondents' statements that many different economic stances can be rooted in Christian ideas with a clear descent from undeniably orthodox themes, that these connections can be made by people with an amazing variety of theological perspectives, and that they are found in the thinking of people who vary in the kind of 'commitment' survey researchers typically define."

⁵Some CCCU institutions administer a scale to all or most matriculating students. If this data is adequate, administering a separate scale may be unnecessary.



Through A Mirror Dimly: Social Constructionism Through the Lens of Faith

by Amy Quillin, Ph.D

ABSTRACT

Postmodernism has often been excoriated in Christian circles for its departure from commonly recognized principles of truth seeking. How can we, as educators, help students grapple wisely with this pervasive worldview in the context of encouraging a biblical and vibrant development of their faith? Are there components within postmodernism that might help inform students' faith development? This article will examine social constructionism, a variant of postmodernism, from the lens of Christian faith and spirituality, and will attempt to answer some of those questions.

INTRODUCTION

Like the yearly running of the bulls in Pamplona, every fall introduces new and returning students to the nations' college campuses. The development of students' faith on these campuses, both Christian and secular, faces many challenges not the least of which are competing worldviews.

The zeitgeist of current culture may best be reflected in postmodern thinking. If that is even moderately accurate, how then does a Christian college student—either in Christian or secular settings—respond? How does their faith and spirituality intersect with a pervasive postmodern worldview? In what way can we as educators encourage them to think reflectively, humbly, and well about this issue? How does postmodernism inform their faith development, and conversely, how does their faith inform their thinking about postmodernism? This paper offers a way to hopefully further enlighten the discussion on those questions.

An old parable tells the story of three blind men describing what they each believe to be three distinctly different things in front of them. One describes a long, thick, somewhat flexible cylinder, and concludes it must be a heavy rope. Another describes a very tall, large, solid immovable column with a rough exterior and deduces it must be a tree. The third describes a long skinny, flexible cord, with an evenly textured top half and a bottom half that is a shock of coarse-like string; he decides it must be a whip. As the familiar story goes, all three men were not, in fact, describing completely separate entities, but rather three distinct entities on one rather large elephant, namely the trunk, a leg, and the tail. The parable sets the stage for the direction of this paper

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which has as its purpose the consideration of postmodernism's social constructionism through the lens of Judeo-Christian faith and spirituality.

Social Constructionism

Definitions for both social constructionism and spirituality are somewhat amorphous and varied. Social constructionism in some ways defy definition; and even the way in which this author chooses to elucidate several characteristics of social constructionism in the hopes of defining it may itself, according to social constructionists, be a social construction. What one chooses to use in the process of definition is filtered through a biased lens and results from historical and cultural influences that help shape his or her worldview. Nevertheless, an attempt at a definition will be made.

Social constructionism purports that our beliefs, ways of thinking, and values are not inherently, innately, or objectively given, but rather are constructed within the framework of social interaction with others (Gergen, 1985; Gergen, 1994; Freedman and Combs, 1994; Gutterman, 1994). "Realities are socially constructed ... and constituted through language (Freedman & Combs, 1996, p. 27, 29). Reality and knowledge defy objectification, but are, rather, "a linguistic creation that arises in the domain of social interchange" (Gutterman, 1994, p. 228).

Furthermore, stories or narratives—both personal and cultural—serve as the means through which realities are organized and propagated (Freedman & Combs, 1996). Individuals live in a larger cultural story that maintains its narrative in various ways—institutions, norms, values—and they live and construct personal narratives in the ways they choose to talk, dress, and interact with others. Stories are never static, but are always subject to change both personally and culturally. Additionally, social constructionism refutes the idea of a universal basic human nature or concept of self. Self, according to Cushman (1995) "embodies what the culture believes is humankind's place in the cosmos. ... There is no universal, transhistorical self, only local selves; there is not a universal theory about the self, only local theories" (p. 23).

The result of the previous "tenets" is that universal truth is a fallacy; only subjective, local understandings of the world reside in the collective agreement of linguistic creations (Gergen, 1985; Freedman & Combs, 1996). Since reality is constructed, individuals subjectively experience their reality, not objectively know it. Finally, social constructionists, purport that viewing social reality as they do presents opportunities to assist in subverting the dominant culture that often perpetuates stories that oppress and marginalize individuals (Freedman & Combs, 1996; Gutterman, 1994). Western culture, for example, propagates dominant stories of racism, sexism, classism, and so forth, all of which either intentionally or unintentionally categorize, and thus marginalize, people who fall into certain categories. Those categories are often viewed as "truths" by the culture and its individual members, and the stories, then, of those "isms" continue to be perpetuated. Social constructionists, however, would contend that those categories are mere constructions, perpetrated by a culture that may be reluctant to change those categories, and so-called "truths," because of the shift in power that such a change might cause.

Social constructionism suggests, therefore, that (a) reality cannot be objectively known; (b) reality is constructed in the course of dialogue with others through the use





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of language, contextually formulated and mutually understood; (c) reality manifests itself through narrative; (d) the culture in which we live both shapes and is shaped by our realities; (e) the concept of self and human nature is not a universal one, but is stipulated by the culture in which the individuals find themselves; and (f) the culture itself often marginalizes its people groups with its creations of categories and so-called truths.

Spirituality and Faith

Spirituality and faith, like social constructionism, also defy definition in many ways, and some descriptive characteristics, rather than definitive definitions, may be more helpful to this discussion. According to Fowler (1981), “wherever we properly speak of faith it involves people’s shaping or testing their lives’ defining directions and relationships with others in accordance with coordinates of value and power recognized as ultimate” (p. 93).

Spirituality’s increased popularity in both entertainment and academic venues has given rise to competing views of this construct from different paradigms. Although definitions and views vary widely, certain components of spirituality find agreement among those attempting to describe it. These include: meaning and purpose, transcendence, and relationship to others, self, and that which is perceived as Ultimate (Elkins et al., 1988; Ingersoll, 1994; Westgate, 1996). Benner (1989), however, offers a description specifically of a more Judeo-Christian spirituality:

Spirituality is the human response to God’s gracious call to relationship with himself. ... it has its origin, meaning and ultimate fulfillment in God’s grace. It is grounded in our having been created in God’s image, designed for deep and intimate union with him. ... [spirituality is] our response to a deep and mysterious human yearning for self-transcendence and surrender, a yearning to find our place. (p. 20-21)

This construct of relationship holds chief importance in this author’s understanding of spirituality, and imbues its descriptions with more than just sterile abstractions. Among other descriptions, the Bible portrays God as a passionate bridegroom in pursuit of his bride (Isaiah 62:5; Jeremiah 3:14), as a nurturing mother sacrificially protecting and playfully comforting her young (Isaiah 66:13; Matthew 23:37), as a friend sharing the intimacies of close companionship (Exodus 33:11; John 15:14, 15), and as a father desiring to give his children the very best that he has (Psalms 103:13; Matthew 7:9-12). As Benner noted, God initiates relationship with his/her creation, and spirituality and faith development can only be understood in the context of this relational desire, and the privilege and responsibility we have to respond to and reflect it. Without relationship spirituality erodes into mere abstract rhetoric and/or pharisaical legalism.

The following assumptions can guide the consideration of postmodernism’s social constructionism from the lens of Christian spirituality and faith development:

1. There exists an infinite, transcendent Being, namely God, who created and sustains the world and its inhabitants, and has initiated relationship with those



inhabitants. The entire scope of the reality of God's existence stands beyond our ability to fully comprehend it, is not dependent upon our will to construct it, continues to exist in spite of our attempts to ignore or mitigate it, and remains constrained by the limitations of language to fully describe it. God's absoluteness is, admittedly, predicated on a degree of faith since the "fact" of this absoluteness defies human attempts to verify its certitude.

2. Truth exists. This statement is made with tentative caution, and with the added caveat that what we know of truth we know in part—gradations, varieties, and flavors—since what constitutes the whole of truth cannot yet be known. Truth is infinite and eternal; humans are finite and temporal. We only know, in part, the whole of truth.

With God as its genesis, and Christ as its ultimate fulfillment, truth expresses itself in myriad ways through the creation as a reflection of God's character and purpose on earth. Because truth is not confined to the finite, temporal, here-and-now, but is rather infinite and eternal, it exists in the paradoxical tension of fluid definition contextually framed, and the transcendent experience that both defies and incorporates culture, language, and history. Taylor (1992) cautioned against confusing truth with certainty. Certainty, intended to insulate individuals against the encroaching reaches of doubt and the interminable struggle for meaning, is a fallacy. Truth, on the other hand, accepted by faith, embraces doubt, pursues and provides the platform through which the struggle for meaning plays itself out, and invites individuals to live boldly and with passion in an uncertain world. Far from the sterility of abstract dialogue, truth manifests itself in the lived reality and storied lives of individuals' interactions with others, giving voice to the ultimate reality of Jesus as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 3:16, RSV).

3. People bear the image of God. They do so in myriad ways, but specific to this discussion, they reflect the person of God in that they are (a) relational, designed for relationship with God and others; (b) volitional, they possess the will to choose; and (c) purposeful, they move toward some desired ends based on their relationships and their choices (Crabb, 1987). Inherent in every individual, these characteristics will manifest themselves in as many different kinds of ways as there are individuals. God's image is certainly not confined to these characteristics, but individuals have been endowed with these traits as lived-out expressions of God's character.

4. God has revealed him/herself and engages in relationship with us primarily through the narrative process. Stories, parables, and metaphor constitute much of scripture and provide not so much a rigid set of instructions, as an invitation to participate in an on-going narrative that is a relationship with God and his/her creation. Scripture's repeating theme is, indeed, a love story with God as the heartsick, and often jilted, lover in passionate pursuit of those he/she loves.

Spirituality then, as espoused by this author, purports a passionately relational God who has revealed him/herself in the context of narrative, who transcends our ability to fully comprehend or describe him/her, who holds forth a reality of truthfulness in the context of relationship that both incorporates and surpasses the confines of social





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and historical location, and who has predisposed creation to bear his/her image. With this lens in place, spirituality will now critique—and be critiqued by—the tenets of postmodernism's social constructionism.

How They Differ

If all social reality is only that which we construct, it precludes the existence of God or any transcendent being that claims to exist beyond the human realm. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, God's existence predates human existence, which negates the idea of God as a social construction. How can one construct something that already exists? Further, if the idea of God is only a social construction, then that idea has lost its transcendence, since God is then constrained and confined within the language and shared meanings of individuals. If we reduce God to only that which we socially construct him/her to be, he/she fails to possess any qualities or magnitude of qualities beyond what we, in our finite minds, can comprehend and express. God then becomes a manageable, even malleable, entity, and a mere expression of our own construction. Some may argue, however, that individuals may construct their God to be transcendent and eternal; but the finite and temporal individual, then, dictates transcendence and eternity toward a supposedly infinite and eternal being. How can the finite create infinity? How can the temporal construct eternity?

Furthermore, if truth and reality are merely constructed, and nothing transcends that construction, we have no way in which to evaluate ourselves, our communities, or our world apart from what serves us most usefully. Gergen (1994) stated a constructionism makes no denial concerning ... poverty, death, or the world out there, more generally. Neither does it make any affirmation. ... constructionism is ontologically mute. Whatever is, simply is (p. 72). With no higher authority or entity to which we appeal, apart from ourselves or even our historical context, we are relegated to those constructions that are held by the majority of people who find them most useful.

Taken to its natural conclusion, the idea of social constructionism silences any appeal to that which transcends our construction; and the idea of any kind of ethical or moral authority on which to measure behavior is rendered moot, because the "objective" basis on which to measure it gives way to "whatever is, simply is." What remains then, is merely the ability to describe what *is*—or at least to describe what is socially constructed as *is*—not what *ought* to be. Social constructionists then abandon any right or ability to assert the prescriptive *ought* and forfeit any claim of moral agency in their world (Walters, 1999; italics his).

Guba and Lincoln (1994) purported "no construction is or can be incontrovertibly right; advocates of any particular construction must rely on *persuasiveness* and *utility* rather than *proof* in arguing their position" (p. 108, italics theirs). That statement acknowledges the universality of human frailty and finiteness; humans are not in a position to ever assert being beyond error. Additionally, it honors the differences of individual experience in regard to reality—which is different than saying that reality itself changes for every individual. To say, though, that no reality exists other than that which can be socially constructed with persuasiveness and utility is to travel a dangerous path.





Jewish concentration camps, the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Rwanda, the early Crusades, slavery, racism, sexism, and all kinds of “isms” all were/are initiated and sustained by the constructions of reality perpetrated by those who were most persuasive about their utility. Those constructions of reality served, and continue to serve, a usefulness to those who most convincingly promoted that reality. If the only reaction offered to those incidents, however, is “whatever is, simply is,” and if no basis for ethical or moral reasoning exists, then we are precluded from asserting with any authority that Hitler was wrong, ethnic cleansing is heinous, and slavery despicably violates the human spirit. Taylor (1996) made this argument

We are all relativists to a degree, and should be. But we should also reject the kind of dogmatic relativism that suggests there is no such thing as truth and falsehood or good and evil in themselves, and vilifies anyone who suggests otherwise. This kind of relativism ... ultimately leaves us defenseless and powerless. No practicing moral relativist can lift a hand, or even a voice, against violence, aggression, racism, sexism, or any other evil in the world. (p. 144)

A social constructionist who concedes no higher authority than what is culturally constructed as most useful is limited to merely *describing* events of genocide, slavery or violence, and is rendered mute in *prescribing* what might possibly ought to have occurred in those situations.

Finally, social constructionism asserts that individuals have no universal, inherent nature (Cushman, 1995; Gergen, 1994; Hoskins and Leseho, 1996), that the whole of who we are is constructed from interactions with others within certain cultural settings. Certainly social interaction, cultural contexts and historical settings influence the development of who we are as individuals and societies. However, to make the claim that the whole of who we are is the sum of our social interactions and cultural contexts, presumes that individuals are in fact social or relational in nature. If social interaction presumes to have the influence constructionism claims it has, individuals require an inherent predisposition to those social influences. It necessitates that people are inherently socially or relationally oriented. Further, the impact of those influences, if individuals are going to be shaped by them, also presumes that those individuals have choice and are predisposed to making choices. Finally, social constructionism’s assertion of the primacy of social interaction and the individual’s ability to be shaped by them, in making decisions accordingly, further presupposes that individuals make those choices purposefully. For social constructionism to claim that the self is void of a universal, inherent nature and is comprised only of the sum of what is experienced through social interaction in a cultural context appears contradictory since that claim necessitates within the individual an inherent social, volitional, and purposeful orientation.

How They Inform Each Other

Despite the differences between spirituality and social constructionism, similarities do exist. Postmodernism’s social constructionism can, indeed, critique and inform our thinking of spirituality and faith development so that we become better readers of Scripture and livelier participants in the larger story God is crafting in and around us.

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Social constructionism honors the primacy of social relatedness and the impact that social connections have on individuals and communities. That we are relational beings designed for connection, predisposed to engage in the intricacies, complexities, sorrows, and joys of relationship is a tenet that both spirituality and social constructionism seem to share. The concept of relationship and social connection is critical to our being human, and both social constructionism and spirituality place a high premium on it.

Social constructionism also reminds us of the importance of culture, context, the use of language, and historical framework in the interactions we have with others, and it is a reminder that those of us who espouse a Christian spirituality need to hear often. God's desire for relationship has been the consistent—and constant—message expressed through the vagaries of culture, people groups, and language, from the Old Testament to the ecumenical church today.

Admittedly, the ecumenical church, serving as God's representatives on earth, has often failed miserably in its attempt to communicate this message of relationship. The Inquisitions, the Crusades, slavery, misogyny, violence against groups of people who fail to conform to certain behavioral prescriptions, all serve as indictments against a church that has missed the mark in honoring both God's message and the cultural and historical richness offered by different people groups. Postmodernism gives voice to that richness and serves as a signpost to that which the church, in its hubris, has often neglected. Hudson (1998) reminds us:

Postmodern thinking critiques the modernist tendency of limiting the voice of God to one voice and instead calls us to listen to the ensemble of many voices. ... [it] emphasizes difference by recognizing that many perspectives give us a better view of God. (p. 22)

Additionally, the need for humility is also evident in our quest for truth. As we continue to encourage faith's development in ourselves and in students, we need to remind ourselves to keep our minds open, our curiosity piqued, and our hearts pliable to new discoveries and nuances of reality. Postmodern thinking challenge us in our faith development to hold the idea of truth cautiously and inquisitively. As much as God has revealed him/herself through scripture, through history, and through the lives of others, he/she remains hidden still, infinite and beyond our ability to fully comprehend. The whole of truth is not and cannot yet be fully known, as Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, wrote "... for now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall fully understand ..." (I Corinthians 13:12, 13, RSV). That does not, however, negate truth's existence nor our desire for it. Rather, it fosters the love of questions, the embracing of paradox, the appreciation of life's fluidity and circularity, the acceptance of mystery, and a reflective humility. Hudson (1998) stated "True sight does not begin in sight. ... the sighting of truth begins with the acknowledgment that I am blind" (p. 20).

Finally, social constructionism's emphasis on the importance of narrative aligns squarely with spirituality's assertion that story is one of the more common and compelling ways that God reveals him/herself. A social constructionist and postmodernist reading of scripture can allow the narrative of Scripture to "breathe" to not be static,





but instead to be alive. It invites us to bring our own stories to the text—our culture, our history, our shared understanding of language—and engage with the larger story of Scripture. We are encouraged to passionately pursue the person and truth of God in both Scripture and the storied lives of others.

Because Scripture transcends culture, and the truth emanating from it defies the constraints of time, our own stories can be seen transposed against the pages of the ancient narratives. The story of Job, for instance, becomes our story of demanding from God answers to the heart-wrenching events of life and the need for persistence and faith when answers are not forthcoming. The story of the woman caught in the act of adultery and forgiven by Christ resurrects itself in our lives as we recognize the ways in which we have been outcasts, deserving (figuratively) imminent stoning, and have then been granted a reprieve—the slate wiped clean—and our accusers, “not without sin,” made mute and sent away.

The most compelling narrative, of course, is the incarnation. If viewing reality as socially constructed presents opportunities to empathize with and honor the voices of the disenfranchised and those marginalized by the dominant culture’s metanarrative, Christ’s incarnation, the gospel itself, represents the zenith of that opportunity. The gospel is, paradoxically, its own metanarrative, “the greatest story ever told,” and yet Crouch (cited in *Christianity Today*, 2000) stated:

the problem with most such stories [metanarratives] is that they tell the truth in a way that benefits someone [and oppresses others]. But the Cross is a story in which the other is met by the non-other; God becomes the other and endures the full experience of marginalization. ... to be excluded ... to be crucified on a garbage heap—that is what the central figure of the story, indeed, the Author, the Person with all the power in the story, embraced. (80)

What was endured in the incarnation, and particularly at the crucifixion, was the full expression of oppression and marginalization to an extent never before, or since, realized. Christ’s response to that marginalization (perpetrated, lest we forget, by the fundamental religious leaders of the day) scripted a new story of response, “Father, forgive them,” and honored those who feel most poignantly the brunt of oppression perpetrated by the powerful. Scripture supports that the kingdom of God is not orchestrated by those who wield the most power, but rather by those who in some ways appear the least useful to society. It invites the voices of those outcasts to speak and live a new story, a story that has its beginning and ultimate fulfillment in the person and work of Christ, and gives meaning to the creative expressions of our individual and corporate stories.

CONCLUSION

How might the earlier parable of the three blind men now be understood? Social constructionism may contend that each man is constructing his own reality of what is before him. A Christian view of spirituality and faith, however, would counter that although each man encounters what appears to be a completely separate reality, they all experience a different part of what is a greater reality.

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Though differences exist between the two, postmodernism's social constructionism can inform our way of thinking about spirituality and Christian faith development by emphasizing the importance of the multiplicity of voices in dialogue, the significance of the cultural and historical context in which conversations take place, and the way they influence the individual and communal meanings of those dialogues. It invites us to glimpse the magnitude and complexity of language, relationship and story; it also comforts and awes us in reminding us that God "cannot be encircled, surrounded, or encompassed with language" (Hudson, 1998, p. 17). Social constructionism serves to remind us that though truth exists, it remains tenuous, and in the living of our stories we must be aware of our own "blindness" as well as attentive to the nuances of reality brought to life by the narrative of others and our participation in the transcendent story of God. Postmodernism's social constructionism invites our faith, and that of our students, to be strengthened on the anvil of a competing worldview, and humbled by the many ways in which God whets our appetite for the truth that will one day be revealed in its entirety, "face-to-face," and understood fully.

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The Roles of Women on Campus: Contributing to the Development of Student Values

by Alyssa M. Tongg Weiler

INTRODUCTION

Can the student gender values at otherwise similar colleges, be significantly influenced by the mere presence of a curricular program? This research explores the relationship between institutional gender climate and student gender values by determining 1) how egalitarian students are; 2) the degree to which students think about the values of their colleges affect their own value development; and 3) what students think about the values of their colleges at five Christian colleges and universities. An egalitarian is someone with a belief in human equality, especially with respect to social, political and economic rights and privileges and would be committed to the advocacy of the removal of inequalities among people. This research will look at three schools that have a Women's Studies curriculum in place, and two colleges without. Based on student and administrator responses at the participating schools, a list of institutional factors that promote healthy egalitarian value development in students is proposed. This article will begin with a brief overview of the literature, then a description of the participating colleges. Next the survey results and other connections will be explored. This article will conclude with a list of institutional factors that help to foster and cultivate healthy egalitarian views in students.

Literature Review

Since the first college opened its doors in the United States in 1636 (when chemistry was not yet considered a respectable course of study), curriculum has been used as a tool to change our society by bringing intellectual legitimacy to scientific, racial, cultural and gender issues that had not existed before. In *The Opening of the American Mind*, Lawrence Levine (1996) provides a historical look and suggests some implications of the changes in American college curriculum. More specifically, he looks at how gradual changes from a classical curriculum for early America to a democratic curriculum for today has effected the society that we live in as well as how knowledge has changed throughout time. Levine's idea that adding something to the curriculum of a college brings cultural legitimacy to that subject is the central idea that emerges throughout the book.

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But what happens when a college does not add something to its curriculum? What happens if social values are changing, such as attitudes towards women and their roles, but curricula remain the same? Does the lack of curriculum expansion at some colleges, despite what students are exposed to off-campus, keep some legitimacy of women's social progress from being realized?

Vanessa D. Arnold (1974), author of *A Scale for the Measurement of Attitudes Toward the Social, Educational, and Economic Roles of Women*, conducted a survey of business teachers, their female students and the students' parents to find out how female business students' aspirations were affected by the values of their teachers and parents. She found that when teacher and parent values differed about the "rightful place" in society for the female students, the female students' score was found to be between the two values of the teacher and parents' score. This research shows that teacher values do have an effect on student values. If female students change their values to mirror more closely the values of their teachers, what responsibility do institutions of higher education have in promoting values that are healthy for its students? Are colleges obligated to keep their curricula current with social and political developments for the sake of students?

One example of an addition to the curriculum began when the first Women's Studies academic programs were created in 1969. This new scholarship about women was the first to use gender as a category of analysis. Several social and cultural conditions made this expansion of knowledge possible. Catherine Stimpson (1984) identifies several of these factors in her address "Where Does Integration Fit: The Development of Women's Studies" delivered at the Wheaton College Conference *Toward a Balanced Curriculum*,

- the entrance of women of all classes and races into the public labor force,
- the democratization of higher education,
- the partial decline in religious definitions of masculinity and femininity and a far wider cultural acceptance of supplementary ideologies that value equality and self realization, and
- an intellectual climate that tends to value skepticism, empiricism and secularism over tradition (14).

According to Stimpson (1984), during this time "knowledge changed from a series of absolute forms to a series of cultural constructs" (14). Women's Studies curriculum was based on an assumption that was grounded in the new way that knowledge was understood, namely that the gender patterns of masculinity and femininity are human and social constructs.

In another article by Catharine Stimpson (1993), "Women's Studies: The Idea and the Ideas" she defines Women's Studies as a "transdisciplinary intellectual and educational movement that is irrevocably altering what we know and think about women and gender" (545). Stimpson identifies three themes that have become dominant in Women's Studies programs. Women's Studies has sought:

- A particular ethic that values the freedom and the moral equality of all those who seek education and of those who offer it. Women's Studies has promised





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that such an ethic will enhance education, not smash it to pieces.

- To alter institutions so that they embody such an ethic. We have asked them to act affirmatively. One, though only one, positive act would be curricular; to incorporate, to "mainstream" new scholarship about women in ordinary syllabi.
- To change consciousness – that of individuals and of institutions. This has meant more than occasionally referring to a specific woman...it has meant a constant, serious, deepening awareness of sets of problems and ideas about women. (546)

Stimpson (1993) also lists six ideas from Women's Studies that have entered our cultural thinking. She says, "Once blasphemies, they are now banalities" (546).

- The need to distinguish sex, a biological condition, from gender, a social construction;
- The pernicious existence of gender stratification and discrimination;
- The fact that sexual stratification and discrimination have helped to create distorted representations of men, women and gender;
- The importance of the relationship between public and domestic worlds, productive and reproductive spheres, reason and feeling;
- The complexity of the causes, nature and extent of sexual difference; and
- The profound differences among women themselves (546).

Stimpson provides examples and evidences for Levine's claim that simply being included in the curriculum brings about changes in attitudes of society.

William G. Tierney (1990) explores two additional ideas in "*Cultural Politics and the Curriculum in Post-secondary Education*." The first is the relationship between the culture of a college and its curriculum. The second is how curriculum might be used as an empowering tool. The overarching premise of Tierney's view of the organization is that the "organizations' culture focuses the participants' understanding of their relationship to society through an organizational web of patterns and meanings that constantly undergo contestation and negotiation" (43). Once educators understand the powerful role of the individual institutions of higher education in shaping a student's understanding of the world and her or his place in it, Tierney says that educators "first need to accept that all organizations exist in a cultural network where ideologies operate; they then will struggle to construct their organizations based on a concern for social justice and empowerment" (50).

One way institutions of higher education can construct their internal organization to encourage student empowerment and concern for social justice is to integrate gender issues into the overall curriculum. In *Changing Our minds: Feminist Transformations of Knowledge*, the authors (Susan Hardy Aiken, Karen Anderson, Myra Dinnerstein, Judy Nolte Lensink, and Patricia MacCorquodale 1988) provide a strong argument on the broad enriching effects of Women's Studies programs on campuses and give an outline for successful curriculum integration. Their message is that it is "necessary to strike a balance between Women's Studies programs, which are essential for both intensive and extensive focus on women, and collective efforts to transform the traditional curriculum and to contest the masculinist premises on which it is based. Without that trans-



formation, Women's Studies programs risk continued ghettoization" (160). The authors found that it is essential to have a strong Women's Studies program in place before attempting curriculum integration. The presence of such a program also emphasizes that curriculum integration is not a replacement for Women's Studies, but an extension.

If indeed it is true that curriculum inclusion legitimizes cultural groups socially, that curriculum can be used as an empowering agent, that having a strong Women's Studies program in place increases the success of curriculum integration, and that students do learn their place in the work by their interaction with their institutional cultures, *how would the mere presence of a Women's Studies program affect the student perception of the institution's goals and values? Would these students who attend institutions that provide Women's Studies curriculum also begin to value this and therefore move to accept more egalitarian views about women's roles in education, the economy and society?* The purpose of this research is to see if student attitudes toward women at institutions that have a Women's Studies academic program in place, differ from those at institutions that do not. The relationship between student value development and perceived institutional values and climate is also explored.

WHY LOOK AT CHRISTIAN COLLEGES?

Historically Christian colleges have prided themselves on being cultivators of graduates with moral character. Most Christian colleges identify "desirable" values, outlooks and future vocations for their students, either in their mission statements or their educational outcomes. Christian colleges have also been criticized for being breeding grounds of sexist views about women's roles in the family, workplace, community and church.

Marti Watson Garlett PhD (1997) uses a series of in-depth interviews with women faculty at a variety of Christian Colleges in "Female Faculty on the Fringe: Theologizing Sexism in the Evangelical Academy" to explore some of the experiences of female faculty members as they encounter sexism in various forms. The interview data reveals that there is a deeply ingrained sexism against women in the Christian educational field that is disguised by religious practice, belief, tradition, and taboos.

Another purpose of this research is to discover how these underlying currents of sexism affect the value development of students. Do students pick up on the contradiction of the glass ceiling reality and the pro-women rhetoric of their colleges? If they do, do students also begin to mirror the values of their colleges (do these schools even have pro-women rhetoric)? On the other hand, how do student values look at Christian colleges that seem to be committed to the empowerment of women? This article will conclude with a list of suggestions that Christian colleges can apply to their own communities to help them as they make strides to becoming positive environments for women.

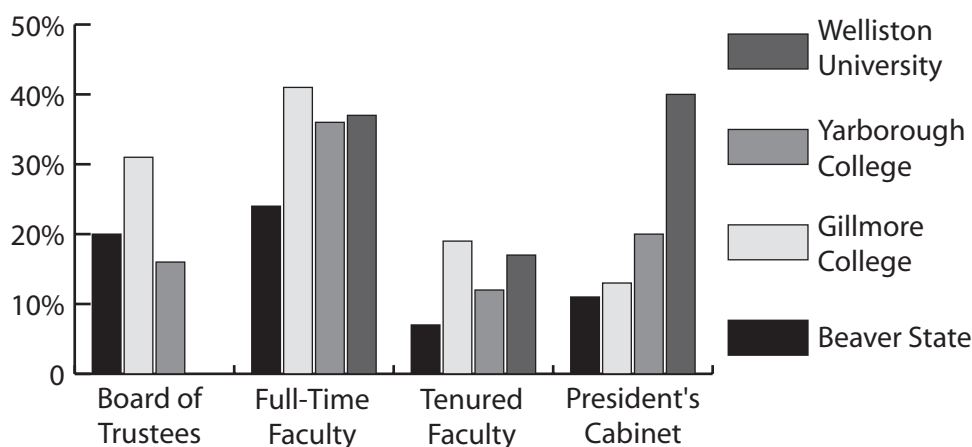


The Investigation

389 students at five different Christian colleges throughout the country were surveyed. All of the schools included in the survey are member institutions of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU), and have had their names changed in order to provide anonymity. Each has an undergraduate enrollment between 1,000 and 2,700 and also has a first-year retention rate ranging between 79% and 85%.

During the fall of 1999, a survey was distributed to juniors and seniors in general education courses. The survey was designed to measure: 1) how egalitarian students were; 2) the degree to which students thought the values of their colleges affected their own value development; and 3) what students thought about the values of their colleges. Administrators at each of the colleges were also asked questions about the climate on their respective campuses.

% of Female Representation



All participating schools had varying levels of campus gender issues outreach. On one side of the spectrum this was accomplished by holding a session during Fall Orientation dedicated to gender related issues, where the faculty who teach these sections hold separate sessions for men and women and discuss issues that are related to gender identity and role responsibilities from a Christian perspective and Women's Ministry Retreats. Other participating schools brought in special speakers and programming to engage the campus community in discussing issues relating to gender. And on the other side of the spectrum, the three schools that had special committees in place to look at the integration of women's issues into the curriculum, pay equity and Title IX compliance were also the same schools that had a women's studies curriculum program in place. Two of these three schools had women's studies academic programs newer than five years old, and one school was into its 18th year of a Women's Studies minor and also was the only school to have a female president.



The Women's Studies Programs and the Climates on Their Campuses

Beaver State

One of the two schools without a women's studies curriculum: Beaver State has a high rate of females participating in some form of student leadership. In the past thirteen years students have elected a female as student body president five times (38%). In the past, the majority of their Orientation leaders, yearbook and newspaper editors, club officers, Trustee Scholars and drum majors were female. Because of this involvement of women in student leader positions, Beaver State faces another sort of problem, according to the Vice President of Student Development: *"The truth of the matter is that we have been trying to be very intentional in developing male leadership on campus, because we saw a lack of initiative demonstrated."* She believes that the lack of women in senior management positions is more reflective of the fact that higher numbers of women have only recently joined the Beaver State faculty and staff ranks. She added in closing that historically, *"Beaver State was one of the early colleges in this country to admit women to full-time academic status in their undergraduate programs."*

Fenster Hills College

Fenster Hills College is the second of the five participating institutions without a women's studies curriculum. This is also the only institution that did not participate by providing administrator responses about the climate at Fenster Hills College.

Gillmore College

In 1982 a Women's studies minor was created, the curriculum seeks to increase student awareness about gender and women's issues. The minor requires 18 credits from a variety of disciplines ranging from religion, literature, and peace studies to history, sociology and social work.

I interviewed the Director of the Women Studies Program at Gillmore College and member of the Women's Studies Advisory Board, and asked her about the ways in which Gillmore College sends empowering messages about and to women.

I think we have quite a few women faculty who are active, articulate, and creative members of our faculty. We have women representatives in every discipline and in the administration, although many of these women are not necessarily tenured or serve in lower administrative ranks. Promotion is still a persistent issue here, even though our salaries are handled quite equitably. Having a woman as president is an empowering message in many ways, I believe.

She describes the gender issues climate on the Gillmore College campus as active with a commitment to on-going awareness and discussions.

That said, I do think that gender issues are seen as important, complex, and worthy of consideration on all levels, from the classroom to the student paper to the





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administration. That is unique. I credit strong role models in the earlier generation of female faculty who were willing to work for a Women's Studies minor and speak out about women's issues on campus. The results of these discussions do not always fit with the feminist agenda, but the presence of these discussions on campus is important.

Yarborough College

Yarborough College established a Women's Studies program in the 1995/96 academic year. The first Women's Studies course was taught in the 1996/97 academic year. The program was established by adding one new course-Introduction to Women's Studies. New courses qualify for the program if it reflects a significant integration of gender issues within the course (approximately 1/3 of the work devoted to the issue).

When asked if there were other ways that Yarborough College sends empowering messages about and to women, the Associate VP for Academic Affairs, Curriculum and Assessment responded,

The culture among the students...is one that women are not as capable as men. It has been a number of years since a woman was student body president; when women do run they are often viewed as less capable. There is discussion of the "ring by spring" phenomenon with some persistence and educationally competent women often comment they can be made to feel uncomfortable with goals of graduate school. Women in the women's studies course often indicate they receive some degree of questioning/ridicule when they enroll and there is consensus that 'feminism' is a bad word.

I also asked her to describe the gender issues climate on the Yarborough College campus.

Because there is a majority of women on campus, there isn't any sense that this is a bad place for women- a place where women would feel uncomfortable. But there is a critical mass of women,... who see little need to be "empowered." Many seem to see marriage and children as their career/life course more than career or employment...On the other hand, there is a strong and growing group of women who are very focused on academic achievement, graduate school, and making significant contributions to the community. Of particular interest among this group are identifying role models and desiring to "figure out" the balancing act of marriage, family and work.

Welliston University

Welliston University instituted a Women's Studies minor in the 1997-1998 academic year. The minor consists of an introduction course, interdisciplinary elective courses, and a capstone course. The courses have been well enrolled averaging 20-25 students. The Women's Studies faculty has started to work on an outreach program that would integrate gender and women's issues into the culture climate of the rest of the campus population.

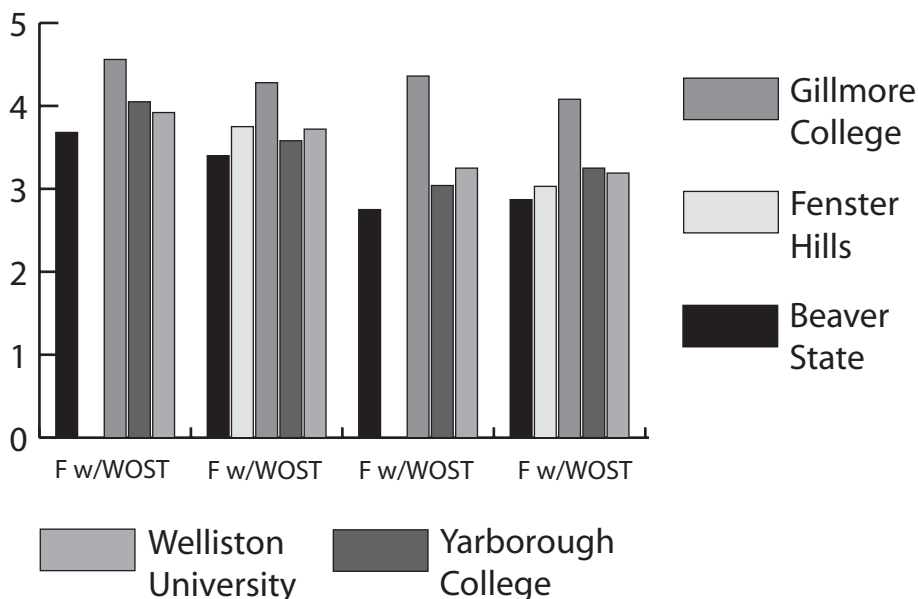
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I interviewed the Provost and asked her how the campus sends empowering messages to and about women.

There are visible female leaders in the administration and among the student body officers. Not only do we have female faculty in many of our 17 other departments; there are female faculty in biology, chemistry, physics, computer science, mathematics and sports medicine—all of these are areas often dominated by male faculty. We also monitor the male/female ratio in public events.

Egalitarian Score by Sex and Women's Studies Education



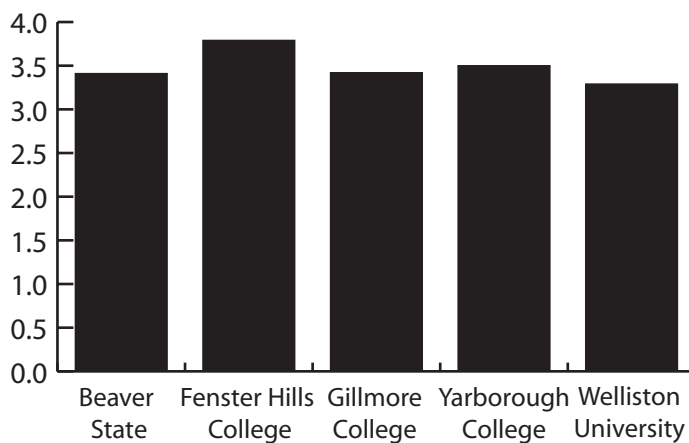
***WOST= Women's Studies**

****** It is important to note here that although Beaver State does not offer any women's studies curriculum, both male and female students alike, who filled out the student gender values questionnaire, had thought that they had taken a women's and/or gender studies class. This leads one to conclude that 1) these students took such a class at another institution or that 2) these students were confused by what exactly a "women's studies" class was. I suspect that the latter of these two options is more correct than the former. For example, when I was doing preliminary research about the presence of a women's studies curriculum at a number of CCCU schools, "women's studies" was understood by certain administrative contacts as anything from a Bible study group for female students, to the actual curricula program. This lack of understanding also says something about the climate of these particular campuses.

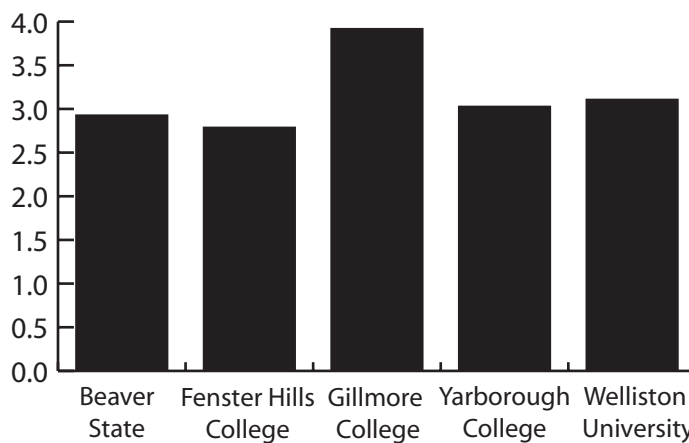


Faith Development on the Christian College Campus

The Values of my College Influence Me as I discover my Own Values



Student Perception of College Priority on Gender/Women's Issues



Interesting Connections

Levine's idea that adding something (in this case a Women's Studies minor) to a college curriculum adds cultural legitimacy to the subject is reflected in the different egalitarian value scores of the different colleges in this study. The Gillmore College students had the highest egalitarian value score compared to the other institutions' students.



Even Gillmore College students who hadn't taken a Women's Studies course ranked higher than the average student at the other four colleges (egalitarian value score of Gillmore students who hadn't taken a Women's studies course: females – males - 4.08). In fact in all of the campuses, males who hadn't taken a Women's Studies course were the lowest ranking group on egalitarian values score compared to females who hadn't taken a Women's studies course and both males and females who had. (The exception here is the egalitarian scores at Beaver State, which I suspect is due to a misunderstanding). It is interesting to note that even the males in this lowest ranking group at Gillmore had a higher egalitarian value score than any of the other colleges in the study.

Perhaps 18 years of a Women's Studies curriculum had affected the culture of Gillmore College to cultivate students who identify more with egalitarian values, than students at other Christian colleges. The Director of Gillmore College's Women Studies Program believes that 18 years of Women's Studies curriculum has made: 1) strong gender and racial equality program integration; 2) a campus community commitment to an on going gender values dialogue; and 3) having a female president possible. Her thoughts coincide with what authors Susan Hardy Aiken et al. (1988) found about the essentialness of having a strong Women's Studies program in place before attempting curriculum integration. The presence of such a program they found, also emphasizes that curriculum integration is not a replacement for Women's Studies, but an extension.

It should be no surprise then, that Yarborough College's and Welliston University's (both of which have new Women's Studies programs) egalitarian values score rank was in-between that of Gillmore College and the other two colleges that do not have a Women's Studies curriculum. One would imagine that as the Women's Studies programs begin to develop further on these two campuses, that the cultures of these colleges would change to incorporate more of an emphasis on women's and gender issues. This trend is already evident at Welliston University where the faculty of the Women's Studies department have begun a curriculum and campus-cultural integration program.

Institutional Climate and Student Value Development

It is clear that Gillmore College students identify with more egalitarian values than the students at the other four colleges; when the perceived values of the colleges are examined, the reasons for this noticeable difference in student values becomes clear. Gillmore College scored the highest on the statement: "My college places a priority on gender/women's issues" (Question 16). Students gave Gillmore College a 3.92 score. Just like one would expect in light of the egalitarian score data, Yarborough College (3.03) and Welliston University (3.11) ranked below Gillmore College but higher than Beaver State (2.93) and Fenster Hills College (2.79) on this statement about perceived institutional support for gender and women's issues.

It is interesting to look at how students answered the statement: "The declared values of my college influence me as I discover my own values" (Question 1), in light of the data on what students think the gender/women's issue values of their colleges are. Fenster Hills College, despite scoring the lowest on perceived commitment to gender and women's issues, scored the highest on influence on developing student values. Fenster Hills College received a score of 3.79 from its students. Yarborough College (3.50),





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Gillmore College (3.42) and Beaver State (3.41) all had similar scores, while Welliston University (3.29) received the lowest score from its students on its perceived influence in helping students develop their own values.

All of these colleges' scores (despite their particular ranking in this category) show that a student's developing values are influenced by their college cultures, what ever they may be. Therefore, it is imperative for colleges to understand this responsibility to provide the best influence possible. In regards to increasing a college's support for gender and women's issue awareness, education and integration – and therefore increasing egalitarian values of all students, we have seen a strong example in Gillmore College.

Conclusion

When all of this information is considered, there are a number of factors that emerge that help colleges to foster egalitarian values in their students.

The perceived values of the Christian colleges in this study (as they pertain to an institutional commitment to gender and women's issues at least) do affect student value development. Students at colleges that place a priority on gender and women's issues identified more with egalitarian values, than did students at other schools.

There are a number of ways that a college can show its commitment to gender and women's issues and therefore egalitarian value development in students.

- **Implement a Women's Studies curriculum.** Studies have shown, that this is essential in developing a strong foundation that should be used for curriculum integration later.
- **Have an equitable number of women in high-ranking positions on campus.** For example, Gillmore College not only has a female president, but also the highest percentage of fulltime female professors, and females on the Board of Trustees.
- **Gender and Women's issues education efforts to the rest of the campus community.** We see an example of this with the Women's Studies faculty at Welliston University and their educational outreach program.
- **A Women's/gender studies curriculum requirement.** We saw that all students, male and female alike who had taken a women's studies course had significantly higher gender egalitarian values than students who had not yet taken a course in this subject.
- **An awareness and commitment to be intentional about the leadership roles women are encouraged to play on campus.** We saw that Welliston University was very intentional about sending the empowering messages about women in leadership in the way that they monitored their convocations, and religious ceremonies.

It is important to remember that institutional climate does not change over night. It took 18 years for Gillmore College to cultivate a culture that is as supportive to and encouraging to egalitarian value development in its students. The students at Gillmore College acknowledge that the values of their college influence their own value develop-

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ment. Coupled with the fact they also believe that Gillmore College places a priority on gender and women's issues, it is no surprise that these same students identified with egalitarian values more so than any of the students at the other colleges in the study. One would imagine that Yarborough College's and Welliston University's students will identify more with egalitarian values over time, as the Women's Studies departments on their campuses develop and continue to take steps to engage the campus in a conversation about these issues.

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V. James Mannoia; *Christian Liberal Arts: An Education That Goes Beyond* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, Inc, 2000).

Reviewed by David M. Johnstone

Jim Mannoia, the current president of Greenville College, has chosen to wade into the discussion on the nature of a liberal arts education. These types of reflections have spanned many centuries, but have become increasingly focused in the last half-century.¹ Part of the current discussion has been a reaction to the rise of technical and professional specialization within traditionally liberal arts institutions. This response has been due to a perception [and some reality] that many places of higher education have been moving away from providing a broad education encompassing numerous disciplines. The concern is that institutions who are beginning to focus on professional programs are jeopardizing the foundational and traditional integrity of an education which is intended to prepare a young man or woman to be deep learners, as well as being actively engaged within their world. Mannoia has chosen not to enter the dialogue from a perspective of reaction but with an engaging affirmation. He has suggested that a Christian worldview is essential to the conversation about the significance of liberal arts. He explores the place of Christian liberal arts, in particular, within the world of American higher education. He goes so far as to suggest that a Christian worldview might be optimally positioned to provide one of the best educational foundations for a student pursuing a liberal arts education.

His discussion revolves around ways the fragmented and divided parts of a college and university can have a place in unifying and consolidating an institution's educational mission. This discourse is significant because for those in Student Life, it clarifies the impact they can have in the pedagogical goals of the curriculum. It articulates the different roles that Student Life can play in participating in that consolidation of the mission. The gems in this book are Mannoia's discussion, of what he calls "critical commitment." He defines it, declares its significance then demonstrates how the various constituencies on a campus are essential to the success of the academic mission.

Repeatedly in student development literature, there is an attempt to legitimize and articulate the pedagogical underpinnings and mission of the vocation. I will not pursue this concern other than to observe that student development personnel can rest assured that their significance has already been established. There is a vast number of empirical and anecdotal works that illustrate the importance of out of classroom experiences which Student Life facilitates. However, I must acknowledge the perceptions of many faculty, staff and students. Often Student Life staff are perceived as whiling away their

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days having coffee with students and planning the next social activity. When pressed many of these same professionals struggle to articulate the educational paradigms that propel their efforts to plan, program and participate in campus activities. These circumstances increase the confusion about the Student Life role in educating students.

While there are plenty of developmental models focused on students, there are few paradigms that are considered by Student life in planning, implementing and envisioning strategies. Even as he focuses on education in general, Mannoia provides a paradigm which allows student development staff to clearly and simply articulate their roles within the educational mission of a college or university. While *Christian Liberal Arts* is directed broadly to Christian educators, those in student development will find specific benefit in that it clearly identifies the role, significance and importance of student life particularly on a Christian campus. He provides a lens through which student development is able to focus its energy and vision.

In this volume, Mannoia emphasizes and articulates why linking the liberal arts with Christian thinking is not only possible, but also beneficial, natural and needed. As one who has spent many years as a faculty member and administrator in Christian higher education, he has had the opportunity to observe what has and has not worked. His goal is to encourage and develop “critical commitment” in the lives of college and university students. Critical commitment goes further than that which is referred to as “critical thinking,” for it challenges the individual to incorporate the implications of their education into their living. It also goes beyond dogmatism and cynicism to a place where students “recognize the limitations of human understanding and yet are prepared to take a stand and even stake their lives” (42-43).

Mannoia asserts that “critical commitment” should be the implicit and explicit goal of a liberal arts education (64). To accomplish this goal four variables are needed. He calls them: *dissonance*, *habituation*, *modeling* and *community*. Often they exist parallel to one another and all are necessary for creating a comprehensive learning experience. In his explanations and explorations of these variables it becomes abundantly clear that Student Life must play significant parts in an institution’s life for it to accomplish its educational mission.

First, Mannoia identifies that integral to the learning process in any one’s life is the sense of *dissonance* that is created by being exposed to a new experience, idea or relationship. It shakes and disturbs what the student is familiar with and exposes the individual to an alternative way of viewing or interacting with the world (77-80). However, for this dissonance to be translated into learning, the context of the experience is critical. The individual must have a *community* in which they have the safety and freedom to reflect and muse upon these new experiences (85-90). As well, it is essential that they are able to perceive responses to these or similar circumstances in those they witness, read or hear about (81-85). Students must have *models* that are demonstrating or have demonstrated new means by which they can respond to the dissonance-causing experiences. The community and adequate models provide the ways by which a student is able to experiment with responses and begin to develop new *habits* that transform their former ways of responding to similar circumstances [80-81]. The full scope of a transforming education is demonstrated when a student deeply incorporates these responses into her life so that the habits become a part of her way of living.





Faith Development on the Christian College Campus

When we begin to identify the impact of the different constituencies on a campus, we quickly realize that different spheres have different levels of influence on the make-up and genetic code of the community. Some are obvious chapel and ministry departments have a tremendous impact on the spiritual life of a campus; those focused on learning disabilities have an impact on academics. Looking at the campus through Mannoia's lens of dissonance, modeling, community and habituation, it broadens our view of the campus. The academic realm obviously impacts the creation of dissonance in a student's life. However, it also has a significant part in providing both living and historical models for students. Those in Student Life are able to facilitate all areas of developing critical commitment. But the most significant is the role that they can and must play in the development of models and the community on a campus. Many student development staff have been hired specifically to log time with students, to build trust, facilitate relationships, birth vision and broaden worldviews. These are all part of creating community and providing more examples for students. Student Life has a paramount role in building community and joins the rest of campus in creating dissonance, providing models and encouraging deep and wise habits in student lives.

Christian Liberal Arts describes the divided nature of many campuses, but it also provides a vision for the manner by which many of its disparate parts can be united in their goals. It defines the necessary elements of a whole education and the need for the whole campus to be involved in that enterprise. It brings together those focused on the social, cognitive and faith developments and demonstrates the need for their integrated and cooperative strategies. When student development embraces its tremendous skills in developing community and providing models, it will realize that it has a profound impact on the fostering of a learning environment and in the success of every institution's educational mission. Although possibly not intentional, Mannoia has succeeded in articulating a pedagogical paradigm that clearly demonstrates the strategic impact that Student Life has and can have upon the whole education of a student.

FOOTNOTES

¹A sampling of these are: Bruce A. Kimball; *Orator & Philosophers: A History of the Idea of Liberal Education*, expanded edition [New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1995]; Martha C. Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense Of Reform in Liberal Education* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997]; Mark R. Schwehn; *Exiles from Eden: Religion and the Academic Vocation in America* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993].





Michael L. Peterson; *With All Your Mind: A Christian Philosophy of Education* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001. xii = 260 pp. \$18.95 (pbk), ISBN 0-268-01968-1).

Reviewed by Todd Ream, Ph.D and Amy Peeler

Despite the recent rise of interdisciplinary work in academe, the majority of research conducted within this enterprise continues to focus upon strands of knowledge within a particular discipline or sub-discipline. Studies in theology quickly turn into studies in soteriology, which quickly turn into studies done in soteriology within a particular theological tradition. While such efforts contributed to the proliferation of knowledge during the modern era, these efforts also allowed the issues that define the educational enterprise as a whole to slip into the realm of the pre-conscious. In his book entitled *With All Your Mind: A Christian Philosophy of Education*, Michael L. Peterson attempted to theologically frame these defining issues in such a way as to allow them to move back from the pre-conscious field of operation.

In order to conduct such an effort, Peterson drew upon resources found within philosophical theology. These resources were then operationalized into what he called digested scholarship or a form of scholarship that includes normative arguments built upon the evidence of personal reflection. As a result, Peterson argued, "every policy and every method, whether we realize it or not, is laden with some form of conception of what education is all about, and this concept arises from some fundamental philosophical viewpoint" (5). Peterson hoped that such a conversation would eventually reveal a philosophical worldview that drives perceptions of educational philosophy, policy, and practice. In the end, his goal was to equip the reader with a reliable and helpful way of thinking as a Christian about countless educational issues.

An overview of Peterson's book reveals a discussion that begins with basic theological and philosophical terms and then quickly moves into conversations concerning a host of traditional and contemporary philosophies of education. In regard to traditional philosophies of education, Peterson reviewed movements such as idealism, naturalism, and Thomism. In addition, when Peterson reviewed contemporary philosophies of education he examined movements such as experimentalism, existentialism, philosophical analysis, and postmodernism. Each one of these traditional and contemporary philosophies of education received a review of its major theoretical commitments, an assessment of its impact on education, and a critical evaluation of the presence of those commitments in education.

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Amy Peeler was a student at Oklahoma Baptist University at the time of writing this review and is now pursuing a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary.





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The result of this sense of critical evaluation led Peterson to contend that a need existed for the articulation of a Christian philosophy of education. His position concerning the need for such a perspective leads one to see his theological commitments to historical orthodoxy and theism. The employment of these commitments leads to a conversation that begins with the creation narrative and sees a heavy sense of import in the idea that human beings are bearers of the image of God. As a result, humanity possesses a drive to understand the created order and how education represents a formal effort to facilitate this understanding. When a Christian understanding of the educational enterprise is defined by a clear and present sense of philosophical understanding, it also provides for the best forms of educational practice.

This sense of understanding works to mediate the divide that has emerged between a host of dualisms. Christianity has access to the meaning that is found in God. As a result, a Christian philosophy of education focuses its efforts on the highest aims of a liberal education. For example, since all truth is now God's truth, the realms of faith and learning can no longer stand divided but can now become an integrated entity. This sense of understanding could also provide insights into issues such as professional education, ethics, and pedagogy. In the end, the fissures that modernity forged between many issues within education could find mediation and a new sense of focus as a result of the presence of a Christian philosophy of education. This new sense of focus would find its defining mark in a pursuit of intellectual excellence.

Peterson's development of a philosophy of education is in many ways valuable because of the fact that it successfully raises the question of the need for a Christian philosophy of education. Regardless of whether one agrees or disagrees with his evaluation of traditional and contemporary philosophies of education or with this theistic philosophy of education Peterson's work directs one's critical gaze beyond his or her own conscious practices in education to the pre-conscious theories that drive such practices. In addition, while Peterson does an admirable job of appropriating the rich detail of such theories, his work is also designed to be accessible to anyone interested in educational theory and especially a Christian philosophy of education. As a result, his charge concerning excellence is discernable to scholars in biology, chemistry, history, English, and music alike.

However, one should find him or herself wary of the critical approach that Peterson employs in certain portions of his work. The concerns that he raises with regard to the traditional and contemporary philosophies of education that he reviews emerge as a result of the internal limitations present in these systems. As a result, a Christian philosophy of education does not gain its standing by virtue of the critical power by which it engages these forms of understanding. By contrast, these forms of understanding are negated by internal limitation and a Christian philosophy of education emerges by default. In addition, Peterson's critical approach occasionally leads him to take on an apologetic air in terms of his sympathies for the canon of Western Civilization. Frequent affirmative references to the efforts of scholars such as Mortimer Adler lead to a blurring of the lines between Western Civilization and the Christian faith. While these two entities have made contributions to one another, critical concern must be reserved to demonstrate the space that separates them.

Michael L. Peterson's work concerning a Christian philosophy of education is an admirable foray into an important area that receives little to no attention. While





scholars in academe will find his work a challenge to their pre-conscious assumptions concerning education, his work is accessible to anyone interested in engaging the theoretical and practical implication of a Christian philosophy of education. While Peterson's work may not serve as a defining text in the field of philosophy of education, this text may have raised awareness for the need for a Christian conversation concerning philosophy of education. In the end, that type of contribution may prove to be invaluable.