4-2011

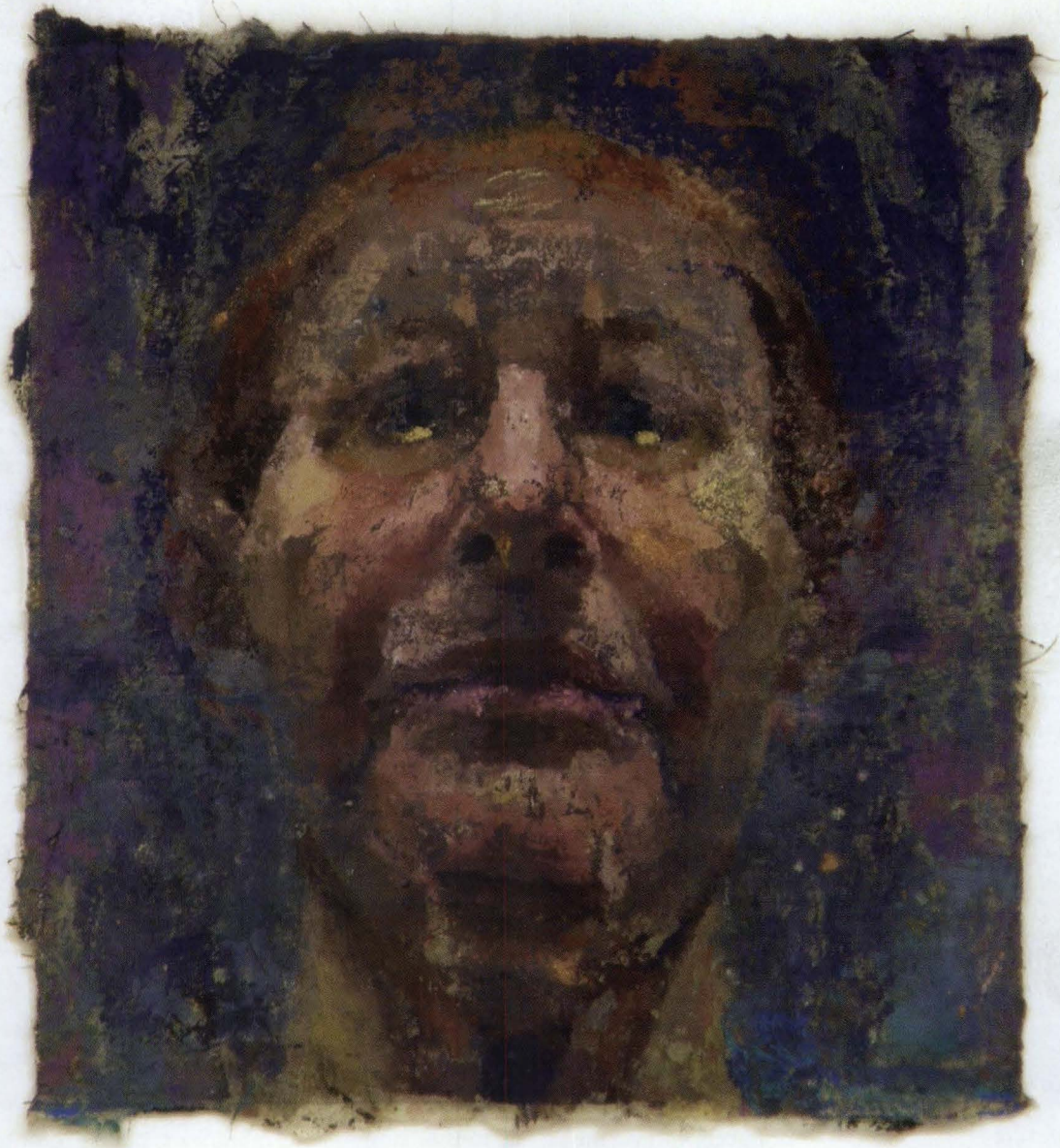
The Cresset (Vol. LXXIV, No. 4, Easter)

Valparaiso University

THE CRESSET

A review of literature, the arts, and public affairs

Easter 2011



Special Issue

The Lilly Fellows Program in Humanities and the Arts

Where is the University Now?

Vincent J. Miller

Campus Places and Placemaking

Gretchen Buggeln

Hacker Ethics and Higher Learning

Gerardo Marti

Valparaiso University

On the cover: Susanna Coffey (b. 1949). "Self Portrait from the Morning Studio," 2000. Oil, blush, and eye shadow on paper. Brauer Museum of Art, 2000.13.

Susanna Coffey is a contemporary artist who for the last several decades of her career has focused on painting self-portraits. A highly regarded artist whose works appear in important museum collections internationally, Coffey uses virtuoso painting techniques and, at times, unusual materials to create works of psychological depth and intensity. For this painting on paper, she actually used makeup as pigment to represent her face, raising questions through the use of these materials about simultaneously revealing and concealing one's identity in art and in life.

This piece was part of the Brauer Museum's exhibition held in conjunction with the twentieth annual National Lilly Fellows Conference, held at Valparaiso University in October 2010 and titled "Face to Face in Time and Place." Dedicated to the memory of former Lilly Fellows Director John Steven Paul (1951–2009), the exhibition featured portraits and figural works from the Brauer's permanent collection.

—⚜—

THE CRESSET (ISSN# 0011-1198) is published five times during the academic year (September through June) by the Valparaiso University Press as a forum for informed opinion about literature, the arts, and public affairs. Periodicals postage paid at Valparaiso, Indiana and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster send address changes to The Cresset, Huegli Hall, Valparaiso University, 1409 Chapel Drive, Valparaiso, IN 46383–9998.

Subscriptions: Regular subscription rates: $20.00 per year; Student/ Senior subscription rates: $10.00 per year; single copy: $5.00. International subscriptions add $8.00. Subscribe online at www.valpo.edu/cresset.

Letters to the Editor: Readers are encouraged to address the Editor and staff at cresset@valpo.edu. Letters to the Editor for publication are subject to editing for brevity.

Submissions: Manuscripts should be addressed to the Editor. Authors who wish their manuscripts to be returned should include a self-addressed envelope with sufficient postage. Submissions of articles, essays, or reviews may also be submitted via email to cresset@valpo.edu. Poetry submissions are not accepted via email. For further submissions guidelines, please refer to the inside back cover of this journal.

The views presented are not thereby endorsed by Valparaiso University nor are they intended to represent the views of the faculty and staff of the university.

THE CRESSET

Easter • April 2011 • Volume LXXIV, No. 4

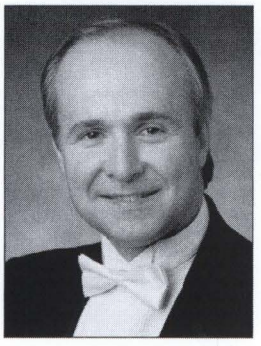
LILLY FELLOWS PROGRAM in HUMANITIES AND THE ARTS

2010 Arlin G. Meyer Prize

in Music Performance

The Arlin G. Meyer Prize is awarded biennially to a fulltime faculty member from a college or university in the Lilly Fellows Program National Network whose work exemplifies the practice of the Christian artistic or scholarly vocation in relation to any pertinent subject matter or literary and artistic style. The 2010 Prize has been awarded to the author of a creative work that emerges from his or her practice of the vocation of the Christian performing artist, in accord with the principles and ideals of the Lilly Fellows Program. In subsequent years, the Meyer Prize will honor those who practice in the fields of non-fiction, creative fiction, the visual arts, and the performing arts. The $3000 prize honors Arlin G. Meyer, Professor Emeritus of English at Valparaiso University, who served as program director of the Lilly Fellows Program in Humanities and the Arts from its inception in 1991 until his retirement in 2002.

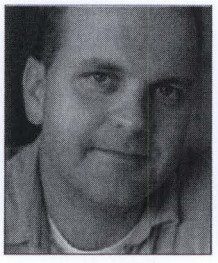
Winner of the 2010 Arlin G. Meyer Prize



Innocents

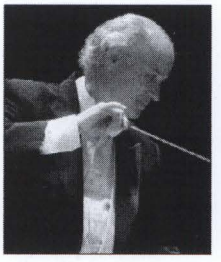
Dennis Friesen-Carper
Reddel Professor of Music
Valparaiso University

Finalists



Tegel Passion, A Dramatic Cantata in Six Parts on the Martyrdom of Dietrich Bonhoeffer

N. Lincoln Hanks
Associate Professor of Music
Pepperdine University



Reconciled: A Gospel Symphony

Gerry Jon Marsh
Director
Symphonic Wind Ensemble
Seattle Pacific University

In Luce Tua
In Thy Light

Face to Face in Time and Place

The world keeps getting smaller, but somehow people keep finding themselves further apart. We live in a hyper-connected world. Tools like email, text messaging, and online chatting allow nearly instantaneous communication between people in all corners of the world. While these technological innovations have had many benefits—they have revolutionized the world economy, democratized access to information, and provided new opportunities for cross-cultural encounters—they are not without costs. While we now can be more and more connected to a far-flung network of friends, we also often find ourselves less and less engaged with the people and places closest to us in the physical sense. The more deeply involved we are with an online network in our personal and professional lives, the easier it becomes to forget the value of face-to-face interactions in the immediately present world and to forget both the unique benefits and problems of our local communities.

These changes are having profound implications for higher education. At the most trivial level, professors have learned that in the classroom they often must compete for attention with messages that students are receiving over cellphones and laptop computers. Beyond such annoyances, these technologies are transforming the entire relationship between professor and student. What exactly is the role of a professor when the Internet offers students immediate access to countless sources of information on any topic, information that can be accessed through gadgets and software that students usually are more adept at using than their teachers? At a more basic level, higher education today is buffeted by technological and commercial forces that pull the attentions of both faculty and students further and further afield, such that the entire relationship between a university as an institution located in a particular time and place and the community that surrounds it must be reexamined.

At the twentieth annual National Conference of the Lilly Fellows Program in the Humanities and the Arts, held 15–17 October 2010, representatives of the Lilly Network schools gathered on the campus of Valparaiso University to discuss these issues. In plenary lectures, small-group discussions, and artistic presentations, conference participants considered the role of physical place in higher education and how we as teachers and administrators at church-related schools can and should respond to these developments. The essays in this issue are based on the plenary lectures presented at this conference.

In "Campus Places and Placemaking," Gretchen Buggeln of Valparaiso University surveys how throughout American history the campuses of colleges and universities have been reconceived in response to changes in the needs and resources of a developing nation. In "Hacker Ethics and Higher Learning," Gerardo Marti of Davidson College argues that the emergence of new forms of interaction made possible by technology has led to the development of a new set of values that governs the availability of information, and this "hacker ethic," he argues, undermines the traditional understanding of education that guides many schools. In the third plenary lecture, "Where is the University Now?" Vincent J. Miller of the University of Dayton considers how our fundamental understanding of social space is changing in ways that hold both enormous potential and difficult challenges for higher education and church-related higher education in particular.

The world is getting smaller, and we as teachers cannot help but sense the exciting opportunities that this interconnected, ethereal, cyber world offers both to us and to our students. Yet we as creatures live embodied lives in the here and now, and these lives will always be shaped by the real places and spaces—the classrooms, the campuses, the communities—where we teach and learn together.

—JPO

Campus Places and Placemaking

Tradition and Innovation in the Architecture of American Higher Education

Gretchen Buggeln

One reason that I am a professor is that I love schools as places, places filled with history and tradition, but also with constant newness and energy. Those of us who work in such places are privileged to do so. My task here, as I see it, is to survey the development of the American campus and the ideals that have shaped it and to highlight some current trends in architecture and planning. I would like to provoke thought about these real places, about bricks and mortar, concrete and glass, landscapes and pathways. *If* a physical environment specifically designed for higher learning is a reality we want to preserve, in whole or in part—what, exactly, are we preserving?

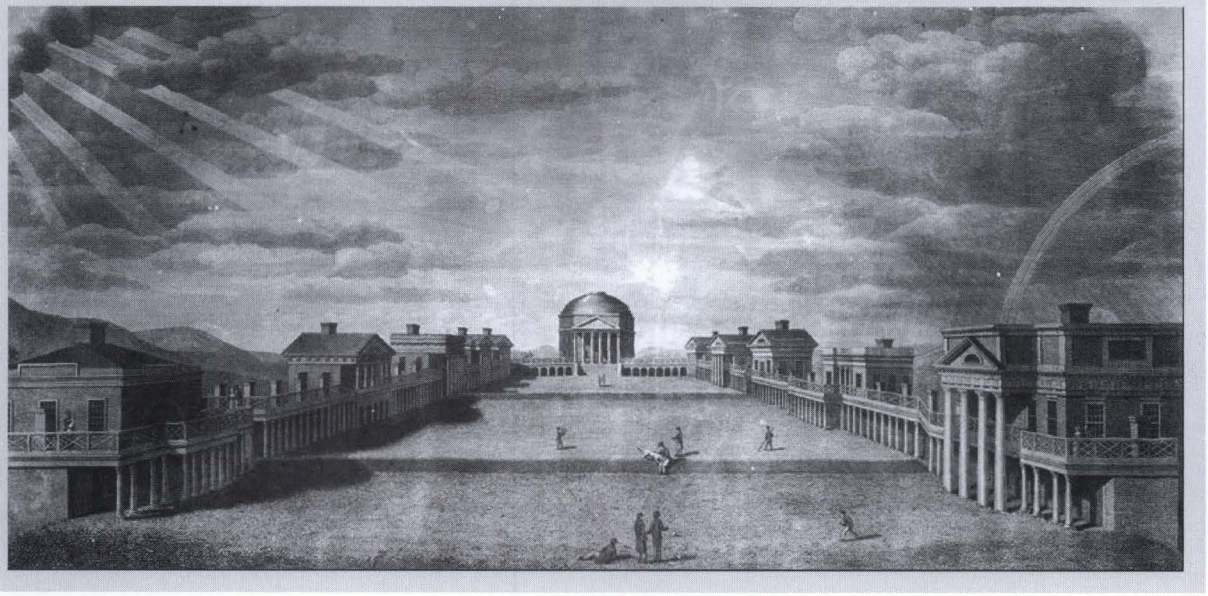
There are about four thousand place-based colleges and universities in the United States today. These increasingly share the territory with institutions that have bucked this centuries-old pattern—most notably the University of Phoenix, a for-profit enterprise that currently enrolls over four hundred thousand undergraduates, decentralized on two hundred "campuses" worldwide. The landscape of higher education is tremendously varied. But for many—prospective students, their parents, faculty, and administrators—the ideal is still a residential campus community based on a model that has been around since the seventeenth century in America.

The first American colleges consisted of one or several multipurpose buildings, designed in the stylistic idiom of the day, which housed students and tutors as well as classrooms. By 1726, Harvard College, for instance, consisted of three main buildings, arranged in an open U-pattern (**Figure 1**). The second Harvard College building (1672–1682, burned 1764) was the largest building in New England when it was built, with a hall, kitchen, and buttery on the ground floor, a library and chambers on the second floor, and two more stories of chambers. Educators built this type of multipurpose college building throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries up and down the eastern seaboard from Virginia to New Hampshire. Although the style is now long out of favor, the *idea* behind this form, that of a college as a separate, contained, residential community on an English model, has widely persisted. Here students and tutors lived, studied, and dined together. Education was measured not only in terms of information transferred, but of lives transformed by study and conversation. The idea of college education as a broadly transformative experience has persisted to this day, putting a burden not just on educators but on campuses. If the question is not only, "What skills will a student acquire here?" but "What will a student *become* here?" the physical environment, as a facilitator of a range of experiences and interactions, must be a teacher itself.

Any discussion of American college architecture must take into account Thomas Jefferson's

Figure 1 (right). Harvard College in 1740. Engraving by William Burgis. Library of Congress.

Figure 2 (below). Detail of University of Virginia map by Herman Boye, 1827. The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, The Albert & Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia Library.



designs for the University of Virginia. On a hill outside of Charlottesville, Jefferson developed the idea of a central mall surrounded by neatly placed, architecturally united buildings, what he called his "Academical Village" (**Figure 2**). The architectural focal point at the end of the mall was a domed rotunda that housed the college library—notably *not* a chapel, as was often the case on other campuses following this basic mall plan. Professors' classrooms and living spaces faced each other across the grassy mall, alternating with student rooms and united by a front colonnade. Jefferson preferred smaller connected buildings on a human scale rather than a few larger ones, yet the whole nonetheless is grand. He emphasized specific geographical setting—the rural Virginia Piedmont that he loved so well; yet within that natural landscape he created a campus of great urbanity. Indeed one of the features of American campus architecture has been its celebration of the best of civilization and culture in the midst of nature.

In the nineteenth century, the meaning of a campus's architectural *style* became more deliberately symbolic. Greek Revival buildings, for instance, signified the arrival of civilization and learning. One magnificent campus in this style was Girard College founded in Philadelphia in 1833, an unusually literal interpretation of classical architecture. The first Gothic college architecture, such as the main building of Kenyon College, built in 1827 on the Ohio frontier, was notable for crenellation and pointed arches. Although this was hardly the full-blown collegiate Gothic of later years, the sense of tradition, age, and permanence of this

style was immediately attractive to college builders, particularly Episcopalians and Catholics.

The Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 greatly accelerated the progress of campus building by providing funds for the large-scale growth of state universities. Access to higher education increased along with the number of courses of study. Students were able to pursue agricultural, scientific, and technical subjects along with elements of the old classical education. Ezra Cornell, founder of Cornell University, summed up the ethos behind these rapidly developing institutions, stating, "I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study" (Turner 1987, 140). The democratization of higher education changed not just the student body and educational content but the architecture of the campus as well. Buildings that seemed to mesh with this democratic ethos were no frills structures, a good match for economic as well as ideological reasons. Land grant college campuses showcased technical improvement and flexibility.

Figure 3. Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. Harpers Weekly, June 1873. Ezra Cornell Papers, Cornell University Library.

That the campuses of these exuberant institutions did not end up as architectural free-for-alls (at least not in this period) was in large measure due to the influence of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted Sr., designer of New York's Central and Prospect Parks and some important garden suburbs, who served as architectural planner for several dozen of these new institutions, including Cornell in 1867–1873. Olmsted held a finely tuned belief that beautiful, natural landscapes—architecture in harmony with nature—shaped good citizens. Breaking from the preferred rural model, Olmsted reintegrated college with city, preferring to develop campuses at the quiet suburban edge of a growing urban area, where there was room to plan a park-like setting, while not isolating the university from urban life **(Figure 3)**. Despite the rapidly accelerating size and complexity of these institutions, Olmsted insisted that they be built on a human scale. His preference for the picturesque resulted in buildings that were loosely arranged, yet still carefully planned on campuses with winding roads, stands of tall trees, and other prominent natural features. Many schools renovated their older campuses according to Olmsted's principles.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the first graduate schools were introduced in the United States. They were initially simply workplaces, urban offices and laboratories without affiliated dormitories or any provision for extracurricular functions. It was in the rapid fusion of the two forms of higher education, college and graduate school, that the huge and complex modern American university arose. These new universities were massive institutions, cities of architecture housing multiple departments, technical schools and facilities, law and medical schools, scientific research, along with dormitories and cafeterias to house and feed large populations of students.

One of the most significant changes to college campus in the later nineteenth century was the accommodation of rapidly growing competitive athletic programs. Competitive sports became an integral part of college and university life, for team members, other students, and local fans. As Valparaiso's historian Richard Baepler writes, "nothing in other nations' experience compares to

the way US universities became intensely identified with the mass popular entertainment of college sports" (2001, 91). It is hard to overstate the effect sports have had on the ethos of American institutions of higher education and their campuses.

The increasing power and importance of the turn of the century university was reflected in expansive Beaux-Arts campuses, with their grand axes, monumental buildings, and public courtyards, campuses made possible by enormous private gifts. In California, Leland Stanford, in memory of his son, created Stanford University's Mission/Mediterranean-style grand campus. John D. Rockefeller pumped $30 million into building the University of Chicago, its Gothic quadrangles reflecting a monastic, cloistered vision of the scholarly life **(Figure 4)**. In style of architecture, these two campuses reflect different regional and cultural preferences, but they are quite alike in the formality of their overall plans. Although these campuses were ambitious and modern in many ways, the emphasis on historic style and cloistered spaces shows a traditionalism and introversion reflecting the mood of the country during the early decades of the twentieth century. Gothic building programs became especially popular from coast to coast. The Gothic seemed to give brand new buildings instant weight and authority.

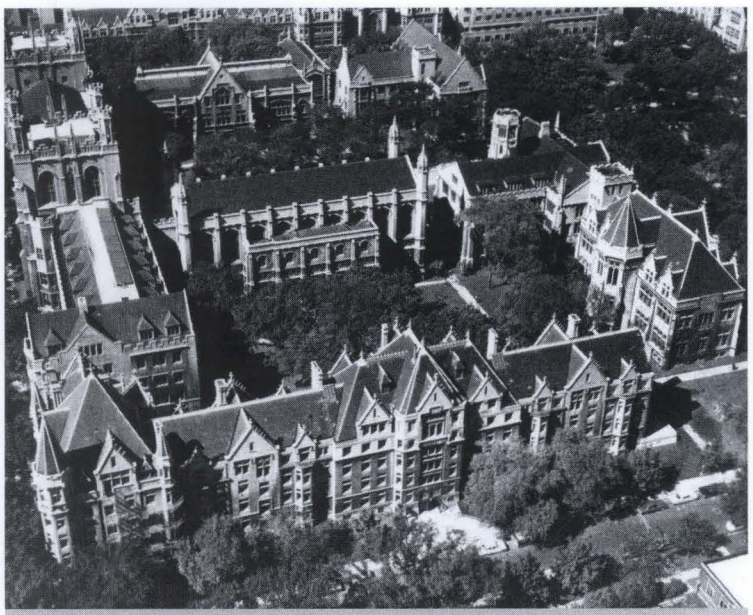


Figure 4. University of Chicago. Archival Photographic Files, [apf2-02633], Special Collections Research Center, UC Library.

In sum, the legacy of the first three hundred years of places of American higher education is this: a residential model giving extracurricular activities such as social organizations and athletics a prominent, extensive place on campus; buildings in traditional architectural forms and styles, having connotations that were local and historical; integrated landscapes with picturesque outdoor areas; central libraries for the storage of knowledge and laboratories for its creation; small- to medium-sized classrooms or larger lecture halls—important if not luxurious spaces that facilitated face-to-face academic interaction, professor to student, professor to professor, and student to student. Even the most massive campuses were comfortably scaled walking cities. When you were on a college campus, you knew it. It was unlike any other place.

After World War II, rapidly increasing enrollment of a more diverse student body and the rise of the commuter campus placed enormous demands on the physical university. The pace of building was furious, as colleges scrambled to create spaces for new students, new programs, and automobiles. Things might have turned out differently for the campus if this demographic upheaval had not coincided with a new type of modern architecture that made building much less expensive. Initially, modern architecture had not been immediately appealing to most college communities, except for a few notable showcases, such as the Illinois Institute of Technology, designed by Mies van der Rohe beginning in the mid 1940s. Even at midcentury, many institutions preferred to build in historical styles. Wake Forest University, newly moved to Winston-Salem by the Reynolds family, built an entire Georgian campus. But Wake Forest's decision was controversial, and the architectural profession lambasted the institution for its conservatism. By this time, most institutions were choosing a new form of steel and concrete building and consciously making their campuses less formal,

emphasizing flexibility and a fresh approach to higher education.

New modern campus architecture often paid little heed to existing architecture on the campus around it, and this was not often seen as a bad thing. Architecture had an experimental feel, as did the university of the time. From classrooms to dormitories, new ways of learning and living were being explored on campuses. Yet the impulse to preserve small college communities persisted. The epitome of these trends, both exploratory *and* conservative, is probably the University of California at Santa Cruz, designed and built in the 1960s and early 1970s. Students in the "Creating Kresge College" course contributed to the design of a new self-contained campus, a village of white-faced buildings that meandered up a hillside in a redwood forest. To commemorate the opening of the dormitories students, formed in "kin groups," "stood in a circle around a bonfire while they burned their unwanted possessions" before walking "single file, holding hands, up through the woods to their new home" (Turner 1987, 283). Although this is a striking example of 1960s countercultural campus behavior, it is also reminiscent of the isolated, communal, utopian ideal that marked many American campuses from the beginning.

In the midst of all this change, including architectural innovation and expansion, historic campus centers—embodiments of tradition—held on. Colleges and universities preserved core campuses, and those remain the heart of many schools. The persistence of a distinctive central quadrangle is especially important when research campuses, dorms, and athletic facilities can now be literally miles from these centers.

Today the general consensus is that the majority of campus architecture built in the boom decades of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s isn't much to write home about. Many of these inexpensive, unornamented buildings lack character, distinctiveness, and beauty, and later administrations have had to reign in sprawl and deal with deferred maintenance. In the 1980s, there was a general renewed interest in historical places and styles, and the most recent wave of building has often returned to older forms of architecture—postmodern neo-Georgian and neo-Gothic buildings in particular. Universities also restored and remodeled landmark buildings, and campus planners looked back to Jefferson's and Olmsted's ideas about human scale and open, natural space, and once again asked architecture to resonate with its local context. This isn't just nostalgia, but a hardnosed sense of the real value, even marketability, of tradition, and, of course, beauty. This is particularly important because studies suggest that the primary factor influencing the choice of college is most often the physical campus.

Turning from the general to the specific, I will now focus on the particular story of one typical campus as it has grown and changed. Valparaiso University was founded in 1859 and reflected the spirit of its time. If you recall Ezra Cornell's sweeping vision, this also was a place intended to teach, cheaply and efficiently, many subjects to many students. The original campus consisted of a small number of boxy buildings with classical details interspersed with residential and commercial buildings at the southern end of the town of Valparaiso. By the early twentieth century, the south end of campus, then known as College or University Circle, looked more collegiate, with lawns and curved pathways, a little bit of Olmsted trying to dignify the university's haphazard origins (**Figure 5**). Many American schools of the time, especially teachers' colleges and technical schools, had a similar, utilitarian feel.

By the time the Lutherans bought Valparaiso in 1925, the buildings were mostly tired and insufficient, and Old Main had burned down in 1923. Nonetheless, a handsome, collegiate core anchored the campus. The new administration renovated existing residence halls and classroom buildings, but large scale campus growth was deferred. After President O. P. Kretzmann took the helm in 1940, and it became clear that the university was poised for expansion, Valparaiso's leaders began planning a new campus on about one hundred acres of farmland that the university had purchased to the east of the existing campus.

As early as 1926 Valparaiso's administration had been considering the construction of a full Gothic campus (**Figure 6**). The coherence of this vision is impressive. A Gothic chapel would sit on the highest point of land. The rest of the campus

Figure 5 (above). Postcard depicting Valparaiso University, Old (West) Campus, ca. 1912. Valparaiso University Archives.

Figure 6 (below). Valparaiso University plan for a Gothic Campus, Edward F. Jansson, 1940s. Valparaiso University Archives.

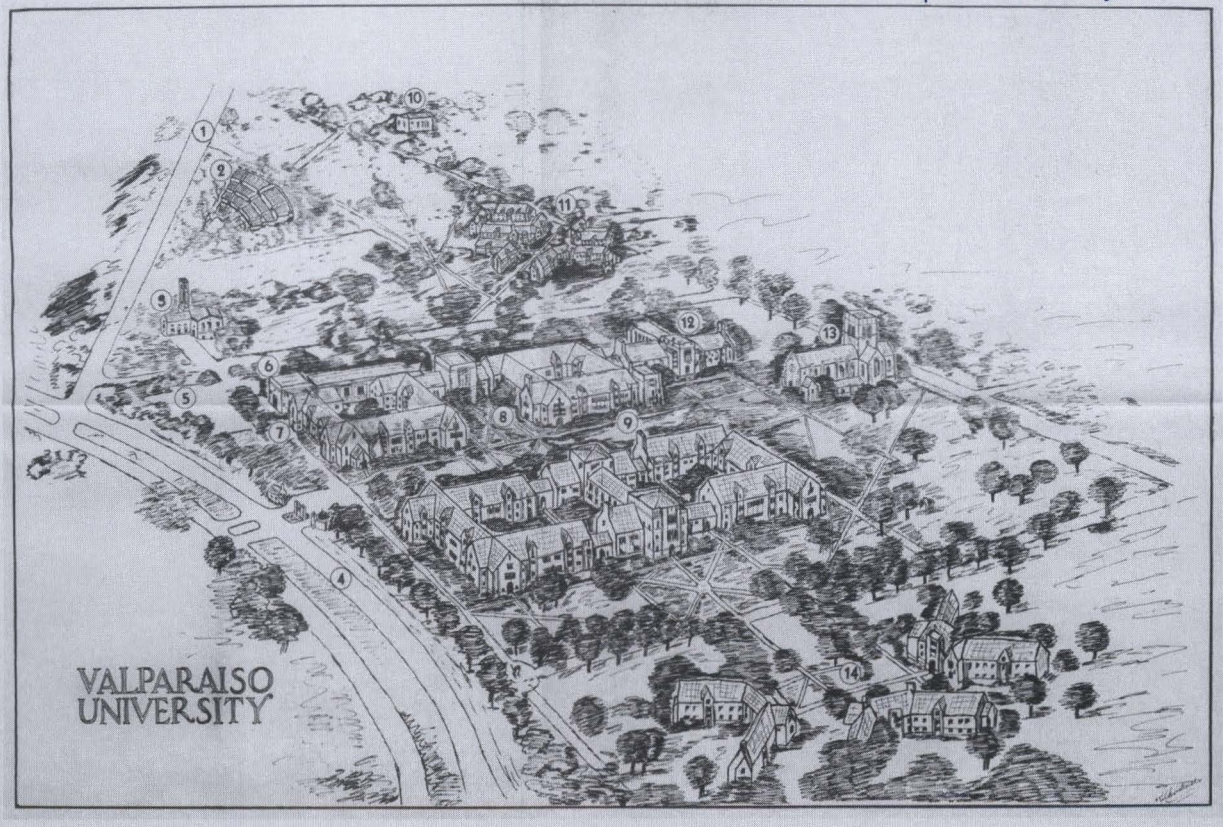


Figure 7 (above). Campus map of Valparaiso University, 1956.
Valparaiso University Archives.

Figure 8 (below). Aerial photograph of Valparaiso University, early 1970s.
Valparaiso University Archives.

would be filled in on a quadrangle model. The architect, Edward F. Jansson, was known for his church work, as a consulting architect for the Bureau of Interdenominational Architecture, and Gothic architecture was the preferred style of church building at the time. A related plan from the same period shows a slightly different arrangement, emphasizing a rectangular mall (like Jefferson's at Virginia) opening out to Route 30, intended to offer a clear view up an incline to the chapel. Guild and Memorial dormitories were the only structures ever built from these plans.

Something very different, spatially and architecturally, transpired. In a plan from 1956, the main items of interest are Dau-Kreinheder dorms, the Union, the shadow of the proposed deaconess building, and, most importantly, the chapel—indicating how far to the east the campus was going to move (**Figure 7**). The first of these buildings erected were the Union (1955), Deaconess Hall (1956), and two of six new dormitory structures, five of them to be clustered on the north side of the campus expansion.

An aerial view from about 1971 shows the postwar campus near the end of the boom (**Figure 8**). In the center of campus, in a place of prominence, is the distinctive 1959 chapel. In the process of building the chapel, the university acquired a young, well-trained campus architect, Charles Stade, and a professional planner of some renown, Jean Labatut, one of Stade's professors at the Princeton School of Architecture. Labatut encouraged the administration to use topography to greatest effect. In one letter from Stade to Labatut, he responded to a request for specific coordinates of all the existing trees on campus, probably because Labatut hoped to preserve them and integrate them into the new campus (20 August 1956, Labatut Papers).

By the later 1960s, it was apparent that the university had charged ahead with building without following Labatut's advice. In a 1965 letter to O. P., he registered his disappointment about recent campus additions, particularly regarding the placement of new buildings. He noted "so much wasted space for so few buildings.... buildings designed as if unsympathetic to each other, or designed by different architects at different times and without consideration for the quality of space between them," and he questioned the orientation of new buildings (18 October 1965, Labatut Papers). Labatut advocated "better land use, higher density of buildings, more order and greater economy of land, better landscape treatment and consequently more beauty" (Ibid). At Valparaiso, as was the case with many postwar campuses, the rapid speed of building had left insufficient time for careful planning.

Certainly one of the biggest reasons to discard the Gothic campus in favor of a modern one was financial. Modern steel and concrete structures could cost less than half as much per square foot and could be built much more quickly. But more than architectural style was altered, for in a few short years this administration, and many others, had rejected a closely built, inward looking plan for one that flung its Midwestern, midcentury modern buildings outward. The buildings were experimental within the constraints of time and materials, but overall one gets the impression of cost-effective functionality.

In the last two decades, Valparaiso University has been moving back toward Labatut's vision of a higher density, better landscaped campus. The Valparaiso University Center for the Arts, dedicated in 1995, marked the beginning of a new wave of building, one that is still in process.

What are the particular challenges facing Valparaiso and other campuses today? There are many. M. Perry Chapman, a principal planner with Sasaki Associates, the Boston architecture firm that designed Valparaiso's new Harre Union, writes about the "seismic forces affecting the shape of the twenty-first century campus," including the digital information revolution, globalization, the increasing diversity of campus populations, and skyrocketing costs (Chapman 2006, 53ff). Universities are expanding (and occasionally contracting) to remain competitive, raising enrollments and building new facilities, economizing through adaptive reuse of adjacent non-university buildings, increasing the appeal and safety of their campuses, and just frantically trying to keep ahead of the game. What principles should guide campus planning as we face these challenges?

Chapman argues that "The home campus has to be the center of gravity for the virtual hinter-

land created when institutions disperse functions, relationships, and activities outside the borders of the core campus" (73). In a similar vein, MIT media guru William Mitchell writes that "the more global the enterprise becomes, the more integrity and intensity the mother ship must possess" (cited in Chapman 2006, 73). Universities must respond by creatively engaging the centrifugal forces taking learning activities away from the core and simultaneously strengthening the centripetal forces that pull students and faculty back to the center.

Digital media, globalization, the expansion and diversification of the student body—these are all trends that are affecting the way we learn. They also challenge the ways that colleges and universities function as communities.

Consider the architectural dimension of two of the most important changes facing universities—the digital revolution and the recasting of the structure of community in a decentralized, global marketplace. Expensive, rapidly evolving technology is changing the way we teach and learn. As teachers, we will continue to be able to do more and more online that once required a physical classroom, and we can't assume business as usual, regardless of our disciplines. There are better and worse ways, architecturally speaking, to bend to this trend. Chapman notes that "the challenge is how to make the breathtaking speed, capacity, visual quality, ubiquity, and flexibility of digital communication an organic, enriching part of the place-based collegiate realm" (62). One intriguing, creative response is the "Math Emporium" at Virginia Tech. In the late 1990s, in an old downtown department store, the university created a self-paced program for math instruction in core courses necessary for many majors. Open twenty-four hours, and staffed by math professors fourteen hours per day, here students work interactively around five hundred computer workstations. This is not an isolated online course model, but a collaborative system of learning that has resulted in better grades and test scores for students. Virginia Tech created a space both digital *and* social, freeing up many classrooms for other purposes and concentrating resources efficiently.

In *The Social Life of Information* (Harvard Business, 2000), authors John Seely Brown and Pual Duguid make a distinction between information and knowledge. Information is data; knowledge is deeper and transformative, generally the result of personal encounters that take place within developed social networks. Open discourse and hands-on discovery, they argue, are critical for the development of knowledge (cited in Chapman 2006, 63–64). Chapman writes, "The campus is the working, experiential habitat of learners... gathered where they can see the eyes and sense the body language of their compatriots, where the resistance and reinforcement of human encounter is a tactile, sensory experience" (64). People and technology need to work together in places that encourage collaboration. Learning, like all human events, literally takes place. There is no such thing as "place-free learning." Cyberspace doesn't remove place from the equation; it simply changes it. Rather than a classroom, perhaps memories will be tied to a desk chair and a computer screen, as well as the spaces and things that surround them.

Digital media, globalization, the expansion and diversification of the student body—these are all trends that are affecting the way we learn. They also challenge the ways that colleges and universities function as communities. Frederick Law Olmsted articulated the idea that the total environment of learning develops not only our skills in subject matter but also our character and values as citizens of a community. Universities are still wonderful places to learn *about* place, to become skilled in genuine community. One strong argument for the continuing importance of the well-designed and built college campus is that Americans are sorely lacking in their ideas of good civic space that is lively, beautiful, and inspirational. Giving students the opportunity to inhabit a model civic space teaches

them to care, and provides them with a benchmark for such places for the rest of their lives. And now, more than ever, universities also need to make sure that students are not isolated from the communities that surround them. Campuses have a responsibility to enrich the life of their larger place. If our campuses are going to connect with our communities, we can't be islands of university buildings and manicured lawns surrounded by seas of parking. The actual, physical borders between campus and city need to be permeable and inviting in both directions.

of place, consonant with sustainability, community, and regional authenticity.

In conclusion, consider one recent addition to the Valparaiso campus, the Christopher Center for Library and Information Resources (2004), a place that attempts to address concerns of both technology and community (**Figure 9**). The oldest library building on campus is Heritage Hall, now the law clinic and recently rebuilt. When I arrived on campus six years ago, the old Moellering Library was still in place, although slated for demolition, having been well over capacity for decades. According

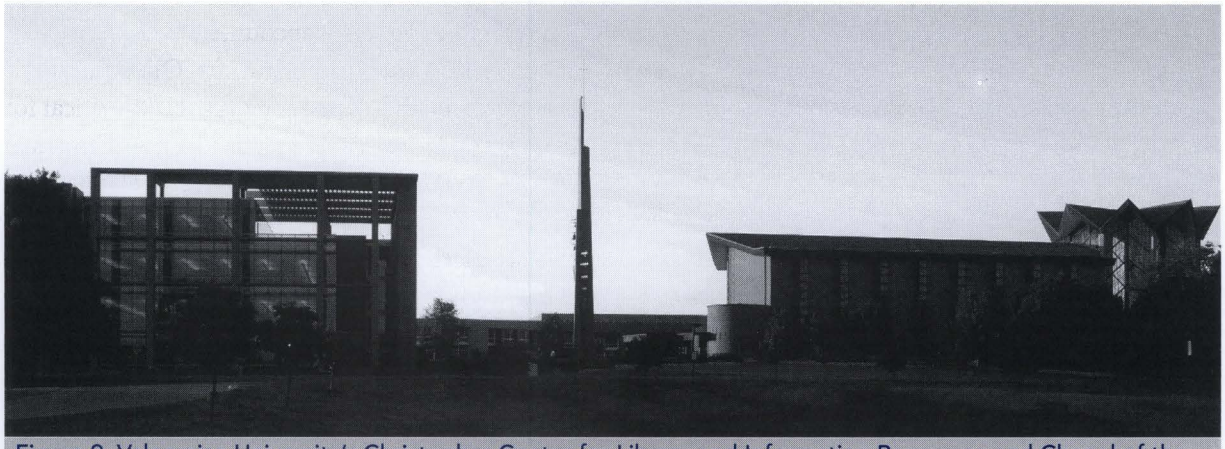


Figure 9. Valparaiso University's Christopher Center for Library and Information Resources and Chapel of the Resurrection. Photo: Andrew Zimmer.

Perry Chapman argues for a new *ethic of place*, applicable to university campuses, and centered on three themes he sees as *the* critical issues for future campus building: sustainability, community, and regional authenticity. Christian colleges and universities should find a ready match between these themes and their institutional missions. The material expression of faith might be something as overt as a big Jesus painted on the wall of a building, but perhaps a more effective message is sent when the campus conveys an ethic such as the one Chapman advocates. There are better and worse ways to mark Christian identity. Architecture and landscape can indicate the welcome presence of religious faith among us. Charles Stade's Chapel has anchored Valparaiso's campus for fifty years. Even for those students who never worship there, it is an ever present reminder that life and learning on this campus takes place under the cross. And there are many other ways that we might develop a Christian *ethic*

to Rick AmRhein, who came to Valparaiso in 1999 to become Dean of Library Services, the first conceptual studies for a new library had been following the model of "a place to protect books and to house lots of them" (Interview, Valparaiso University, 11 October 2010). Under AmRhein's direction, the planning committee took a different approach: "libraries are not boxes for books, libraries are places for learning." Valparaiso's library must, AmRhein insisted, be about people. Working with the San Francisco-based architectural firm of EHDD, the driving question for design was "how will we use space to enable interaction between people?" Marc L'Italien, the lead designer for the project, was asked to design "a real range and diversity of collaborative spaces" with "seamless, open flexibility" to accommodate inevitable future changes (Telephone interview with Marc L'Italien, 13 October 2010).

Spaces were arranged to facilitate a wide range of activities, all organized under the concept of an

"information commons." An automated storage system enabled the main library floors to be open and spacious. AmRhein wanted books, computers, and comfortable furniture on every floor, to encourage the use of the entire space. With a fireplace lounge on three floors, an outdoor terrace on the fourth floor, a large community room, natural light coming from at least two directions throughout the building, a basement café, and minimal restrictions on eating and drinking in the entire building, the Christopher Center has proved as welcoming as the design team intended. AmRhein stressed the need to conform the library to contemporary student learning behaviors. For instance, he notes, "if you don't create a multitasking environment, it's not comfortable for them... If we create an environment where they can't live their life," he argues, "then they don't want to be there" (Interview with AmRhein).

Based on use patterns and my unscientific polling of students, the Christopher Center is a hugely successful building. In fact, given the natural inclinations of students, and what they say about other buildings on campus, their admiration for the Christopher Center is striking. In the first fall it opened, library use was up 433 percent over what it had been the last year in Moellering. AmRhein hopes the building offers a "sense of arrival," and more than one student has spoken of the thrill she gets while walking down the main staircase into the student centered ground floor, with its café and busy computer work areas. The siting and exterior treatment of the building is designed to respect the primacy of the chapel and to blend in with the materials used in other campus architecture, while making a fresh statement.

L'Italien noted that, except for being very protective of the chapel, the Valparaiso committee gave the architects a lot of freedom. *How* to work with the chapel became the most difficult aspect of the project and, in the end, one of its greatest achievements. L'Italien believes they succeeded in finding the "magical separation between the two buildings," that preserves the primacy of the campus's central icon. Indeed, he was delighted when, at the opening reception, he was frequently complimented not on the Christopher Center itself, but on the way it offered a "renewed perspective on the chapel," enabling the community "to see and appreciate it in a different way" (Interview with L'Italien). This building works because it blends technology and community while architecturally connecting with the institution's identity and mission. It has already changed the way we learn and live on this campus, becoming the central place the design team hoped it would be.

The architectural historian Paul Venable Turner, whose 1984 book *Campus* is still the standard work on this subject, closed his study with a statement that captures the spirit of these special places very well. "Americans," he wrote, "normally have preferred open and expansive schools that look confidently outward to the world" (1987, 305). This is our architectural legacy, a legacy that reminds us of something important. The spaces on our campuses, when working as they should, provide places to dwell in community. But for most of the people who share these spaces with us, their stay is temporary. Our mission is not to turn inward. We are called to look outward, to lead and serve, and to prepare our students to do the same.

Gretchen Buggeln is the Phyllis and Richard Duesenberg Chair in Christianity and the Arts and Associate Professor of Art History and Humanities in Christ College of Valparaiso University.

Works Cited

Baepler, Richard. *Flame of Faith, Lamp of Learning: A History of Valparaiso University.* St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

Chapman, M. Perry. *American Places: In Search of the Twenty-First Century Campus.* Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2006.

Labatut (Jean) Papers. Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

Turner, Paul Venable. *Campus: An American Planning Tradition.* Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987.

Hacker Ethics and Higher Learning

The Moral Clash Determining the Future of Education

Gerardo Marti

IT IS EASY TO BE DISTRACTED BY THE IMMENSE technological changes affecting higher education today. Change is here. We are all faced with it in our classrooms and our offices, and we see it in the lives of students, donors, administrators, and alumni. The changes are happening so fast; the quality of what is considered "normal" is transforming quickly. How can we assess the key issues of place and face in higher education when the ground beneath our collective feet keeps shifting? Many may quibble over the nuances of the history and development of higher education and modern communications technology, but in the hope of stimulating a conversation about our collective future, in this short space I will accentuate two moral codes, two idealized orientations, which do not end in lines of convergence but accentuate forceful tensions in higher education.

The Rise of Computing and Digital Connectivity

I became infatuated with computers in college. When I entered as a freshman, "computers" meant large, refrigerator-sized mainframe machines housed in super-clean, dust-free rooms and run by specialized computer operators. While these were impressive, it was the "micro-computers" produced by IBM, Apple, Hewlett Packard, and Kaypro (if you remember them) that captured my attention. Educational institutions—including the one I attended—became sites for exclusive contracts for new "computer labs." By my third year of college, I was at the heart of the micro-computer revolution. My roommate Kirby had a "portable" computer—a Compaq 286, dual-disk drive model. Kirby saw how excited I was about it, and I remember he looked at me one day and told me something I'll never forget. He said, "It's not the computer, Gerardo. It's the modem."

Nearly thirty years later, Kirby's perceptive comment rings even more true today. Listen closely to his message: the most transformative technological change of the computing age is NOT the computer, but the connectivity *between* computers. At the time Kirby was talking to me, I mostly was using computers to write papers and create spreadsheets. I also played Zork and Pinball. Dial-up on a 9600-baud modem didn't seem all that exciting until I discovered electronic bulletin boards, then threaded forums, and eventually America Online, a comprehensive online service that provided me an email address, chat rooms, and an introduction to the World Wide Web with its vast community of web pages. I was there to press the button the day AOL created portal access to the World Wide Web. The point of it all was that I was now connected to everyone else with an online connection. Between Yahoo, online forums, and occasional chat rooms, I could find information and communities of interest. Strangers became acquaintances. The digital world became a chain of relationships.

In the late 1980s, our banks, our phone companies, our local and federal governments, and our colleges and universities were creating computer "networks" to manage people and processes, to ease the coordination of projects, and to accelerate the pace of communication and decision making. Moving from pagers to smartphones, we became

increasingly connected to a flow of relationships until the rise of social media sites like Facebook, which grew between October 2009 to October 2010 from 350 million users to over 530 million. Six degrees of separation has been reduced to four or even three.

When I was introduced to the digital world, it was a fairly limited arena. I was comfortable using the Internet as supplemental to my life, but the Internet has come to mean much more than that. By the mid-1990s, we were all invested in digital connectivity, from the national government to our local neighborhoods. It is no longer limited, and networks are no longer isolated islands of data and relationships. Online connections have become a necessity. The possibility of connectivity is now assumed, through work, cell phones, and ubiquitous wi-fi connections. The ease of wireless connectivity equaled the rise of social media. Chat rooms and online forums were replaced by instant messages and texting alongside services like MySpace, Facebook, and Twitter. The spread of Starbucks equaled the spread of wireless Internet access, and airports, and other public venues raced to catch up to the new medium. Paper has been transformed to screen images. At the end of September, the federal government announced that, while we can still physically mail our returns, more people are e-filing and, as a cost cutting measure, the federal government will no longer mail tax forms. From now on, we must access them online. On Twitter, Barry Wellman said, "[A] Student finds it impossible to go cold turkey off the grid because official announcements and research materials are only online." The Internet is not just a tool of knowledge and business; it has become something much more.

The Hacker Ethic is fundamentally reshaping the form of higher education that has been assumed for the past century.

Higher education is caught in this larger transition. Our schools and our professions are dominated by digital connectivity. We submit grades online; our students register for courses online and use electronic course reserves. Seventy-two percent of professors use course management systems ("Professors' Use of Technology in Teaching," *Chronicle of Higher Education,* 25 July 2010). We answer questions, set calendar appointments, distribute departmental information and committee reports, and even submit journal articles and whole book manuscripts online. Increasingly, we post syllabi and study content, we Skype into meetings, and we blog and tweet our results (about one-third of professors use Twitter, according to Faculty Focus Special Report 2010).

It took me a while, but I soon recognized that a new set of ideals was being promoted. The development of these new digital realms is fueled not just by clever innovation, but by a new morality, what's been called the "Hacker Ethic" (Levy 1984). Hackers represent those who are taking advantage of the new spaces and new possibilities opened up by the creation of new structures. It is a complete moral orientation. Moreover, I believe the Hacker Ethic embedded within emergent digital processes is fundamentally reshaping the form of higher education that has been assumed for the past century. Before describing the Hacker Ethic, I will review the moral orientation familiar to most of us as educators. It is the moral orientation that has guided the development of higher education for well over a century, and it is an orientation that is all about the shaping of personal morality.

The Moral Imperative of Formative Retreat in American Higher Education

In the emergence of the American university, intense moral conversations about the purpose of higher education dominated much of the 1800s. Once I learned about the ubiquitous nature of these themes, I decided to explore the archives of my own institution, Davidson College in North Carolina. Davidson is a small liberal arts college formed through the cooperative efforts of local Presbyterian church leaders in 1837. Sure enough, the earliest records of the college exemplify core

concerns found among educators throughout the United States at the time. Davidson College leaders had a clear notion of what they wanted to achieve through this institution.

An excellent source for finding an expression of their ideals is the Inaugural Address of Davidson's first president, Reverend Robert Hall Morrison. On 2 August 1838, with rousing oratory and what was surely a powerful speaking voice, President Morrison stated, "The cultivation of an enlightened conscience and a holy heart is the chief end of education." For Morrison, the role of education is to produce a godly disposition. His aim was to achieve a "standard of character" and to provide an education that would liberate students' virtue and keep them from being "enslaved by their vices." Morrison stated, "While 'knowledge is power,' it is education which determines whether this power will be exerted in the promotion of virtue or vice." History provided evidence for his perspective:

> Had Mahomet, Saladin, Voltaire, Hume, Byron, Napoleon, and other such scourges to our race been constrained by the truth and Spirit of God to have surrendered their pride and ambition, and to have lived for the glory of their Maker and the welfare of their fellow men, what woes would have been spared from the catalogue of human wretchedness.

Morrison was unequivocal: "Knowledge which does not lead to the extermination of evil passions and the cultivation of virtuous habits... will prove a curse to its possessor, and an infamy to society."

What was required to achieve such noble aims in the lives of students? The answer is quite simple. The important work of formative education demands the right location. By design, Davidson College was deliberately built away from both Charlotte and Salisbury (at the time, the larger and more significant of the two cities) because cities were seen as corrupting places full of temptation, vice, and immorality. A proper location, like the rural site chosen for Davidson College, allowed for the establishment of a formative retreat center far from centers of vice. The very first line of the first college catalog indicates, "This College [provides] thorough education, at a moderate expense and free from temptations to immorality." The first page of the college catalog for 1842–1843 states, "The Patrons of the Institution... desired a College in which the youthful mind might be trained under the restraints of Christianity..." It continues, "The Patrons of the Institution [are] fully persuaded that any education is too dear when obtained at the expense of sound moral principle..." Moreover, "The location of the College... is highly advantageous in promoting good order and undivided application to study... free from the allurements and noise of a town..." An advertisement for the college printed in 1867 continued to reinforce the importance of character formation, godly living, and the excellence of its location for accomplishing both. Distributed to potential students, their families, and their pastors, the flyer states:

> Founded in the liberality and prayers of pious Presbyterians, the College has already done much to realize the design of its benefactors, in sending out men of piety and learning, many of whom are now in the work of the ministry.
>
> The Students, with very few exceptions, are members of the Church.
>
> There exists among them, a prevalent manly character, as well as a healthy tone of morals...
>
> Situated, as the College is, in so healthy a region, removed from the temptation of towns...

The archives of Davidson College—and in all likelihood, the archives of most other private liberal arts institutions founded in the past century—affirm the finding by historian Laurence R. Veysey in *The Emergence of the American University* that "mental and moral discipline was the purpose which lay behind a fixed, four-year course of study in college" (1965, 23). Veysey, a leading historian of higher education, finds that "College disciplinarians essentially desired a controlled environment for the production of the morally and religiously upright" (25; see also Reuben 1996). Even when the separation of "knowledge" from "morality"

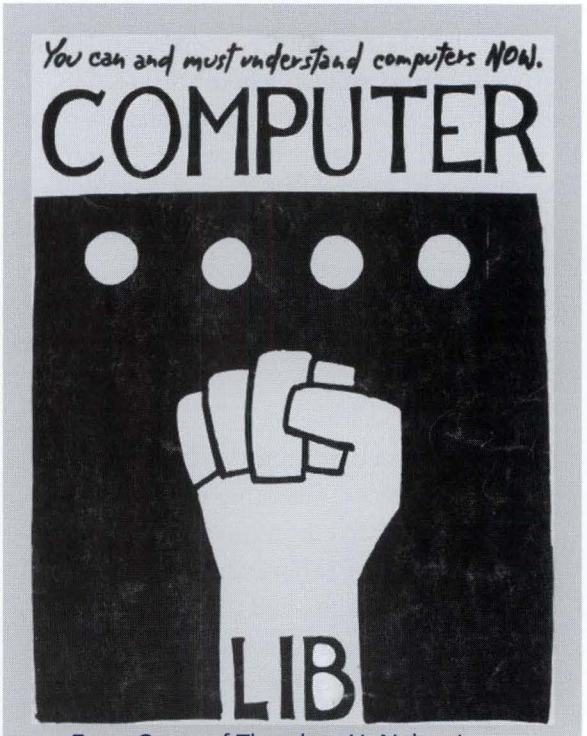
occurred in higher education at the beginning of the twentieth century, the moral development of students remained a priority. An alliance of disciplines (including the emerging "humanistic" discipline of sociology) were involved in the development of good citizens and the addressing of social concerns.

Much of our work as college educators stems from a moral imperative to shape the discipline, virtues, and (sometimes) piety of our students. Our institutions are structured on this principle. Ideally, students focus 100 percent of their attention on their courses and social activities on campus, and, in our own courses, we expect students to depend on our direction, our guidance, and our expertise in shaping their mastery of knowledge and perspective. The ability to accomplish these tasks are based on the fundamental notion embedded in our institutions as *formative retreat centers*. In sum, our institutions of higher education have an underlying moral orientation to operate as a formative retreat for the cultivation of virtuous adults. In general, I suggest that the greater the religious orientation of a college, the greater the formative moral imperative embedded within the institution.

The Hacker Ethic (and Its Concern for Education)

"Hacker ethics," "hacker code," and "hacker culture" are phrases I use heuristically to describe an overarching ethos that fuels the development of our increasingly "connected" (digitally connected, online, and networked) lives (see Mizrach, "Is There a Hacker's Ethic..."; Löwgren 2000). Much of the Internet as we know it is a result of the passionate and largely voluntary work of "hackers" guided by moral values centered on access and freedom. Hackers aren't just the people who illegally break into financial and government networks; hackers include creative pioneers who threaten institutions by mobilizing a broad approach to social life into a movement to transform the human condition. Hackers are engaged technological players who boldly experiment with their techie skills to test the limits of our new digital medium and thereby further the development of human civilization.

A key document representing the Hacker Ethic was distributed in 1974. Theodore H. Nelson wrote what has been called "the most important book in the history of new media" (Wardrip-Fruin and Montfort 2005, 301), a legendary booklet among tech and media people, a two-part tract, titled *Computer Lib/Dream Machines*. It is a prescient piece of work that both exemplifies and predicts the significance and scope of online connectivity. In it, Nelson writes, "You can and must understand



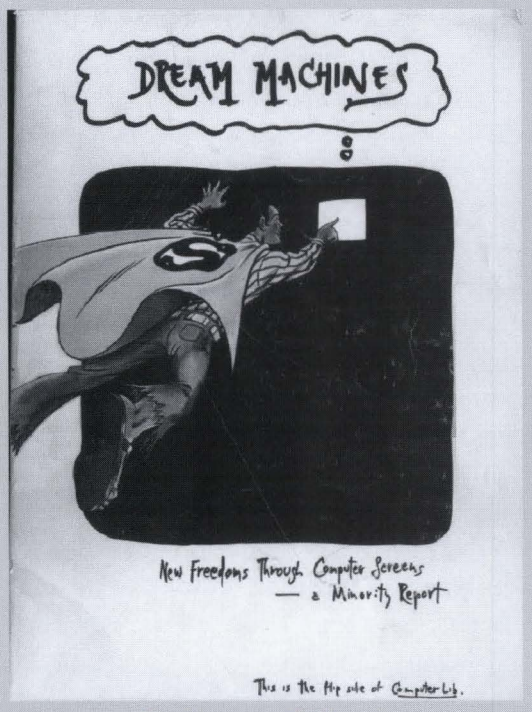
Front Cover of Theodore H. Nelson's *The Hacker Ethic* (1974)

computers now.... The most exciting things here [in proposed dreams for an American future] are those that involve computers: notably, because computers will be embraced in every presentational medium and thoughtful medium very soon." He also writes, "We live in media, as fish live in water... today, at this moment, we can and must design the media, design the molecules of our new water." Nelson believes the importance of computers lay not in their capacity for calculation, but in the fact that they enable new generations of media. "We must create our brave new worlds with art, zest, intelligence, and the highest possible ideals."

Nelson immediately related the potential of computerization and connectivity to education.

Under the heading "Some premises relevant to teaching," he asserts:

> 1. The human mind is born free, yet everywhere it is in chains. The educational system serves mainly to destroy for most people, in varying degrees, intelligence, curiosity, enthusiasm, and intellectual initiative and self-confidence. We are born with these. They are gone



Back cover of Nelson's *The Hacker Ethic* (1974)

> or severely diminished when we leave school.
>
> 2. Everything is interesting, until ruined for us. Nothing in the universe is intrinsically uninteresting. Schooling systematically ruins things for us…
>
> 3. There are no "subjects." The division of the universe into "subjects" for teaching is a matter of tradition and administrative convenience.
>
> 4. There is no natural or necessary order of learning. Teaching sequences are arbitrary, explanatory hierarchies philosophically spurious. "Prerequisites" are a fiction spawned by the division of the world into "subjects"; and maintained by not providing summaries, introductions, or orientational materials except to those arriving through a certain door.
>
> 5. Anyone retaining his natural mental facilities can learn anything practically on his own, given encouragement and resources.
>
> 6. Most teachers mean well, but they are so concerned with promoting their images, attitudes, and style of order that very little else can be communicated in the time remaining, and almost none of it attractively.

Nelson's booklet provides an excellent example of how hackers consistently express a vital concern for knowledge and learning; however, they believe the educational systems we have are broken, working against the very ideals they espouse. Nelson writes passionately about how computers can allow the rejuvenation of the educational process, saying, "Those who are opposed to the use of computers to teach generally believe the computer to be 'cold' and 'inhuman'" (310). Nelson counters, saying, "Living teachers can be as inhuman as members of any people-prodding profession, sometimes more so." Nelson speaks of "freeing teachers for the creative part of their work," at the very least, "to *rescue* the student from the inhuman teacher, and allow him to relate directly and personally to the intrinsically interesting subject matter, then we need to use computers in education." Instead of an education that produces "a nation of sheep or clerks," Nelson argues,

> Education ought to be clear, inviting and enjoyable, without booby-traps, humiliations, condescension or boredom. It ought to teach and reward initiative, curiosity, the habit of self-motivation, intellectual involvement. Students should develop,

through practice, abilities to think, argue and disagree intelligently. Educators and computer enthusiasts tend to agree on these goals.

While some educators see technology as reducing humanity, the Hacker Ethic sees it as a true release of the human spirit. Computers are a source of truth, beauty, and ultimately transformation. Computerized experiences consisted of designed media, and this design should involve a creative process undertaken with the audience (users) in mind. Core to the emerging Hacker Ethic is that media should be collaboratively designed. Moreover, Nelson proposed that designed media experiences should not be hoarded or commodified but placed in a radical, open publishing network. Openness, access, freedom: these became core to the emerging Hacker Ethic.

For Nelson and other hackers the primary enemy is Central Processing in all its commercial, philosophical, political, and socio-economic manifestations. Another publication that boldly condemns the "central processing" of education is *A Hacker Manifesto [version 4.0]* by McKenzie Wark (2004). In a section entitled "Education," Wark writes that the Hacker Ethic desires "knowledge, not education." Professions in higher education have "sold out" to the interests of business and government. "Education is not the same as knowledge"; rather, "Education is slavery." For Wark, "education" is an institutionalized instructional system with allotted roles that perpetuate the status quo. In contrast, hacker knowledge invokes in its practice a politics of free information, free learning, and the gift of sharing results to a network of peers. Hacker knowledge also involves an ethic of knowledge subject to the claims of public interest and free from subordination to commodity production.

The Hacker Ethic embraces flexible hours, creativity, and a passion for one's work. The Hacker Ethic therefore includes a number of principles, such as:

Efficiency of information which involves:
  Space—how much room information takes
  Speed—how fast information is processed
Seat of pants problem solving
Mistrust of authority
Decentralized decision making
Working out of your passion
Joy of discovery
Access, sharing, openness
Free exchange of ideas
Creating a better world

Mark Zuckerberg exemplified the Hacker Ethic in a 2009 interview describing Facebook, saying, "We didn't start with some grand theory but with a project hacked together in a couple of weeks" (quoted in Levy 2010). Every six to eight weeks, the Facebook staff conducts "hackathons" where people have one night to dream up and complete a project. "We have a big belief in moving fast, pushing boundaries, saying it's OK to break things." This orientation is similar to the experiences of computer programming pioneers like Richard Stallman who described the atmosphere at MIT in the 1970s as "Rules did not matter—results mattered" (quoted in Gehring 2004, 46; also see Cyberpunk Project). At Facebook, Zuckerberg said, "We've got this whole ethos that we want to build a hacker culture."

A mantra among hackers is "Less Yack, More Hack." The hacker is a *bricoleur*, involved in "making do," and, in doing so, recovering a non-alienated self. Yet being a "hacker" is more than mere individual inventiveness. It involves a larger set of ideals. A hacker should always practice freedom of expression, respect privacy, catalyze self-initiative, be enthusiastic about involvements, have a passionate attitude toward work, do work that is truly enjoyed, exercise creativity, and promote the desire to realize oneself and one's ability, often in teams formed spontaneously around "projects." The Hacker Ethic incorporates a curious relationship between intense isolation and radical sociability. Being a hacker is not truly solitary but rather involves cultivating rich communities of interest instead of forced communities of instruction. Trevor Owens, an information technology specialist with the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIP)

in the Office of Strategic Initiatives at the Library of Congress, used the phrase "The Interest Driven Curriculum" oriented around "Online Affinity Communities" to describe this approach to education (Owens 2010). The fruits of one's intellectual labor are donated to everybody for advances and further developments.

The hacker work ethic involves a desire to share one's skills with a community united by common goals, along with the need to acquire recognition from peers. The value for free distribution and peer recognition is fueling today's most exciting and transformative online experiences. Hacker ethics disdain monetary rewards for achievements, preferring what the open-sourcers label "Egoboo" (short for "Ego Boost"), which represents the respect of one's peers for work done freely, voluntarily. Free distribution is an attempt to establish systems based on a "gift economy," and the best representation of free distribution is the Open Source Movement. The open source operating system Linux, established by Linus Torvalds and collaboratively constructed, exemplifies the principles of the Open Source Movement where transparency, distribution, exploration, and craftsmanship are fundamental.

Also central to the Hacker Ethic is *playfulness*. At a 2006 O'Reilly Emerging Technology Conference, Matt Webb and Ben Cerveny wrote, "Hacking is a playful act. In a primal sense, play is the investigation and experimentation with borders and combinations" (O'Reilly Emerging Technology Conference, website). Despite early, highly structured approaches to computing in mainframe laboratories in the mid-twentieth century, a computing culture of iterative experimental hacking has evolved that is essentially playful. Hacking as play emerged in response to the Cold War environment where the first "hacks" were parasitic on established systems and at the same time working against the system. Richard Stallman writes about hacking as "playfulness, cleverness, and exploration." He writes, "Hacking means exploring the limits of what is possible in a spirit of playful cleverness." Activities that display playful cleverness have "hack value." Essentially, "Playfully doing something difficult, whether useful or not, that is hacking" (Stallman, "On Hacking.")

The Hacker Ethic has been so successful in producing useful knowledge that we now count on the free flow of information. Today, digitally mediated information has become remarkably convenient with greater accessibility, quick connection times, and wide geographic breadth at declining cost. Access to computers networks—the means by which one could achieve learning and contact with others in communities of interest and concern—is becoming virtually unlimited and total. Digitally mediated communication also is characterized by enormous capacity as online communication allows for significant data and larger numbers of people participating. At the same time that the Hacker Ethic is useful, it also creates instability and anxiety, especially as hackers push programs beyond what they are designed to do.

Underlying Conflict between Hacker Ethic and Formative Retreat

Stewart Brand, creator of the Whole Earth Catalog, famously said, "Information *wants* to be free..." The Open Source Movement and the aggressive push for "open access" urges educators to accept that all information *should* be free. The Hacker Ethic applied within institutions of higher education therefore involves much more than "the strategic use of technology for teaching and learning" (Bates 2010). It is more than using Twitter as "a teaching and learning tool" (Barrett 2008), as valuable as that is. It involves more than understanding "ambient intimacy" and other forms of scalable sociability (Reichelt 2007). And it is certainly beyond the attainment of mere technological competency (Young 2010). The Hacker Ethic is not represented in the hiring of companies to build your university's online courses (Parry, "Outsourced Ed," 2010) or what some people see as the cash cow of distance learning (Kolowich 2009). Instead, the free distribution of knowledge encompasses a holistic philosophy toward education that is becoming ubiquitous in our society.

One small example is the increased availability of digital information. On 12 October 2010, an agreement was announced between the University of Virginia Press and the National Archives to make tens of thousands of the Founders' papers

(annotated and searchable) available online for free (Bromley 2010). Also in the first week of October 2010, Robert Darnton, a historian who heads up the Harvard library system, had a secret meeting with forty-two high-level representatives of other institutions and foundations, to endorse the creation of a "Digital Public Library of America," described as "an open, distributed network of comprehensive online resources" culled from America's libraries, archives, museums, and universities (Howard 2010). If this appears futuristic, we should note that the United States is a little behind. In August 2010, the United Nations launched its own World Digital Library (www.wdl.org/en).

A more significant example comes from another announcement made in October 2010. In a "Call for Open Textbooks" a student activist group called for textbooks to be made "freely available by their authors" so that they can be "chopped up and manipulated by professors who use them" (Kolowich 2010). The management of content is being put up for grabs. So is the desire for access to scholarly knowledge. The growth of "Open Access journals" is part of the movement of broad publication and easy accessibility. Even the growing number of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary efforts can be seen as an aspect of the movement which shifts traditional approaches not only to the boundaries of scholarship but to hiring, administration, curriculum design, and pedagogy. The push toward greater "openness" in higher education through digital access is expanding even further. Initiatives exist to bring about a "reunification" of online and offline learning, a goal captured in the new pedagogical phrase "blended contexts." In 2010, colleges saw a 17 percent increase in online enrollment, and more than one in four students have taken at least one online course since the fall of 2008, according to an annual survey by the Sloan Consortium (Parry, "Colleges See 17 Percent Increase..." 2010). The continued development of virtual learning environments like the online communities Moodle and Sakai also accentuate openness, distribution, and self-pacing. There are now self-paced online courses for which professors are paid not *per class* but *per student.* ("One student, desperate to graduate, knocked off 113 quizzes and six writing assignments for a humanities course in forty-six sleepless hours." Quoted in Parry, "Will Technology Kill the Academic Calendar?" 2010).

The most aggressive mainstream effort to integrate the Hacker Ethic into higher education is represented in the financial commitments made by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to displace traditional forms of education (Parry, "Gates Offers Major Money..." 2010). In late 2010, senior program officer Josh Jarrett stated, "We'll issue a set of challenges this fall around shared open-core courseware, around learning analytics, around blended learning, and around new, deeper forms of learning and engagement using interactive technologies." Jarrett said, "If in a traditional world my faculty is my primary relationship—and maybe some of the twenty-nine other students in the classroom—technology is starting to afford different types of relationships..." His comments complement a statement made in August 2010 by Bill Gates himself at the Techonomy conference in Lake Tahoe, California. Gates talked about how college needs to be less "place-based." The title of an article from the event summarized his comments: "In Five Years The Best Education Will Come from the Web" (Siegler 2010).

Does this sound too sensational? Note that the Gates Foundation committed up to $80 million to this effort over the next four years. A *Times Higher Education* article states, "Open learning and new technology are about to smash the structure of the modern university." Peter Smith, senior vice-president of academic strategies and development for the private US firm Kaplan Higher Education and a former assistant director general for education at UNESCO, told an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development conference in Paris in September 2010, "Faculty and people who run universities are no longer in control" (Morgan 2010). Recall that in the moral orientation of hacker ethics, freedom is a goal to be maximized, even essentialized. Contrast this with historian Laurence R. Veysey's observation that the development of American higher education was embedded with the assumption that "College disciplinarians essentially desired a controlled environment

for the production of the morally and religiously upright." The contrasts between *formative retreat* and *hacker ethics* are especially embedded in church-related institutions.

Church-related higher education best captures the dilemma between hacker ethics and disciplined formation. As the goals of discipline and piety are accentuated in an institution of higher education, the tendency to see students as "not-yet-adults" increases and forms of paternalism are enacted. The essential tension between the ethics of formative retreat and Hacker Ethic is based in part on the assessment of who qualifies as an "adult." Understanding the difference in approaching "adulthood" is significant for church-related higher education as institutional assumptions often operate on the principle that freedom should be productively constrained. Moreover, an age-bias is embedded within hacker ethics, as this orientation tends to assume that younger people are faster, more able to focus intensely, more willing to work against obstructive authority, and in many ways are essentially smarter than "adults."

The Exploit

In describing the Hacker Ethic, I am not interested in romanticizing an image of computer technology or digital connectivity. Yet, I suspect that as educators we may be guilty of romanticizing an era of higher education that will no longer exist. As an educator, I acknowledge that different forms of education have occurred throughout history. The history of higher education is rich and varied, including Plato's gymnasium, the medieval University of Salamanca or Bologna, the religious colleges of New England, research universities like Johns Hopkins which imported conceptions from Germany, and the open curriculum pioneered at Harvard and Chicago. In addition, there are numerous technical and residential colleges with their own distinctive foci and experiments. We now have online degree programs, distance learning, and decentralized faculty. Who knows what comes next? We can be confident that in one hundred years, the character of higher education will be different from what we know today.

There are rich possibilities for education within the Hacker Ethic. Yes, it can be criticized for lacking cohesion. Who are the core representatives? Where are the concrete action points? What are the primary frames? Those who share in the Hacker Ethic say it is intended to be a dispersed set of phenomena. Perhaps it is too "young" an orientation to be routinized and institutionalized. Or perhaps it is perpetually in motion. Consider a book printed by Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman titled *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals* (2004). The authors define concepts inherent to the Hacker Ethic like "play," "design," and "interactivity." The book looks at games through a series of eighteen "game design schemas," or conceptual frameworks, including games as systems of emergence and information, as contexts for social play, as storytelling media, and as sites of cultural resistance. Perhaps a structure of openness and the uncertainty invoked in notions of gaming will replace more hierarchical conceptions in educational systems.

Our educational systems are full of ever more students, colleagues, and administrators increasingly acclimated to the hacker ethic. They bring conceptions of freedom, distribution, and play in novel and fruitful ways into their classrooms, their scholarship, and their leadership.

Hackers have a term called "The Exploit." The exploit represents the "hole" that lets you do things the system was not originally designed to do. I suggest that our educational systems are full of ever more students, colleagues, and administrators who are increasingly acclimated to the Hacker Ethic. In novel and fruitful ways they bring conceptions of freedom, distribution, and play into their class-

rooms, their scholarship, and their leadership. Even though our systems of higher education were not designed with the principles of hacker ethics in mind, the subversive nature of the Hacker Ethic will surely find its way into our structures and our bureaucracies. Already, bending "the rules" for many people is simply a way of getting things accomplished. We should not be surprised if we find people in our educational systems "bending rules" along the lines of the Hacker Ethic, engagingly "exploiting" systems in pursuit of new approaches to pedagogy, research, and management. While those who are less ambitious might consider mimicking physical space online or minimizing digital dynamics, the more transformative route would be to have the courage to open ourselves to the unseen possibilities in the design of human interaction now made possible through the radical expansion of new forms of communication. It is not the distant future of higher education, but our all-too-real present.

In the first Inaugural Address of Davidson College in 1838, President Robert Hall Morrison said, "Education must be defective if it fails to cultivate all the powers of our nature." I find a surprising resonance between President Morrison's nineteenth century approach to education and that of the technological visionary Theodore H. Nelson who wrote in his 1974 *Computer Lib/Dream Machines*, "It is for the Wholiness of the human spirit that we must design." Rather than retrenching into our formative retreat or naïvely embracing the Hacker Ethic uncritically, perhaps a fusion of insights from these two men suggests a path. In taking up the capacity to cultivate humanity and proactively design for the richness of the human spirit with the tools now available to us, we not only create the future of education, we also empower ourselves to shape the best possible future of our world. And we can do it together.

Gerardo Marti is the L. Richardson King Associate Professor of Sociology at Davidson College.

Works Cited

Barrett, Tom. "Twitter—A Teaching and Learning Tool." *Edte.ch*, website. 29 March 2008. http://edte.ch/blog/2008/03/29/twitter-a-teaching-and-learning-tool.

Bates, Tony. "Designing campuses for e-learning." *E-learning and Distance Education Resources*, website. 9 August 2010. http://www.tonybates.ca/2010/08/09/designing-campuses-for-e-learning.

Bromley, Anne. "Grant Allows U.Va. Press to Make Founders' Documents Online Free to Public." *UVA Today*, website. 11 October 2010. http://www.virginia.edu/uvatoday/newsRelease.php?id=13117

Cyberpunk Project, website. "The Hacker Ethic." http://project.cyberpunk.ru/idb/hacker_ethics.html.

Faculty Focus Special Report. "Twitter in Higher Education 2010: Usage Habits and Trends of Today's College Faculty." Manga Publications, 2010. http://www.facultyfocus.com.

Gehring, Verna. *The Internet in Public Life*. New York: Roman and Littlefield, 2004.

Howard, Jennifer. "One Step Closer to a National Digital Library." *Wired Campus Blog*, 6 October 2010. http://chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/one-step-closer-to-a-national-digital-library/27491.

Kolowich, Steve. "A Call for Open Textbooks." *Inside Higher Ed*, website. 1 October 2010. http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/10/01/textbooks.

_____. "Online Education's Great Unknowns." *Inside Higher Ed*, website. 22 October 2009. http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/10/22/online.

Levy, Steven. "Geek Power." *Wired,* Vol. 18, No. 5 (May 2010): 80–89, 126–129.

_____. *Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution*. New York, Doubleday, 1984.

Löwgren, Jonas, "Hacker culture(s)." Lecture notes, 23 February 2000. http://webzone.k3.mah.se/k3jolo/HackerCultures/index.htm.

Mizrach, Steven. "Is there a Hacker Ethic for 90s Hackers?" Published online. http://www2.fiu.edu/~mizrachs/hackethic.html.

Morgan, John. "Universities are blind to open-learning train set to smash up their models." *The Times Higher Education*. 23 September 2010. http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=413596.

Nelson, Theodore H. *Computer Lib/Dream Machines*. Self-published by author, 1974.

O'Reilly Emerging Technologies Conference, 6–9 March 2006, website. "Session: *playsh*, the Playful Shell." Matt Webb and Ben Cerveny, directors. http://conferences.oreillynet.com/cs/et2006/view/e_sess/7893.

Owens, Trevor, personal website. "The Interest Driven Curriculum and Online Affinity Communities." 2 May 2010. http://www.trevorowens.org/2010/05/the-interest-driven-curriculum-and-online-affinity-communities.

Parry, Marc. "Colleges See 17 Percent Increase in Online Enrollment." *Wired Campus Blog*, 26 January 2010. http://chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/colleges-see-17-percent-increase-in-online-enrollment/20820.

_____. "Gates Offers Major Money for Technology-Inspired Learning." *The Chronicle of Higher Education.* 10 October 2010. http://chronicle.com/article/article-content/124859.

_____. "Outsourced Ed: Colleges Hire Companies to Build Their Online Courses." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 18 July 2010. http://chronicle.com/article/Outsourced-Ed-Colleges-Hire/66309.

_____. "Will Technology Kill the Academic Calendar? Online, Semesters Give Way to Students Who Set Their Own Schedules." *The Chronicle of Higher Education.* 10 October 2010. http://chronicle.com/article/article-content/124857.

Reichelt, Leisa, "Reboot 9.0—Ambient Intimacy." *Disambiguity*, website. 4 June 2007. http://www.disambiguity.com/reboot-90-ambient-intimacy.

Reuben, Julie A. *The Making of the Modern University: Intellectual Transformation and the Marginalization of Morality.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Salen, Katie and Eric Zimmerman. *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004.

Siegler, MG. "Bill Gates: In Five Years The Best Education Will Come From The Web." *TechCrunch*, website. 6 August 2010. http://techcrunch.com/2010/08/06/bill-gates-education.

Stallman, Richard, personal homepage. "On Hacking." http://stallman.org/articles/on-hacking.html.

Veysey, Laurence R. *The Emergence of the American University*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965.

Wardrip-Fruin, Noah and Nick Montfort, eds. *The New Media Reader*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2005.

Wark, McKenzie. *A Hacker Manifesto*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004. http://subsol.c3.hu/subsol_2/contributors0/warktext.html.

Young, Jeffrey R. "How Social Networking Helps Teaching (and Worries Some Professors)." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 22 July 2010. http://chronicle.com/article/How-Social-Networking-Helps/123654.

Where is the University Now?

Education and Place in Global Space

Vincent J. Miller

Globalization is profoundly transforming the social spaces in which our particular places and institutions are constructed. Globalization is not, however, a process that simply creates new and larger places. It is a transformation that fundamentally changes the nature of social space in a way that affects all of our places. These changes in the nature of space challenge many of the assumptions implicit in our understanding and practice of higher education.

Globalization provides both profound challenges and opportunities. Much of what follows will focus on how previous spatial orders are being eroded and thus will have a pessimistic tone. For that reason, I begin by invoking the enormous positive possibilities that many of the dynamisms of globalization present to us.

Pope John Paul II was able to see beyond the neo-liberal assumptions that have dominated discussions of globalization since the 1980s and offer a positive vision of globalization. He famously spoke of the possibility of a "globalization of solidarity" (John Paul II 1998, §3; 1999, §55). Transportation and communication technologies provide unprecedented possibilities for communication, coordination, and cooperation both within and between groups. John Paul's ability to see the hopeful potential amidst the chaos and exploitation of actually existing globalization was grounded in a Christian imagination. Christianity is a missionizing religion and has its own deep dogmatic reasons for imagining the ultimate communion of all peoples and for discerning the particular character of that communion. These doctrines provide Christianity with potential resources for a spatial imagination.

Edward Soja has argued that modernity and modern critical thought are marked by a "hegemonic... historicism of theoretical consciousness" which so preferences the historical over the spatial that it is blinded to the undeniably spatial aspects of human sociality and solidarity and to our dependence and impact upon our environment (1989, 10–11). Much the same can be said about Christianity. Despite its fundamental spatial concerns, the modern understanding of the Pascal Mystery and discipleship—of God's work in the world and our graced response to it—has been conceived overwhelmingly in terms of time and history. This has its most compact expression in the call found in *Gaudium et Spes*, one of four constitutions resulting from Vatican II, for the faithful to read "the signs of the times," to listen to and learn from events in recent history.

There is much that is good in this conception, and as *Gaudium et Spes* clearly shows, historical concerns need not obscure those conceived in spatial terms. Nonetheless, this temporal focus inclines to a deficient form of cosmopolitanism concerned primarily with the "big issues" being debated in metropoles and capitals. Thus, the message is often conveyed that smaller locals are backwaters; history is taking place elsewhere. This was precisely the experience I had growing up in the rapidly rusting city of Pittsburgh in the late 1970s and 1980s. In large ways and small, we learned that the tide of history had once been there but had since gone elsewhere. Such a perspective runs afoul of the catholicity

of the Church, which requires us to attend to the fullness of salvation for all places (Miller 2008, 412–432). J. M. R. Tillard described the catholic imperative to engage the depths of the local as the divine gift of fullness "'plung[ing] its roots' into the soil of diverse human cultures" (Tillard 1995, 126; Ruddy 2006, 66).

Soja quotes John Berger, "Prophecy now involves a geographical rather than historical projection; it is space not time that hides consequences from us" (Berger 1971, 40). Christianity envisions salvation embracing all persons, creatures, and places, even the backwaters of history. What would it take to put the ideal of the globalization of solidarity into actual practice?

Higher Education and Space

Such concerns are relevant to higher education in general and to Christian affiliated higher education in particular. The liberal arts have always had an explicit or implicit relationship to particular spaces: e.g., the Greek polis, various ancient imperial bureaucracies, the Latinate cosmopolitanism of medieval Christendom, Renaissance city states, modern European state bureaucracies, the modern nation state and its imperial variants, and most recently what Aiwa Ong describes as "neoliberal citizenship" in the current global context.

The university and its precursors have had complex relationships with these contexts. Scholars and schools relied upon them for their existence. They provided education for citizens and functionaries, even as they aspired to transform or even subvert them. Ong observes that American higher education has long addressed students as both citizens and as rationally calculative professionals (2006, 149). These two dimensions of the student were held together by more than personal character. The broader context of national space balanced individual careers and professional actions with the accountability of citizenship within local and national community.

The local nature of economic production and consumption reinforced this balance. The so-called "Fordist" economy of the twentieth century is a case in point. The intensification of industrial capitalism required a concord between state, capital, and labor that kept stakeholders in close proximity. Both Henry Ford's notorious experiment with the "social department" that monitored the home life of employees and what Saskia Sassen has termed the "Fordist family wage" made the point that factory owners were dependent on the social stability of labor for successful production (Sassen 2001, 332; 1998, Chs. 1, 5). This was evident as well in the broad array of investments in and support for local education and civic life that industrialists contributed to town and urban places in the twentieth century.

In this economy, markets overlapped with the scale of government. As a result, negative market externalities (pollution, dangerous working conditions, etc.) were susceptible to political correction. In this era, the political world of the citizen overlapped with the economic life of the worker, professional, or owner.

This was also an era in which many of our assumptions about culture were formed. Benedict Anderson (1983) has shown the important role that "print capitalism" played in the emergence of nationalism. The printing press precipitated the emergence of "print vernaculars" that forged diverse spoken vernacular languages into national-scale linguistic zones. The further technological developments that gave rise to the twentieth century mass media reinforced this effect by creating national-scale entertainment and public spheres. Both culture and what we might call the "public epistemology" of the news mapped to national space.

Here we can return to the historical focus of modern Christianity. While often concerned primarily with universal salvation history, that history was frequently imagined and experienced within the national spatial scale. The notion of "the signs of the time" spoke profoundly to generations involved in national independence movements, the struggle for women's equality, and other civil rights movements. All of these, despite their cultural dimensions, were still deployed to transform or appeal to national legal regimes and political communities.

This national spatial context provided the unity presumed by the deepening specializa-

tion in universities over the last half-century. Universities could produce and train students in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and technology without an overarching intellectual synthesis to hold them together. Advanced research and training in potentially revolutionary fields such as psychopharmacology, embryonic biology, and weapons systems could be undertaken without requiring similarly advanced training in ethics, because moral evaluation presumably would take place in national civil society and politics where experts in both ethics and technology would contribute their complementary expertise.

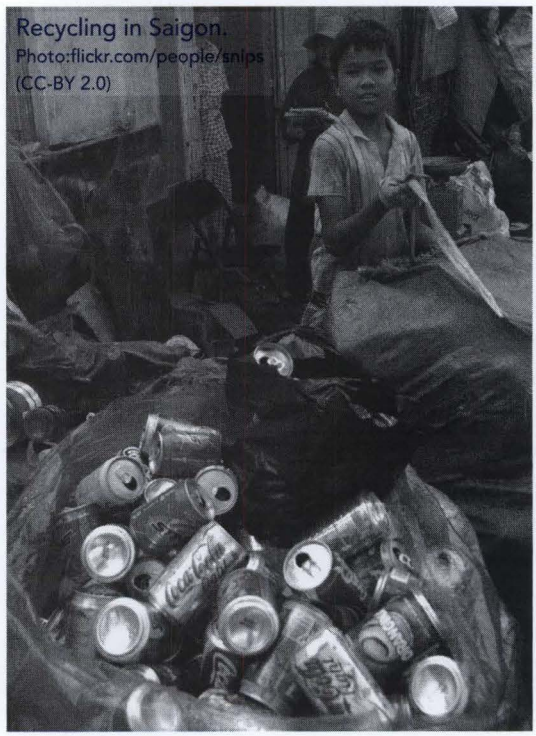
The Unwinding of the National Scale

The economic and political changes of the past forty years, brought about by the multiple dynamisms of globalization have fundamentally changed the spatial context within which we work, rendering these assumptions problematic.

We can begin with the most basic economic changes. The Fordist economic equilibrium underwent sustained crisis in the 1970s as national markets for durable goods began to reach saturation and thus were unable to continue to fuel the rapid growth necessary to sustain large-scale, vertically integrated firms and labor's expectations for an ever rising standard of living. In response, businesses sought flexibility in sourcing, production, and labor relations.

At the same time, advances in information technology and transportation, along with ideological/political support for free trade, enabled an explosive growth in outsourcing and gave rise to the global commodity chains that characterize most industrial production today. These brought about what Thomas Princen has termed the "distancing" of production from consumption, which systematically deprives end consumers of feedback concerning the full costs and conditions of production of the goods they consume. Our goods seem to arrive from an "infinite frontier": a place where resources are never depleted, waste can be disposed of without consequence, and labor costs can be infinitely reduced (Princen 2002, 116–117). Although there could never be any such place, our consumption trains us to imagine that we live in one.

Of course, any form of commodity exchange can encourage negative externalities; in a global context, however, these externalities often take place beyond the boundaries of the national political community. The impoverished children of underpaid workers, the victims of industrial pollution, and the despoiled landscapes that are part of the story of our standard of living are so



Recycling in Saigon.
Photo:flickr.com/people/snips
(CC-BY 2.0)

scattered and distant that they are never brought into what remains of our civil and political discourse. They are also outside the regulatory scope of our national government. This is not to say these things receive no attention. Naomi Klein is a worthy successor to Harriet Beecher Stowe, Upton Sinclair, and Rachel Carson. But, to overwork a metaphor: the consequences of our actions render others' springs silent, not our own.

The nation-state ceases to be the primary "container" of social processes. Saskia Sassen describes the emergent global social order as the "partial unbundling" of the economic, political, and cultural processes that the modern nation-state comprised (Sassen 2006, 423). The nation-state is not about to disappear, but it no

longer serves either to organize a settled hierarchical spatial scale that binds together local places, towns, cities, regions, and states or to relate these to other nationally scaled spaces on the international level.

Emergent Global Space

This account is offered not as a definitive description of the new form of space coming into existence, but as a description of the changes that are already underway. What is emerging is not simply a replacement—a new spatial scale or a different container of social processes—but a fundamentally different form of social space that constitutes a different social physics. Previous social spaces from the local to the national are now being reconstituted from space that has different constants. The metaphors of "spheres" and the bounded, contiguous plains of national maps lose their illuminative power. In contrast to the bounded, territorial model of the nation state, global space is disjunctive (constituted in intersections of disparate elements) and deterritorialized (not easily mapable by shared understandings).

Disjuncture

Arjun Appadurai chooses the world disjuncture—the opposite of conjunction—to describe the interactions that take place in global space. Myriad actors and dynamisms interact, often from great distance. Globalization has not brought us a "global village" or "space-time compression," but something better described as "complex connectivity" (McLuhan 1964; Harvey 1989; Tomlinson 1999). Space is understood better in terms of oblique intersections and nexuses. Appadurai describes the chaotic interplay of different dynamisms: abstract ethnicity serving new ends in diaspora communities; technologies with unpredictable effects in their cultures of origins and abroad; fragments of political ideology at work in contexts far different from their origins; revolutionizing and debilitating flows of hot capital; and the near capillary reach of commercial popular culture, the products of which are received and practiced according to the needs and imaginations of consumers, bringing quite unpredictable results, such as the rather unexpected popularity of Kenny Rogers in the Philippines or anti-Western militants finding inspiration in Rambo movies (Appadurai 1996, 7, 29).

This is a world where farming practices in one corner of the globe can breed new forms of influenza that quickly become endemic everywhere; where a small group of militants spurred by the unremarked religious dimensions of geopolitical strategy, frustration in their own domestic contexts, and outrage at the moral decadence evident in Western media can organize to act across national borders with historic effect; where Jamaican chicken farmers are priced out of business not by focused competition but by the fact that US producers have to do something with the cuts of chicken unwanted by three hundred million Americans fixated on boneless, skinless chicken breasts one moment and chicken wings the next.

Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing offers the provocative metaphor of "friction" to describe the sorts of social interaction that take place in this global context. The metaphor is provocative not for the familiarity of its meaning, but for its oddness. Friction here does not mean the sorts of political pushback experienced by politicians adopting unpopular policies or reformers trying to transform society. Tsing uses the term friction precisely to denote the lack of a shared understanding of what is being undertaken in the "awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across difference" (Tsing 2005, 3).

Friction describes the often minimal cooperations necessary for global capital flows to impact the real world. The central example of Tsing's study is a rare environmental victory on southern Borneo, in which indigenous forest dwellers, provincial nature lovers, and national environmental organizations joined forces to end a logging concession that threatened an indigenous village. What at first glance seems an exemplary example of coalition building, upon closer examination becomes quite confusing. Each group had profoundly different understandings of what was at stake: the personal authority of village leaders,

preservation of wilderness, and indigenous forest dwellers' rights to communal management of the forest. Furthermore the various participants offered incommensurable accounts of both the events that took place and the actions that brought them about. Global space brings about encounters of enormous consequence, in situations where the parties have little opportunity to understand either the stakes or the other parties involved.

Global space is unpredictable. The vastly expanded range of potential interactions renders them unforeseeable and difficult to comprehend. Anonymous forces act from a great distance, cross-cultural encounters occur with greater frequency and across greater difference. In contrast to the relatively homogeneous fields of national space, global space becomes increasingly "lumpy" as interactions are focused in particular nexus points—ranging from global cities and concentrations of natural resources to small towns located near interstate highways (Sassen 2006, 299).

Deterritorialization

The second characteristic of global space is its deterritorialization. Jose Casanova offers a helpful analogy: territory is to space as history is to time (2001, 428). Territory is ordered space that we can make sense of and act within. Two aspects of deterritorialization are particularly relevant here: its non-public nature and its concomitant tendency to encourage something that resembles sectarianism.

First, since disjunctive space works according to intersections rather than shared domains, it does not easily add up to a shared public mapping. This does not, however, mean that it is private. Sassen's terminology of "illegibility" is helpful here. It directs us away from the liberal political assumptions within the concept of "public"—that things are open for debate. The problem is more fundamental. Prior to the questions of debatability and participation lies the fact that space is simply not known in a shared framework of knowledge.

The revolution being wrought by teen texting is illuminative of this illegibility. Cell phones provide adolescents with a communication network that reaches into, but does not appear within, the shared spaces of the home, in contrast to the telephone land-line with its audible ring, a knock at the front door, or good old-fashioned yelling from the street. Intricate plans are arranged which are then presented to parents (or at least to my spouse and I) as *faits accompli.* While this could be accurately construed as a challenge to parental authority, it is more noteworthy for its construction of space. Planning takes place in a way that simply isn't visible or sharable. Parents don't have the opportunity to speak to other parents during the process or to contribute salient facts about the plans of other family members outside of the texting network. Plans emerge fully hatched in the midst of the rest of family life.

While this is not a trivial example, a profoundly less trivial one can be found in the digital trunk lines that encircle the globe. It is a striking fact that global financial transactions are carried out in proprietary networks separate from the data trunks of the public Internet (Sassen 2007, 90ff). That which is private here is not simply that which is not public, but that which is proprietary and invisible. The global is not simply an expansion of previously publically shared spaces; it is the proliferation of multiple orders, many invisible, that can operate at vast distances with profound effects on people who have no access to, or even awareness, of their inner workings.

The second aspect of deterritorialization is consequent upon the first. Deterritorialized space does not lend itself to comprehensive imagining. As minority communities know all too well, the settled scales of national space elide much of the complexity of life and censor opposing spatial narratives. Nevertheless, even in its inadequacies, national space provides a shared imagination of the world upon which action can be planned and against which resistance can be articulated. The domestic economy provided some way of balancing the books: economic production required investment in infrastructure, management of resources, and a population with sufficient means to provide a market for the goods produced. "In an earlier generation, social policy was based on the belief that nations, and within nations, cities, could control their fortunes; now, a divide is

opening between polity and economy.... Since nation-states remain the sole frame for book balancing and the sole sources of effective political initiative, the 'transnationality' of eroding forces puts them outside the realm of deliberate, purposeful and potentially rational action" (Bauman 1998, 55, 56; citing Sennett, 1995, 13).

The national scale is, in this sense, the development and heir of previous, territorial socio-political scales. It is within this sort of well-territorialized space that religious traditions have developed. In such contexts, ideals are forced to contend with and engage the status quo. The ontologies and anthropologies implicit in religious doctrines, their moral principles, and specific precepts had to be brought to bear on life as it was lived in its full material complexity. Thus the traditions developed sophisticated systems of casuistry, jurisprudence, and practical wisdom for making these connections.

In the current spatial context, with its vastly reduced feedback concerning the origins of the goods that we require for survival and that undergird our form of life, and with the chaotic, disjunctive character of the interaction that globalization creates, our traditional ideals—religious and otherwise—are in danger of floating into more abstract forms of ideology and becoming ideal values that take no responsibility for their consequences in the world. This is more than a simple application of Weber's distinction between an ethics of conviction and an ethics of responsibility. When the world ceases to be imaginable as a coherent whole whose structures and logic we can engage with our ideals, our beliefs and commitments get refigured in fideistic and voluntaristic terms as matters of commitment and identity that are not open to evaluation from their concrete effects. Traditions are transformed as beliefs and practices are no longer held together in space and time to allow long-term, life-scale reflection on their wisdom.

Global Cities

Global cities are the space in which our students will live out their careers and vocations. Those who aspire to be global "mobiles" will work in global cities. Global cities are paradoxical: sites of both isolation and encounter.

While such places as Manhattan, São Paulo, Dubai, Shanghai, or Kuala Lumpur are located within diverse cultures, the business centers of such cities are often more integrated into the space of global corporate and financial networks than into their geographical region or even the cities whose name they bear. Professionals working there will interact with other traders and consult with firms headquartered in other global cities. Think of an executive or trader for a Singapore bank working in Manhattan. She could live there for many years without having significant cultural contact with the other boroughs of New York, let alone New Jersey. She will likely visit other American global cities and resort areas, flying over the vast strange cipher of America that lies between them. Living in the space of the global mobile, there is not much time or need to attend to the politics of the places they are near: issues of school funding, public health, unemployment.


Photo by David Bacon. Used with Permission.

One can be there and not really be bound by the historic space, culture, or politics of the city or country at all.

This is a profound problem for our desire to instill in students a thick conception of vocation. Their work lives will be doubly isolated: from the consequences of their professional decisions through global financial and commodity chains, and from the communities in which they work. They are isolated from the feedback and obliging relations that demand accountability and responsibility, virtue, and character. The losses of broader spatial and social contexts combine to operationalize and even algorithmize their exercise of professional life. They undertake actions that have effects *through* space, but they do not act *in* space and face the consequences of their actions.

Global cities are, however, paradoxical. They are also dense sites of interaction that host new forms of cross-cultural encounters. Previously marginalized urban groups are brought into close proximity with global elites. Migrants in other global circuits intersect in global cities. The office and apartment buildings that serve the global class are built by migrant laborers from Latin America or Pakistan and cleaned by other migrants from Latin America, Africa, and the Philippines—a reality Stephan Frears compellingly portrayed in the film *Dirty, Pretty Things*. Sassen describes a shift from civic to an urban space politicized along multiple differences (Sassen 2007, 127).

This has multiple outcomes. On the negative side, the high tension of these juxtapositions of the hyperwealthy and the global underclass encourages a politics of barriers and exclusion. On the positive side, it can provide positive encounters across vast class and cultural differences. These encounters can indeed be face-to-face. While this is very much a gain, unfortunately it takes place on the personal scale and does not easily expand to a broader political sphere that could render such encounters visible, sharable, and public.

Here we see one final aspect of the places our students are preparing to work. Their experience of the globe will be highly personal, as will the global network they develop. At Georgetown University, where I once taught, many of the students were from the class of global mobiles. While they lived around the world, some even in third-world manufacturing centers that their parents managed or owned, their experience was nonetheless mostly of the separate spaces of the global class. They almost universally described the global in terms of their personal networks of relatives, friends, and experiences. Students who offered some thick account of life in the third world or their home culture stood out as exceptions. In a classroom discussion, I once observed that this personal mapping was their default and that this bode ill for hopes for an engaged cosmopolitan politics. To my surprise, they accepted both my portrayal of their default understanding and of its political and ethical deficits.

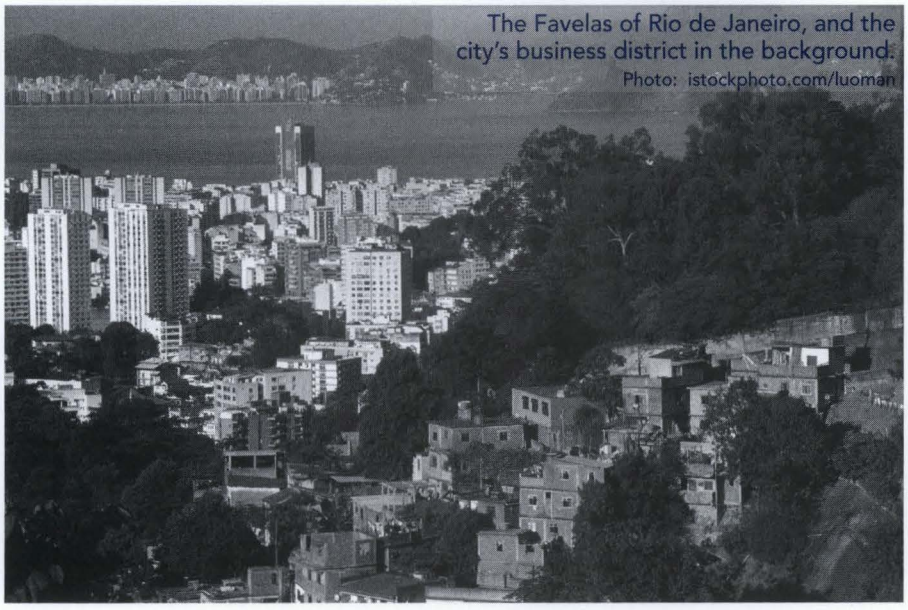
Here, global space resembles a Facebook newsfeed page. The home page for Facebook users presents itself as a hybrid of a news site and blog, with various posts and a highly participatory set of comments. But this isn't public space; it is the nexus of one's personal friends list and their friends' lists. It can stretch around the world and across political and cultural divides, but it remains a personal network. The shared space that appears on the screen is unique to the viewer.

Smaller Cities and Towns are Globalized as Well

But of course, not all of our students aspire to be global mobiles or to work in global cities. Some plan to work in major national cities; others hope to work in smaller cities and towns. Globalization, as many have learned at the expense of their livelihoods, is not a matter of the world out there. Globalization is changing the physics of social space in a way that reforms all of our places. While smaller cities and towns are not the dense nexuses of global cities, they nonetheless experience the disjunctures and deterritorialization of global space.

Work in a smaller city or town is generally marked by the same economic abstraction as we described in the global city. Firms are transnational or held by larger holding companies. Even local, privately-held manufacturers are inextricably tied into global commodity sourcing and marketing.

We are far from the time when the decisions of local firms were manifest in consequences evident solely on the local level. Thus professionals face the same pressures toward a thinly operational mode of decision-making. Local politics becomes increasingly disempowered as the forces affecting the community become increasingly distant. Community organizing models thus also undergo crises as stakeholders and relevant decision makers and responsible parties cannot easily be brought together.



The Favelas of Rio de Janeiro, and the city's business district in the background.
Photo: istockphoto.com/luoman

Local life on any scale is also marked by a cultural abstraction similar to the global city. Local cultures and memories have long been eroded by suburbanization and mass popular culture. I spoke last year with a young woman working at a community services non-profit organization in Dayton. She observed that although she had grown up in Dayton's suburbs only a few miles away, her family seldom ventured into the city, and she had learned little of its history. One can be both there and not there at all in small cities and towns as much as in global cities.

Our cities and small towns are marked by global cross-cultural intersections as well. Migrants, displaced by poverty or violence half a world away, arrive in towns that have never heard of them and take positions in the economy that undercut long fought gains and run transverse to historic fault lines. The same strategies of spatial division are also present as downtown shopping districts are abandoned for faux neighborhood shopping malls in the outer ring suburbs, often safely beyond the reach of public transportation. Where city shopping and entertainment centers are preserved and renewed, various means of exclusion are employed to protect suburban and tourist visitors' nostalgic urban experiences from actual city dwellers (Flusty 1997, 49–50). The civic space of the city is "segregated" into low-income housing, gentrified and gated districts, and consumer districts of nostalgia and spectacle (Bickford 2000, 361; Christopherson 1994, 409–427).

We also find the same individualizing of the experience of space. Suburban neighborhoods often offer low levels of geographical involvement, rendering relationship networks much more self-selecting. Our neighborhoods and localities themselves are increasingly separated into demographically homogenous clusters (Gimpel and Schuknecht 2003; Bishop 2008). This move toward homogenization of association and its concomitant cultural heterogenization has been reinforced profoundly by recent developments in communications technology. The Big Three television networks constructed a shared sphere of discourse with common genres, subjects, and standards of access within which a limited range of voices and opinions could be heard. Now, the five-hundred-channel offerings of digital television (let alone the uncountable options on the Internet) free individuals from the friction and inertia of geography and constrained media systems and offer an opportunity to communicate with those who possess similar knowledge, commitments, and preferences (Van Alstyne and Brynjolfsson 2005, 851–868).

To close the circle, this is the space from which the majority of our students come. They are already

formed in the habits of global space and have little experience of the more settled forms of space it is replacing. As a result they have little awareness of how these dynamisms are transforming place.

This account can seem very pessimistic, but there is enormous potential in this moment. This is not a story of the destruction of places, but rather of an epochal transformation in the nature of space that is transforming our places. This way of looking at the problem also saves us from a nostalgic response that attempts to return to the local in reaction against the global. While there are parts of the world where this is still possible, ours is not one of them.

We should be aware that many of our students come to higher education looking precisely for mobility. As Zygmunt Bauman notes, in a global world, it is those who are able to move through space who are the winners; those stuck in the local are most often the losers (Bauman 1998). In the United States, education has long been tied to mobility, and a college education has been a ticket out of the working class and out of working-class places. My experience of education since grade school has been one of being prepared for escape velocity. I attended Gouverneur Hance Elementary School in what were then exurbs north of Pittsburgh. In the photograph that hung in the vestibule of the school, Hance seemed to be wearing a cowl. I was told at the time that he was a Dutch Calvinist and some sort of monk. I have never been able to find out who he was or why our school was named after him. This stands as an apt metaphor for the lack of attention to local place in my education. From grade school through high school, I learned very little about Pittsburgh, a place about which there is much to learn. As the steel industry was collapsing around us, it might have served us well to know something about the Homestead Strike or the conditions that had sustained the postwar concord between labor and industry that were then falling apart.

Education's helpful role in social mobility, and its tendency to focus on the national scale leaves it somewhat ill prepared to respond to the challenges the global poses as it reforms our localities.

Responding

How can we respond to these changes as educators? We should consider four groups of questions: 1. What are the spatial assumptions in our pedagogies and curricula? 2. How do our institutions relate to the places where they are located? 3. How do our schools constitute places in themselves? 4. What intellectual skills do students require to live responsibly amidst this spatial transformation?

1. Spatial Assumptions in our Pedagogies and Curricula

Here I return to Aiwa Ong's argument that higher education views students as both professionals and citizens. At one point, unity was provided by both space and individual character. In national space and relatively local economies, a person's professional actions were contextualized by their membership in community and political citizenship. The global transformation of space has dissolved this spatial connection. As a result, our desire to form complex moral subjects, for all its roots in communitarian conceptions of virtue and character, is rendered individualistic by default. Our graduates are left to enact broad moral responsibility without a professional and social context to support it. This decline of a shared context is a reality that we must take very seriously in our efforts to form students as leaders and to encourage students to think in terms of vocation.

Ong warns that as colleges and universities adjust to this new global space, and indeed expand globally themselves, the "fundamental mission of western universities" is at stake as the "deterritorialized values and norms about what it is to be a human today... a calculative actor or a globe-trotting professional" collide with "the situated values of political liberalism." The "traditional goals of higher education—to inculcate fundamental Western humanist beliefs and nationalist values—are being challenged by a stress on skills, talent, and borderless neo-liberal ethos" (Ong 2006, 140, 148).

One of the most ready-to-hand responses to this challenge is to speak of forming students as

"global citizens." This is a laudable aim. Uses of this notion, however, often assume that individual responsibility can simply be scaled up to the global level. The necessary addition of cultural diversity to our curricula can likewise assume a rather simple scalability when it expects that national political struggles for recognition and inclusion by marginalized groups are transferable to the very different function of ethnicity on the global scale. The spatial analysis we have just undertaken, however, makes clear that citizenship requires a rather complex space that we currently lack on the global scale. In John Tomlinson's words, we are at best "Cosmopolitans without a cosmopolis" (1999, 198). The vast improvements in communications, transportation, and logistics undergirding existing globalization certainly provide many of the tools necessary to build such a cosmopolitan context. But their default functions are tied to commerce and entertainment, not politics. A global political sphere remains one of the great unfinished tasks of our epoch.

Cosmopolitan citizenship stumbles on the local scale as well. Since its Stoic formulations, cosmopolitanism has presumed the gravitational pull of the local: kith and kin, polis, ethnos, nation. Broader concern for all humankind, being a "citizen of the cosmos," required intentional cultivation (Delanty 2006, 228–229). But as we have seen, the local is losing its coherence, its ability to ground identity and action. Cosmopolitan citizenship and solidarity today are forced to attend to both the fading local and a global scale, territorialized more for commerce than for responsibility and politics.

2. How are our institutions present in their places?

How do we relate to our surrounding communities? There are many dimensions to such a question. Colleges and universities contribute to their local communities by providing jobs, economic stimulus, community extension, and student volunteering. These are all tremendously important.

There are, however, deeper questions of place more fundamental to higher education. How do our institutions locate their academic work within their place? Appadurai has spoken of the "right to research" as a necessary human right in an era when economic and social change has become so rapid as to render traditional cultural resources inadequate for guiding the lives of communities (2006, 167–177). How do we bring our intellectual resources to bear on the questions faced by the communities in which we are located? How do we as scholars within our institutions and communities allow our research agendas to be set by our location? How do we convey understanding, appreciation, and concern for the predicaments of our local places to our students? Do we share the full and often ambivalent histories of our institutions with them?

> If we wish to instill the habits of attending to differing opinions and engaging others across cultural difference, we must take care to make sure to model these practices ourselves and in our institutions.

These questions are relevant in the classroom, in co-curricular and extracurricular activities, and in the campus form of life. The latter is an often-overlooked dimension of pedagogy. How is staff from the community integrated into the life of the institution? How do our institutions adapt to or ignore their environmental locations?

3. How are our schools places themselves?

During the discussions and debates that accompanied the implementation of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, John Paul II's apostolic constitution on Catholic universities, one often heard the university described as a place of free inquiry and lively academic debate. While I fully support this ideal, at some point during the extended discus-

sions of the document and its potential threat to this practice of the university, I was struck rather hard by the fact that I have rarely experienced this ideal enacted. Most of our work in the academy, at least in the humanities, is done alone, or between a professor and students. We seldom practice the lively and conflictual interchange of ideas that we so commonly espouse. As far as I can tell, the closest we come to such an exchange is through our students. The model somewhat resembles a dysfunctional family dynamic where the parents argue with one another through the children. To be a bit flip, students shuttle between classrooms on one side of campus, where economics faculty inculcate the calculative ethos of *homo economicus,* to classrooms on the other side, where a humanities faculty arrayed from the far Left to the far Right presents what would be—if they ever spoke with one another—a shockingly diverse coalition trying to persuade students otherwise.

Our primary intellectual interlocutors tend to be other scholars in our own disciplines and subfields. This is particularly unfortunate given the increasing heterogenization of culture around us. If we wish to instill the habits of attending to differing opinions and engaging others across cultural difference, we must take care to make sure to model these practices ourselves and in our institutions. This is all the more pressing at a time when our students come from backgrounds in homogenous suburban lifestyle enclaves and have grown up with the ability to tune out of uncomfortable situations at will by surfing the web or texting a friend. We all now carry these exits in our pockets. We need to redouble our efforts to make our institutions places that practice engagement.

Religiously affiliated colleges and universities have much to offer in this regard. They provide places that are both rooted in a particular communal history and that aspire to proceed according to particular dogmatic commitments, values, and practices. They can model the richness that is found in shared traditions and the tradeoffs necessary to remain faithful to convictions and values.

Colleges and universities can model political engagement in another important manner. They are one of the few places remaining where the majority of the stakeholders and decision makers are held together in one place. Students, faculty, staff, housekeeping, food service, maintenance, and administration share everyday life on campus. This is, I think, an often-overlooked facilitator of student activism.

The Living Wage Campaign for contract employees at Georgetown University exemplified this spatial intimacy. Activist students befriended the housekeeping staff through English lessons they offered before and after work hours. They learned that housekeeping staff worked not for the university, but for an outside contractor who paid very low wages and did not provide health benefits. One student took an independent study in living wage issues from an economics professor. They prepared a proposal and presented it to the administration. When the response was muted, they began a campaign to convince students, faculty, and staff of the importance of the issue. They were able to bring pressure on the administration through presentations and protests to the campus community and the trustees, and eventually through a hunger strike. After three years of the campaign, the administration agreed to their demands for a policy that specified living wage and benefits for all outside contracted employees. Our campuses' rare spatial concentration of stakeholders can provide a place for the practice of a politics of responsibility, where the consequences of decisions appear and can be owned. It can also provide contrastive insight into the distancing of stakeholders and consequences that obtains elsewhere.

4. What intellectual skills do our students require to live responsibly in global space?

Short of creating a core requirement in critical geography, we need to think about how to incorporate spatial questions into our disciplines, just as we have incorporated historical, cultural, and gender questions in the past. Those sets of critical questions have broad purchase across the disciplines, and so do critical spatial questions.

In addition to the various questions about education and formation on our campuses, we should also consider how our programs for study abroad function. What criteria do we use for selecting

partner institutions? Do our offerings map to the same network of global cities that dominate the economic globalization we have experienced, or do they trace other geographies? Are students exposed to the breadth of local culture in their study? Do they learn of the contemporary transformations of these societies in addition to the histories of the learned culture and fine arts?

Religiously affiliated institutions have particular strengths on this front as well. They are part of global networks of sister institutions in their denomination or sponsoring religious community. These trace out different and older channels of globalization, inflected with the convictions, values, and practices of the religious tradition. Student and faculty exchanges with sister religious institutions do more than expose us to different cultures; they implicate us in a different form of globalization. Often enough, these institutions have complex histories of intercultural encounter, evangelization, and colonization. Even such ambivalent histories are valuable. They make clear the stakes of such encounters, and the true complexity of cultures.

Facing the Challenges

We are in the midst of a shift in the nature of human space that is every bit as epochal as the emergence of the modern nation-state. It has already produced disorientation and crisis for many. The comparison with the emergence of the nation state suggests that it will continue to unfold over centuries and that much more substantial crises are likely to come. As in previous epochal changes, higher education will likely undergo profound transformations as well. The spatial changes cut to the heart of our assumptions about how education and society hold together. Together with our students we face the challenge of figuring out how to reconfigure them for the new form of space that is emerging around us.

Vincent J. Miller is the Gudorf Chair in Catholic Theology and Culture at the University of Dayton.

Works Cited

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on The Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* New York: Verso, 1983.

Appadurai, Arjun. *Fear of Small Numbers: An Essay on the Geography of Anger.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006.

_____. "The Right to Research." *Globalisation, Societies and Education,* Vol. 4, No. 2 (2006): 167–177.

_____. *Modernity at Large.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Globalization: The Human Consequences.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

Berger, John. *The Look of Things.* New York: Viking, 1971.

Bickford, Susan. "Constructing Inequality: City Spaces and the Architecture of Citizenship." *Political Theory.* Vol. 28, No. 3 (2000): 355–76.

Bishop, Bill. *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America Is Tearing Us Apart.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2008.

Casanova, Jose. "Religion, the New Millennium and Globalization." *Sociology of Religion.* Vol. 62, No. 4 (2001): 415–441.

Christopherson, Susan. "The Fortress City: Privatized Spaces, Consumer Citizenship." In *Post-Fordism: A Reader,* Ash Amin, ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 1994: 409–427.

Delanty, Gerard. "Cosmopolitanism." In *The Encyclopedia of Globalization,* Roland Robertson and Jan Aart Scholte, eds. New York: Routledge, 2006: 228–229.

Flusty, Steven. "Building Paranoia." In *Architecture of Fear*. Nan Ellin, ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997.

Gimpel, James and Jason E. Schuknecht. *Patchwork Nation: Sectionalism and Political Change in American Politics*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2003.

Harvey, David. *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.

John Paul II. Apostolic Exhortation. *Ecclesia in America*. 1999.

_____. Message. *For the Celebration of the World Day of Peace*. 1998.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media*. London: Routledge and Kegen Paul, 1964.

Miller, Vincent J. "Where Is The Church? Globalization And Catholicity." *Theological Studies*. Vol. 69 (2008): 412–432.

Ong, Aiwa. *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006.

Princen, Thomas. "Distancing: Consumption and the Severing of Feedback." In *Confronting Consumption*, Thomas Princen, Michael Maniates, and Ken Conca, eds. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002.

Ruddy, Christopher. *The Local Church: Tillard and the Future of Catholic Ecclesiology*. New York: Herder and Herder, 2006.

Sassen, Saskia. *A Sociology of Globalization*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007.

_____. *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*. Updated Edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006.

_____. *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001.

_____. *Globalization and its Discontents: Essays on the New Mobility of People and Money*. New York: New Press, 1998.

Sennett, Richard. "Something in the City: The Spectre of Uselessness and The Search for a Place in the World." *Times Literary Supplement*. 22 September 1995.

Soja, Edward. *Postmodern Geographies*. London: Verso, 1989.

Tillard, J. M. R. *L'Eglise locale*. Paris : Éditions du Cerf, 1995.

Tomlinson, John. *Globalization and Culture*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005.

Van Alstyne, Marshall and Erik Brynjolfsson. "Global Village or Cyber-Balkans? Modeling and Measuring the Integration of Electronic Communities." *Management Science*. Vol. 51, No. 6 (2005): 851–868.

CAUGHT UP

I am a miner chipping at the earth;
see what coal I stumble upon.
Perhaps you watch as I hold

my pick and single beam,
my teeth white in the world's abdomen.
Yes, I still believe you are not far away,

distinguishable as *lladro* light, talking
with others about the grave's floor.
Dead, except there are the seasons all the time.

What happened—you going to sleep, your bed's
frame at dawn, you never waking up—
was one thing, one thing

and now you sing the molecular blue,
watching electrons collide,
the vitreous sky in winter, the cold water

in clay. Your body breathes dew
and bark. Some days it's lather in my hands,
my knees, my breast. I need your help

to clutch the hard quartz in streams. How I
can almost touch the earth's spine. What you
know in your new life, I want to know in mine.

Mark D. Bennion

Democratic Heroism

Peter Meilaender

On January 8 of this year, US Representative Gabrielle Giffords, a Democratic congresswoman from Arizona, was shot in the head while conducting a public "meet-and-greet" event with constituents in a supermarket parking lot. The shooting provided an opportunity for much hand-wringing and hyperventilating among pundits eager to bemoan the sad state of American public discourse, which many, however implausibly, eagerly identified as a key cause of the attack. Indeed, in the weeks following the shooting, the hand-wringing often seemed to claim more public attention than the tragedy itself.

Often, but not always. Obviously, we heard a great deal about the fate of Rep. Giffords, whose life hung in the balance and whose continued recovery is nothing short of remarkable. What also struck me, however, was how much I saw and heard about the other, less "important" victims of the shooting. Numerous other spectators were also shot; six of them fatally. One, John Roll, was a federal judge and thus a newsworthy public figure, but the others were simply ordinary citizens who had the misfortune of being in attendance at that particular public event.

One of those victims immediately caught the nation's imagination: Christina Green, a little girl of only nine years with an interest in politics. She recently had been elected to her school's student council and was eager to meet the congresswoman. In his memorial speech for Giffords, President Obama paid an emotional tribute to little Christina, saying, "I want our democracy to be as good as she imagined it." Other victims included Gabriel Zimmerman, a young staffer from Giffords's office who was planning to marry next year; Dorothy Morris, whose husband George was also shot but survived; and Phyllis Schneck, known for the quilting and needlework projects she liked to donate to raise funds for local charities.

But perhaps the most moving story of all belonged to Dorwan Stoddard, who attended the Giffords event with his wife Mavy. Dorwan and Mavy had been high school sweethearts but had gone their separate ways. Then, fifteen years ago, each having survived the death of a first spouse, they both moved back to Tucson, where they were reunited and married. Active in their church, they were well known in the neighborhood for their kindness toward the poor and those down on their luck. When the shooting started, Mavy first thought that someone was setting off fireworks, but Dorwan recognized the sound, pushed his wife to the ground, and covered her with his own body. Mavy took several shots to the legs. Dorwan was shot in the head and died ten minutes later, giving up his life for his wife. Mavy had the chance to say goodbye to her bleeding husband, but Dorwan never spoke again.

We expect to read about our congressional representatives in the newspaper, perhaps even about our federal judges. But not about the Stoddards, or about Christina Green, Gabe Zimmerman, Dorothy Morris, and Phyllis Schneck. Still, these people, in their own ways, all exemplify the community service and participation in civil society that make American democracy flourish. So it seems appropriate that we should recognize them, also, after the tragedy in Tucson.

I was recently reminded of these stories by an event, or series of events, of an entirely different (or at least apparently different) sort: the string of uprisings against authoritarian governments in various Islamic countries across North Africa and the Middle East. In a chain reaction whose only real parallel in recent decades is the fall of the Soviet Union, democratic protest movements have sprung up in one country after another—first in Tunisia, then Egypt, then Yemen and Bahrain, and most recently in Libya. Not all of the uprisings have, at this point, succeeded. In Tunisia and Egypt, largely peaceful protests succeeded in turning out the current rulers, while governments in Yemen and Bahrain proved more willing to meet protests with force. The outcome in Libya hangs in the balance: as I write, the US, Britain, and France are launching

airstrikes to enforce a no-fly zone and protect civilians as approved by the UN Security Council.

Even if it is too early to predict an "Arab spring," the democratic wave sweeping the region is impressive. The uprisings are genuinely popular movements. They appear driven more by a commitment to democracy than by any uniquely Islamic commitments. Huge crowds of "ordinary" men and women have gathered bravely in city centers to express their weariness with ineffective and authoritarian rule and their longing for a government that is accountable, gives them a voice, and responds to their needs and desires. Though I hesitate to embrace the more extreme techno-utopian claims about the revolutionary potential of social media, all of these uprisings demonstrate how the Internet's new potential for rapid communication, information sharing, and social coordination enable citizens to engage in mass political action.

Protesters in Tahrir Square
Photo: Wikimedia user Mona sosh

But arguably the most important element of these uprisings is the further evidence they provide that in the contemporary world, in which no form of government other than democracy can claim public legitimacy, men and women everywhere are increasingly dissatisfied with regimes that treat them as less than full citizens. Oddly, one has seen little media discussion suggesting that perhaps President George W. Bush was onto something after all. But surely he must be feeling at least some vindication as he watches events unfold. In his 2002 commencement address at West Point, President Bush said, "When it comes to the common rights and needs of men and women, there is no clash of civilizations.... The peoples of the Islamic nations want and deserve the same freedoms and opportunities as people in every nation." Current events in North Africa and the Middle East illustrate that the foundational moral norm of the modern world is the equal human dignity of all men and women, what Bush called "the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity."

This is what links those events to the obituaries that were written after the Giffords shooting. Media reports on the shooting reveal something about our own values, about what we consider important. That Congresswoman Giffords was shot is clearly important, but we also think it important to remember Dorwan Stoddard. Though he may have operated upon a smaller stage than Giffords, he too touched many lives, and his own was of equal dignity and infinite value. Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Libya—all these countries are filled with their own Dorwan Stoddards. Indeed, it is arguably democracy's greatest moral achievement that in it there are no "ordinary" citizens. From Gifford and Judge Roll; to Stoddard, Zimmerman, Morris, Schneck, and Green; to the nameless victims of oppression throughout the mid-East, each of these men and women has a story to tell, each is bound up with the lives of many fellow citizens. Almost two hundred years ago, Alexis de Tocqueville gave us our most penetrating analysis of this feature of the modern world. "A great democratic revolution is occurring among us," he wrote. At the heart of this revolution was the onward march of equality, which Tocqueville saw more and more as the fulcrum of social relations. "When one searches through the pages of our history, one comes across almost no great events during the last seven hundred years that did not turn to the profit of equality." The love of equality, Tocqueville argued, is the dominant passion of people in a democratic age.

The Tucson obituaries show this egalitarian norm at work in our own society, even as events

demonstrate its growing power and appeal across the world. Our heroes today are not only the Napoleons or Washingtons of world-historical importance. They are also Bill Badger, the seventy-four-year-old retired colonel who, despite being shot himself, tackled Jared Loughner after he had begun shooting; or Neda Agha-Soltan, the young Iranian woman who was killed during the 2009 post-election protests in that country and who became a martyr after the graphic video of her death spread across the globe via Facebook and YouTube. We continue to inhabit the egalitarian modern world whose outlines Tocqueville so brilliantly analyzed.

This democratic belief in equal human dignity is, surely, grounded in Western culture's Christian heritage. Democracy, needless to say, predates Christianity. Ancient Athens was in certain respects radically more democratic than any modern society, but ancient democracy co-existed easily with sharp distinctions between, for example, Greeks and barbarians, or citizens and slaves. While similar distinctions survived into the modern world, they have been eroded by the pressure of egalitarian norms. Tocqueville himself, though he worried about equality's dangerous effects, saw the hand of Providence at work in its spread. Equality, he suggested, is pleasing to God; though "perhaps less elevated" than aristocracy, "it is more just, and its justice makes its grandeur and its beauty." It seems that wherever we look, from Tucson to Tunis, we see reminders that we are Tocqueville's heirs.

Peter Meilaender is Associate Professor of Political Science at Houghton College.

A PHYSICIST'S LOVE SONG: MINORITY REPORT

As corollary to some Big Bang Theory,
the expanding universe reaches limits
predisposed by the physics of the thing
and retreats ever towards a finite point.

What I'd enjoy is, after growing young
with you and giving back our children
one by one, we'd move so slowly
towards that delicate first kiss.
Then you'd be gone and I'd efface
through rediscovered youth, a new eternal time.

But then, after eons and geology,
you walk again into my life,
we kiss and marry, grow old together,
and watch the stars go one by one.

Michael Kramer

God's Big Government

Ed Cyzewski

My conservative friends often tell me, "Government should play no role in alleviating poverty." This prompts me to wonder: Would God support laws that required everyone to give up some of their income and forced businesses to forego opportunities for profits, all for the sake of caring for the most vulnerable members of society?

Yes, he would, and we can read about it in the book of Deuteronomy.

American Christians have never been quite sure what to do with Deuteronomy, or the other biblical books of law. While many on the Right have no trouble applying perceived biblical standards while banning same-sex marriage, they look past the regulations regarding equity and poverty. Those on the Left fear the morality legislation coming from the Right, but point to the biblical commands regarding the poor as justification for their government programs. No one advocates a wholesale adoption of the Old Testament's laws (for which every lobsterman, tattoo artist, and disobedient child can be grateful), but both sides pick and choose the parts they like. In the process, we all miss the true value of a book like Deuteronomy: to teach us about the holy character of God.

Deuteronomy tells us about how God turned a wandering group of former slaves, steeped in the religion of Egypt and tantalized by the idols of nearby nations, into his holy people. Early on in this book, Moses reveals the reason God gave his law to the Israelites: "See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the LORD my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'" (Deuteronomy 4:5–6, NIV). God was doing something radical in calling a people to be his own. Israel was to stand as a light to the surrounding nations as an example of how people could live justly before God (Isaiah 42:6, 49:6).

God's law would make the people of Israel a nation set apart. Many of the laws in Deuteronomy forbid the Israelites to worship the gods of other nations; others set them apart by regulating the foods they are allowed to eat and the rituals by which these foods are prepared. However, a significant number of these laws regulate the use of money and the exercise of political power. In Deuteronomy, God calls on the people of Israel to set themselves apart not only by what they eat and how they worship, but also by how they act toward poor and vulnerable members of their community. The book reveals a God whose law teaches that concern for the poor is an important part of holiness, even if he did not create huge government programs. In Deuteronomy, the Israelites were required:

- to leave part of their harvests in the field to be gleaned by widows and orphans (24:17–22),
- to give a tenth of their income every third year to support those who could not support themselves (14:28),
- to forgive all debts owed to them by other members of the community every seventh year (15:1-2),
- and to be lenient when asking the poor to provide surety for debt (24:12–13).

Additionally, the law required that the Israelites pay their poor workers promptly (24:14) and forbid charging interest when lending money to other members of the community (23:19–20). Clearly, God does not consider alleviating poverty to be a matter of individual initiative. Caring for the poor wasn't optional; it was integrated into the law.

Since leaving the corners of our gardens for gleaning won't yield the kind of food needed to end hunger, Christians in America need to ask what Deuteronomy and other biblical law books, such as Leviticus, reveal about God's character and what these laws mean for us today. In Deuteronomy,

God provided for the poor through a kind of tax on landowners and by forcing his people to wipe the debt slate clean every seven years. These specific requirements might not make sense today, but even if we can't use Deuteronomy as a blueprint, shouldn't God's people think about how they can reflect God's character in a new time and culture? At the very least, Deuteronomy suggests that it is as important for our nation to have laws about caring for the poor as it is to have laws that regulate personal behavior.

At the end of the day, God's "big government" in the Old Testament consisted mostly of property laws and regulations for harvest time, debts, and slaves. This approach ensured that the able-bodied could work, that debt could be avoided, and that no one would be trapped in generational poverty. It was light on government programs, but demanding and counterintuitive when compared to the expectations of modern capitalism. In addition, we learn from Deuteronomy that God wanted to empower the poor to care for themselves. That means we can't just throw money at the poor, but it also means we can't cut off all aid and chastise them if they are unable to rise above the crushing power of poverty. The laws of Deuteronomy do not support the obsessive collectivizing of socialism, but they also don't protect personal property and individual profit to the extent that capitalism does.

As Christians we don't want to take over the government, but we do want our government to reflect the justice that God desires for all nations and people. To this end, we should support solutions to poverty that are empowering for the poor, but that also involve the wealthy in the process, without necessarily creating a larger government. In light of these lessons, perhaps one way forward could involve a robust grant program for nonprofit organizations that is widely available, adequately funded by taxpayers, and easy to access. There are many efficient and effective nonprofit agencies that empower the poor and help them meet basic needs that would otherwise remain unmet, but these nonprofits struggle to find funding that could be easily supplied through a large government grant system. In addition, if businesses are driven by higher profits, the government could offer incentives and tax breaks to businesses that employ former prison inmates or workers from the inner-city. These kinds of solutions do not necessitate the creation of a larger government, even if sometimes government programs are warranted.

God's call for us to be generous and to alleviate poverty is not an invitation to double the size of our government, nor is it vindication to scrap every government program. We can't deny that God envisioned a holy nation as one that cared for the poor. The work of creating a nation that embodies the justice and mercy that God desires must transcend partisan lines. The Bible recognizes that some people need help to get by, that some people need to be forced to be generous, and that the wealthy must make sacrifices for the benefit of the community. Perhaps if the wealthy could share opportunities, capital, and even their property, we wouldn't need taxes, large government programs, and the other trappings of big government. The cost of holiness includes sacrifice from the wealthy and hard work for the poor.

As it turns out, God's solution to poverty is far more personal and costly than either political party could ever imagine. The biblical picture of a just nation is one that includes the alleviation of poverty and the upholding of justice through its laws. God intended for other nations to learn from the laws of Israel what a just nation looks like. While we can't lift the laws from another culture and drop them into modern America, we can learn that God doesn't grant prosperity to nations for the benefit of the supposedly hard-working few. Rather, a truly prosperous city on a hill imitates the justice and mercy of God, using its prosperity to ensure that all people have the dignity of being able to meet their basic needs.

Ed Cyzewski is the author of *Coffeehouse Theology: Reflecting on God in Everyday Life*. He blogs on Christian belief and practice at www.inamirrordimly.com.

TEARS FOR OUR FATHER

"If he were here life wouldn't
Be so trying." Her words flew
Two thousand miles to reach
Me and arrived unruffled.

"He would laugh aloud at these
Troubles of ours and say,
'Let's go to the Dairy Queen.'"
His hot-fudge malt diversion,

Straw-stuck with extra malt, he
Attempted a brave reprieve.
We knew it was not enough
To relieve his heavy heart.

"I'd rather see someone laugh
Than cry." A smile, a wink, his
Owl eyes resigned as the sun
Set on his disillusion.

Years of nesting in hollow
Trees and surmounting barren
Hills left his once high spirits
Nearly tethered and grounded.

Only in dying did he
Find warm air; his spirit seemed
To soar as he sang his last
Song. With one final glance he

Winged away, his legacy
Full plumed with hope undying.
I smiled. "If he were here
Life wouldn't be so trying."

Tony Dawson

Looking Backward to the Future

Tron: Legacy and the Hacker Ethic

Jennifer Lynn Miller

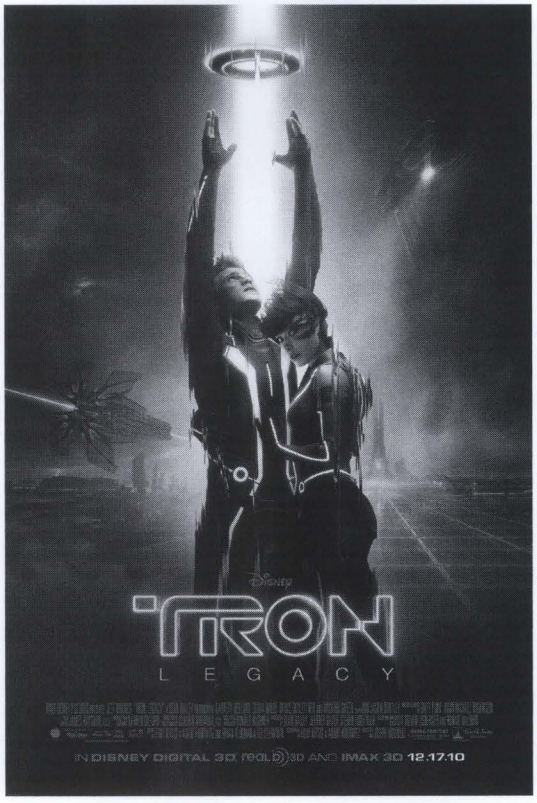
One of the major movie events this past December was the release of *Tron: Legacy*, the sequel to the 1982 Disney cult classic *Tron*. In the original movie, programmer Kevin Flynn enters the computer system at ENCOM's corporate headquarters and prevents the Master Control Program from taking over the system and making computer users obsolete. In the sequel, Kevin Flynn has been missing for twenty years, and his son Sam has been left to grow up alone. After receiving an enigmatic message, seemingly from his father, Sam returns to his father's abandoned arcade and finds himself sucked into a computer system, just like his father was. Once inside the computer system, Sam finds out that his father has been trapped in the system for the past twenty years, and he battles programs, rides light-cycles, and teams up with the human/program hybrid named Quorra to try to help his father escape back into the real world. (Note: This article contains spoilers.)

While the movie is a high-tech extravaganza, featuring 3-D effects and the electronic music of Daft Punk, it is also dedicated to looking backward to the original movie. This is clear even before entering the movie theater. The movie's promotional posters show Sam Flynn reaching up with two arms into a beam of light, with Quorra bracing herself against him, an obvious recreation of the poster from the original film, which showed the computer program Tron reaching up into a stream of light with fellow program Yori bracing herself at his side. Certainly, this continuity in design is an intentional strategy on the part of Disney's marketing team to court the fans of the original movie who have been anxiously awaiting this sequel for twenty-eight years. But there is something more at stake here. This continuity of imagery conveys a sense of nostalgia, a sense of longing for a bygone decade when computers were new, thrilling, and dangerous.

The feeling of nostalgia found in *Tron: Legacy* is not limited to the movie poster. The title itself, with the use of the word "legacy," looks to established ideas of the past rather than pointing forward to new, exciting ideas. Jeff Bridges reprises his role as Kevin Flynn, but he also plays the "bad guy" of the movie, a computer program named Clu who overzealously seeks to create a perfect society. While Sam, Kevin's son, is arguably the hero of the movie, the doubling of Kevin and the continued reliance on his expertise, rather than his son's, makes the narrative itself backward-looking—as does Kevin's final self-sacrifice to let Sam and Quorra escape to the real world. Even many of the film's most exciting visual effects, such as lightcycle battles and the patrolling recognizers, are just reworked versions of effects from the original movie.

Several scenes throughout the movie add to this sense of nostalgia, most notably a scene near the beginning in which Sam returns to his father's arcade. Because of the cryptic message he received, Sam does not know what to expect when he enters the building. As a result, both he and the viewer are on edge—both physically and emotionally—when he enters the arcade and turns on the power. Immediately, the lights and sounds of dozens of video games start up, creating the "powering-up" noise familiar to many of us who experienced the 1980s. The jukebox starts up as well, blasting first the music of Journey—"Separate Ways (Worlds Apart)"—and then Eurythmics—"Sweet Dreams (are Made of This)." In a soundtrack otherwise dominated by the music of Daft Punk, these two familiar songs evoke a nostalgic reaction in the viewer underscored by the emotional intensity of the scene, making it one of the most powerful moments in the movie.

This overwhelming feeling of nostalgia in a high-tech, computer movie would be noteworthy in and of itself, but it is particularly interesting when considered in conjunction with another main theme of the movie—the valorization of the hacker. In an opening scene, Sam rides his motorcycle to the headquarters of ENCOM, his father's company, hacks into the security system to get into the building, and then sneaks up to a server room near the top of the building. At the same time, the ENCOM board of directors is meeting, preparing for the release of their latest computer operating system—which they themselves admit is just a repackaged version of the older system. Sam hacks into ENCOM's network, disrupts the presentation in the board meeting, and releases the code for the operating system to the Internet at large. Pursued by a security guard, Sam then runs to the top of the building, climbs outside, and jumps off the building, using a parachute to glide to safety. The excitement, openness, and sense of play in Sam's actions, and the corresponding uptight, greedy, and mean-spirited attitude of the ENCOM board, clearly position Sam's actions as the right, moral choice.



Yet what does it mean for this valorization of the hacker to be portrayed in the same movie that has such a strong sense of nostalgia? Here it is helpful to consider Gerardo Marti's essay "Hacker Ethics and Higher Learning: The Moral Clash Determining the Future of Education" (p. 17 of the current issue). The author discusses two ideologies that are shaping American higher education, one of which, the "Hacker Ethic," he describes as being characterized by openness, free exchange of ideas, a rejection of authority, playfulness, and solving problems by the seat of one's pants—all of which are applicable to Sam Flynn's hack of ENCOM. Marti contrasts this Hacker Ethic with the educational model provided by traditional institutions of higher learning, which he calls the ethic of "formative retreat." He argues that the formative retreat model is characterized by a central authority that provides constraints for students, thus shaping them into moral beings. Marti argues that today's students have embraced the Hacker Ethic, and so traditional colleges and universities need to think about how to incorporate this ethic into their teaching, rather than "romanticize" an outdated model of education that can no longer exist.

But, as *Tron: Legacy* demonstrates, the Hacker Ethic itself is defined by a sense of nostalgia and a romanticization of the past. Sam Flynn is not a hacker looking forward to the future, but a hacker looking backward to his father's legacy. This same sense of nostalgia can be found on Internet message boards such as Reddit and Slashdot, with users reminiscing about the good old days of Usenet news feeds. Zach Whalen and Laurie Taylor's essay collection *Playing the Past* (Vanderbilt, 2008) examines the key role that nostalgia plays in cutting-edge video games. Even Marti's essay demonstrates how nostalgia is a key part of the Hacker Ethic. One of the key documents Marti uses to describe the Hacker Ethic was published over thirty years ago, demonstrating how the once radical has become the canonical. During the address on which his essay is based, Marti's biggest reaction from the audience came when he showed pictures of old-school computers such as the Compaq 286. And while Marti's roommate Kirby's idea—"It's not the computer, Gerardo. It's the modem"—is remarkably prescient for 1986, Marti's inclusion of it in his discussion of the Hacker Ethic adds force to the idea that the Hacker Ethic, like the model

of formative retreat, is a model for education that often looks to the past for its key insights.

Yet as Linda Hutcheon perceptively notes in her influential essay, "Irony, Nostalgia, and the Postmodern," the past holds this power because of its inaccessibility. Not only is nostalgia a longing for an "irrecoverable" past, but it also "is the ideal that is not being lived now [that] is projected into the past." As a result, explains Hutcheon, "nostalgia exiles us from the present" (January 1998, www.library.utoronto.ca/utel/criticism/hutchinp.html). The nostalgia of *Tron: Legacy* banishes Sam Flynn from his own life, forcing him instead to relive his father's idealized adventures. As Marti's warning against romanticizing the model of "formative retreat" suggests, this same dynamic could adversely affect a model of higher education based on hacker culture as well, with administrators and professors idealizing a playful, democratic past instead of focusing on the realities of the present.

While college students, with their iPhones, iPads, and iPods might like to think of themselves as plugged directly into the information superhighway, the means through which they access this information are designed and controlled by a select few companies and individuals.

Another look at Marti's essay is helpful in avoiding this exile to the past, because his recent examples point to an important way in which the Hacker Ethic has evolved—namely, to be more commercialized and governed by the interests of large corporations. While Mark Zuckerberg might say that he wants to build a hacker culture, the fact remains that as a huge corporation that controls how people share information, Facebook itself is anti-hacker. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation may very well be funding educational reforms that increase reliance on interactive learning technology, but the impetus for these reforms is coming from the private fortune of a single entrepreneurial billionaire, rather than from a decentralized, democratic community. And while college students, with their iPhones, iPads, and iPods might like to think of themselves as plugged directly into the information superhighway, the means through which they access this information are designed and controlled by a select few companies and individuals.

Certainly, as this year's events in Egypt demonstrate, people can use Facebook and other social media in amazingly powerful ways, but those same people can also have their Internet access cut off completely. Similarly, Sam Flynn seems to be the ultimate hacker in *Tron: Legacy*, but his escape from the virtual world is ultimately dependent on a portal over which he has no control. Our own flow of information is increasingly controlled by the whim of government and big business, and as educators at the beginning of the twenty-first century, we would do well to think about the implications of this, rather than, like Sam Flynn, look to the past for our answers. ⚜

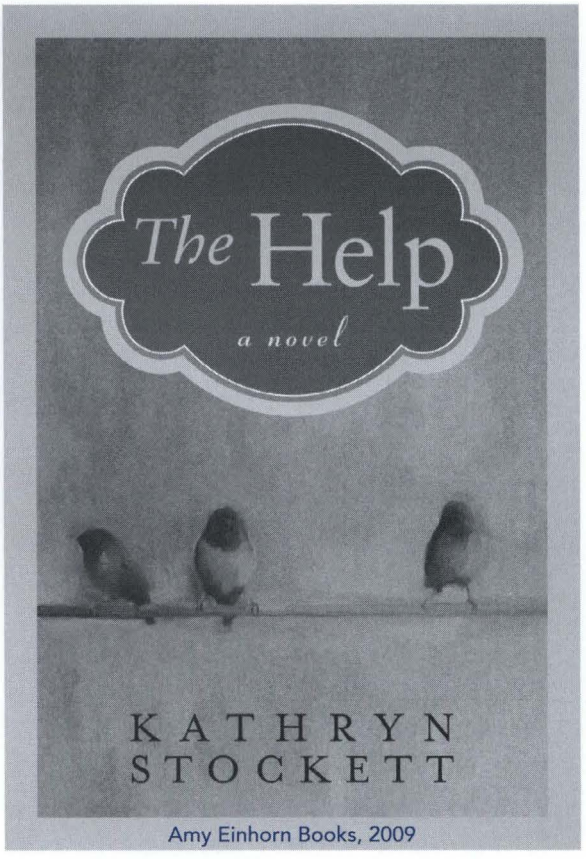
Jennifer Lynn Miller is a Lilly Fellow in the Humanities and the Arts at Valparaiso University.

Speaking for the Help

Dawn Jeglum Bartusch

OVER FIVE YEARS, THE MANUSCRIPT FOR Kathryn Stockett's first novel was rejected by about sixty literary agents, all of whom are surely kicking themselves now. Since being published in February 2009, *The Help* has spent more than one hundred weeks on the *New York Times* best-seller list, and the movie version is due out this August. The novel draws on the author's experiences growing up as a member of a privileged white family in Jackson, Mississippi. Because her parents divorced when she was six and her mother frequently traveled, Stockett spent a good deal of time with their family maid, a black woman named Demetrie. She later attended the University of Alabama, and graduated with a degree in English and creative writing and then moved to New York City, where she worked for nine years in magazine publishing and marketing.

The Help is the story of three remarkable women: two middle-aged, black domestic workers named Aibileen and Minny and a twenty-two-year-old white woman named Skeeter Phelan. Aibileen is a gentle, motherly woman who loves the white children she works to raise. Her only son was killed at the age of twenty-four in a work-related accident, and Aibileen pours the love she would have shown him into the relationships she has with the white children she takes care of. Minny is Aibileen's best friend, but she has a very different temperament. While Aibileen is calm and tender, Minny is angry and feisty. She loses a lot of jobs because she cannot learn to hold her tongue in the presence of her white employers. The third remarkable woman in this story, Skeeter Phelan, is white and wealthy, and she dreams of being a writer in New York City (not unlike author Kathryn Stockett). Even though she is white and privileged, Skeeter is, in a way, an outsider. She's unmarried at a time when the expectation for a rich, young white woman is simply to find the proper husband. She's physically not very attractive: frizzy-haired, pale, tall, and lanky. Skeeter is also an outsider because she's unwilling to accept the prevailing racist views of many in the South in the early 1960s.



Amy Einhorn Books, 2009

The story, set in Jackson, Mississippi in 1962, begins in the voice of Aibileen, currently employed by Miss Elizabeth Leefolt to care for her daughter Mae Mobley.

> Mae Mobley was born on a early Sunday morning in August, 1960. A church baby

> we like to call it. Taking care a white babies, that's what I do, along with all the cooking and the cleaning. I done raised seventeen kids in my lifetime. I know how to get them babies to sleep, stop crying, and go in the toilet bowl before they mamas even get out a bed in the morning.
>
> But I ain't never seen a baby yell like Mae Mobley Leefolt. First day I walk in the door, there she be, red-hot and hollering with the colic, fighting that bottle like it's a rotten turnip. Miss Leefolt, she look terrified a her own child. (1)

Aibileen rescues Mae Mobley, in that moment as well as in many others throughout the book when her mother cannot seem to love her. To make up for the affection Mae Mobley does not receive from her mother, Aibileen never misses a chance to tell the little girl, "You a *smart* girl. You a *kind* girl, Mae Mobley."

The thick dialect with which Aibileen and all the black characters in the book speak has been a point of controversy regarding *The Help*. Some critics have pointed out that Stockett conveys only black voices in dialect, while the white characters in the book are "free of the linguistic quirks that white Southerners certainly have" (Erin Aubrey Kaplan in *Ms. Magazine*, 8 February 2009). In an interview with *Time*, Stockett was asked, "Did you worry about the implications of being a young, white author writing in the thick dialect of African Americans?" She replied, "I'm still worried about that.... The truth is that I didn't think anybody was going to read it. Had I known it was going to be so widely disseminated, I probably wouldn't have written it in the type of language that I did" (11 November 2009).

The main plot line in the story concerns Skeeter's desire to write a book about the experiences of black domestic workers in the segregated South. A Senior Editor from Harper and Row, stunned by Skeeter's boldness in applying—right out of college—for an editor's position with the publishing company, writes Skeeter a note with these words of encouragement: "go to your local newspaper and get an entry-level job.... When you're not making mimeographs or fixing your boss's coffee, look around, investigate, and *write*. Don't waste your time on the obvious things. Write about what disturbs you, particularly if it bothers no one else" (71). She also offers to look over her best work and give her an honest opinion.

Skeeter tells the editor that a black maid has agreed to tell her story about what it's like to work for the well-to-do white women of Jackson (105). Of course, no one actually has agreed to tell any such story. Imagine the danger in exposing the dirty secrets of white employers in the explosive, racially-segregated South of the early 1960s. But Skeeter hopes that Aibileen will take the risk. At first, Aibileen wants no part of this crazy, dangerous plan, but she eventually changes her mind. When Skeeter asks her why, Aibileen says, "Miss Hilly." Hilly is the villain of the novel, an ignorant, racist woman, and one with a lot of power in Jackson. Her latest project is the "Home Help Sanitation Initiative," which would require every prominent white home to have a separate bathroom for the black help (9). Aibileen's employer constructs a separate bathroom for her in the corner of the garage. When Aibileen is told to use only her bathroom in the garage from now on, she describes "feel(ing) that bitter seed grow in my chest" (29). When she can no longer tolerate the daily insults of her life, Aibileen agrees to tell Skeeter her story.

She starts by describing her first job, at age thirteen, cleaning the silver in the governor's mansion. On her first morning, she made a mistake filling in the chart they used to make sure servants weren't stealing the silverware. "I come home that morning, after I been fired, and stood outside my house with my new work shoes on. The shoes my mama paid a month's worth a light bill for. I guess that's when I understood what shame was and the color of it too. Shame ain't black, like dirt, like I always thought it was. Shame be the color of a new white uniform your mother ironed all night to pay for, white without a smudge or a speck a work-dirt on it" (150–151).

Eventually, Aibileen convinces Minny to share her story, too. But to be able to send the New York editor a complete manuscript of inter-

views, Skeeter and Aibileen need to convince many more black women to take the significant risk of speaking out. Two key events make this possible. The first is the shooting death of Medgar Evers (194). Although the novel is set in the Deep South at the height of the Civil Rights movement, Evers's assassination is the only Civil Rights event that Stockett spends significant time describing. She makes only brief reference to other events, as if she is abiding by the prevailing sentiment of the segregated South that said to the world, these are private matters about which we'd rather not speak. At one point Skeeter and her family's maid are watching television together, listening to a newscast about James Meredith's enrollment at the University of Mississippi. At that moment, Skeeter's mother enters the room and says, "'Turn that set off right this minute!... It is not appropriate for the two of you to watch together,' and she flips the channel, [stopping] on an afternoon rerun of Lawrence Welk. 'Look, isn't this so much nicer?'" (83).

But Medgar Evers's murder factors prominently in Stockett's story line. At the age of thirty-seven, Evers was gunned down outside his home in Jackson, Mississippi, in June 1963. A prominent civil rights activist and field secretary for the NAACP, he and his family had been the targets of numerous threats and violent acts before his murder. One biographer writes, "In some ways, the death of Medgar Evers was a milestone in the hard-fought integration war that rocked America in the 1950s and 1960s. While the assassination of such a prominent black figure foreshadowed the violence to come, it also spurred other civil rights leaders... to new fervor. They, in turn, were able to infuse their followers—both black and white—with a new and expanded sense of purpose, one that replaced apprehension with anger. *Esquire* contributor Maryanne Vollers wrote: 'People who lived through those days will tell you that something shifted in their hearts after Medgar Evers died, something that put them beyond fear.... At that point a new motto was born: After Medgar, no more fear.'" (*Contemporary Black Biography*. Gale Publishing, 1992: 62). This is precisely the transforming effect that Evers's death has on the characters in Stockett's story, who are emboldened by the assassination and by their own grief at his death.

The second significant galvanizing force that propels the women to help Skeeter is the arrest and incarceration of a black maid, Yule Mae, for stealing from her employer. Yule has twin boys who are smart and eager for an education. She and her husband have worked as hard as they can to save enough money to send both boys to college, but they have come up about $75 short.

Stockett makes only brief reference to civil rights events, as if she is abiding by the prevailing sentiment of the segregated South that said to the world, these are private matters about which we'd rather not speak.

Yule Mae asks her employer for a loan, but her employer (Miss Hilly) replies, "...a true Christian [doesn't] give charity to those who [are] well and able." Yule Mae asks, "how do you choose which of your twin sons should go to college and which should take a job spreading tar? How do you tell one that you love him just as much as the other, but you've decided he won't be the one to a get a chance in life? You don't. You find a way to make it happen. Any way at all" (249). So Yule Mae steals an ugly ruby ring from her employer, and she prays that it's worth $75. Her incarceration became the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. Suddenly, the black domestic workers of Jackson are lining up to tell their stories to Skeeter.

Stockett does a marvelous job of presenting the racial tensions of the time in such a way that readers feel their full force, yet are not so overwhelmed that they want to put the book down.

She presents the realities of the racially-divided South in a remarkably hopeful way. Readers will cheer the bravery and courage of the women who finally say, we will no longer quietly endure the constant insults of this racially divided society. The seemingly powerless and poor black women come together to claim their true power—a power that they have had all along—to expose the lives of those who oppress them. Stockett also invites us to consider the role of women in the Civil Rights movement, to listen to the movement's feminine voices, which we don't typically hear.

In the telling of these stories, though, we learn more than the white employers' dirty little secrets. We see the full complexity of the relationships between the domestic workers and the families they serve, the surprising "dichotomy of love and disdain living side-by-side" (258). "The help" are told that they cannot eat at the same table or off of the same dishes as the whites in the home. They cannot use the same toilets. And yet, these are the same women to whom the children of the house are entrusted. They are the ones who feed and potty train and nurture the children. There is mutual love between them. They offer the children acceptance—the kind of acceptance that is often absent in their relationships with their mothers. And yet, given the constraints of the social context in which they live, many of the children eventually lose their color-blindness. When the grown children marry, most invite their childhood maids to the wedding, but the maids can attend only if they are in uniform, reminding everyone of their servant's role.

For all its power, many readers of *The Help* are left with gnawing questions about who is entitled to tell the stories of the black maids. Skeeter *seems* genuine in her desire to use her manuscript as part of the struggle to achieve social change and racial equality. And she pays the maids who share their stories with her, so we're less concerned than we might be that Skeeter is exploiting others for financial gain. Yet, at one point, a young maid accuses Skeeter of being just "another white lady trying to make a dollar off of colored people." It's worth noting that the original idea to write about the lives of blacks in Jackson belonged to Aibileen's son, and Skeeter knows that.

The parallels between the character of Skeeter and author Kathryn Stockett are unmistakable, and they lead us to ask whether this story of "the help" is truly Stockett's to tell. To what extent is it fair for her to presume to speak for "the help" in her telling of this story? In an interview, Stockett said, "Some readers tell me, 'We always treated our maid like she was a member of the family.' You know, that's interesting, but I wonder what your maid's perspective was on that." (*Time*, 11 November 2009). Yet, clearly what Stockett is offering us isn't the maid's perspective, but a privileged white person's interpretation of the black maid's perspective.

Perhaps we can forgive Stockett's boldness in presuming to speak for "the help" when we understand just a bit about her motivations. At the end of the novel, Stockett offers this simple but poignant note of thanks to the black woman who raised her and her siblings: "Finally, my belated thanks to Demetrie McLorn, who carried us all out of the hospital wrapped in our baby blankets and spent her life feeding us, picking up after us, loving us, and, thank God, forgiving us" (445). It's clear that Kathryn Stockett intends this book to be both tribute and apology to Demetrie. Stockett writes: "I'm pretty sure I can say that no one in my family ever asked Demetrie what it felt like to be black in Mississippi, working for our white family. It never occurred to us to ask. It was everyday life. It wasn't something people felt compelled to examine. I have wished, for many years, that I'd been old enough and thoughtful enough to ask Demetrie that question. She died when I was sixteen. I've spent years imagining what her answer would be. And that is why I wrote this book" (451).

Kathryn Stockett is currently working on her second novel, also set in Mississippi, this time during the Great Depression. It's a safe bet she won't have to shop this one around to sixty literary agents before she finds a publisher. ✟

Dawn Jeglum Bartusch is Assistant Professor of Sociology at Valparaiso University.

Buried Treasure

Pastor Katie Koch

THE ANNUAL OFFERINGS AT ONE OF MY TWO congregations amount to about $20,000. Yes, that's less than the cost of many new cars, less than half the average household income in the United States, and almost less than half the total cost of hiring a newly ordained pastor. Our congregation shares many of the basic costs of ministry (such as the pastor, secretary, and worship supplies) fifty-fifty with a neighboring congregation, but costs related to the building and ensuing heating and electricity are shouldered by the congregation alone.

In a very rural congregation with an average worship attendance of about forty, $20,000 is not as low as it could be, but needless to say, the budget conversations are laborious and the finances can feel a bit tight at times. We always seem to be stretching the dollars to cover everything they need to, and there is an underlying anxiety concerning the finances and long-term survival of the congregation.

But these modest offerings are not the whole story of the financial state of my congregation. Here is the humor of it all: my scrimping, saving, budgeting, worrying, complaining congregation is, in the midst of all this, sitting on buried treasure. My first clue came in January 2007 during the Annual Meeting, my first while serving said congregation. We went through the usual reports: Pastor, Secretary, Treasurer, Sunday School, Ladies' Aid, and then came upon the Cemetery Fund. This appeared to be actually two funds, the basic cemetery maintenance fund, and a second fund, lumped in with the Cemetery Fund, referred to as the Jacobson Fund.

I had not seen or heard of this fund before, so I scanned the report and my eyes fell upon the total balance at the bottom of the sheet: $234,642.73. What? What kind of cemetery fund was this? Our cemetery is a typical rural plot of land sitting next to the parking lot, flush against soybean fields on two sides. It is littered with gravestones from the early twentieth century through today, and the entire thing is walkable in less than five minutes.

I listened through the rest of the Annual Meeting and then caught one of the women of the church and started asking questions. Is this for real? Who are the Jacobsons? What is this money used for?

The basic answers I got were as follows: Yes; four sisters (three never married) are buried side by side out there, have no living relatives, and left all their money to the church; a bit of the interest is used for this and that, but we would never touch the principal; there's a document written up about the fund; I think it's in the church safe.

My mind began to spin: So what you're telling me is that our congregation, our financially struggling, tiny congregation has well over $200,000 to its name? And what's more, this $200,000 we mysteriously have is tied to four people out there in the cemetery, to be considered useable only by their wishes, and we have only a four-page arcane document from which to ascertain what these wishes might be?

We're rich! Sort of.

I asked around about this odd fund and discovered that instead of ever considering this relatively grand and certainly generous fund useable, my congregation had more or less buried it alongside those from whom it came. Along with the people who bequeathed it, the fund was raised upon a pedestal, to be looked at, marveled over, revered, and protected, but certainly not handled or used, for fear that this treasure would be destroyed.

My congregation had been given this amazing gift, not just for the cemetery, but also for the life of the entire congregation. But this gift of over ten times the average annual offerings was considered so grand by the congregation that over time it had slowly turned into an idol that the congregation worshipped, rather than something to be used. This gift had become treasure to be clung to and hidden away, lest it be squandered.

Jesus declares in the Sermon on the Mount, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves

treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:19–21). Clearly he knew what he was talking about. Storing things up is exactly what we are inclined to do. What happens when one's church receives a rather large monetary gift? It is stored up on earth, buried away like treasure, considered more a part of the cemetery than the actual church. And what happens then to one's heart, one's emotions, one's trust and faith? They are buried away as well, hidden deep in the earth like pirate's loot rather than in heaven where such treasures belong.

Jesus knew the truth about humanity when he warned about the consuming power of moth and rust; he knew that where we placed our treasure, whatever it may be, our hearts would be quick to follow.

This hoarding we are practicing at my church brings to mind another word from Jesus, this one the parable of the rich fool from Luke 12. In this lesson, Jesus warns us to be on our guard "against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions" (verse 15). He goes on to tell the parable of a rich man who owned land that was producing abundantly. The man wondered what he would possibly do with all these crops, and his solution was to build a bigger barn so he could store up all his land had produced and then bask in its glory, relaxing and eating all he wished. All to which God says, "You fool!"

In my congregation, we're holding on tightly to that money, hiding it away, burying it like pirates might bury treasure, leaving only a confusing map that might lead us back to it. And should anyone want to touch that money, well, don't even think about it.

Don't get me wrong; I have the privilege of being the pastor to a generous bunch of folks. Despite their tight congregational and personal budgets, they contribute to their synodical offices, the local food shelf, Lutheran World Relief, and all the local benefits. But when it comes to a major need inside or outside the church, one that cannot be met with a hundred dollars or so, this special fund we've got often comes up in conversation—and we never seem to crack into it.

From what I can ascertain, two things have happened in this congregation since this particular fund was created. First, individual giving has dried up, because when someone is feeling the pinch of tight economic times and just doesn't have much left in the wallet, it is easy to think of this stockpile of money buried out there in the cemetery and think, "The church doesn't need my ten dollars; it's got thousands in the bank." Really, why give anything if it is just going to be buried away?

What's more, even though the congregation is relatively financially secure, the advent of this fund has caused anxiety to grow. It seems that there is a feeling among people that we must protect the Jacobson Fund, as if it were in constant danger from villains and thieves who have been plotting to rob it. That attitude is much like that of my two year old. He doesn't worry about what he doesn't have, but if I give him something enjoyable to play with, the moment I even look like I might take it away, the tantrums begin and he whines, "but I *need* it."

The Jacobson Fund was a surprise gift to my congregation upon the deaths of some rather quiet and humble members. The parishioners did not know they needed over $200,000 to feel good about their church. When they had just a couple hundred dollars in the bank at any given time, they had no idea what they were missing, and the years went by with prayers for provisions and a trust in God. Now, upon the reception of this gift, should anyone consider some of the money going to use, the whining begins, "but we *need* it to stay in the bank."

The truth is, as much as I am laboring on about their experience, the people in my congregation are not particularly evil people just because they do not want to spend their beloved Jacobson Fund. Rather

they are all of us. Jesus knew the truth about humanity when he warned about the consuming power of moth and rust; he knew that where we placed our treasure, whatever it may be, our hearts would be quick to follow. When we treasure the things of this world, our heart is wrapped around fleeting things, instead of around our Lord and Savior. When we are so concerned with that which will die or fade away with this world, then we might as well be hunting for some sort of buried treasure among the dead.

In Mark 5, Jesus and his disciples stumble across a man in the country of the Gerasenes who is living among the tombs. Demonic possession had so overcome him that he was unfit for society, so he took up residence where he and his brokenness could hide, among the ultimate brokenness of death.

Our greedy hearts, attached to the things of this world, lead us to live among the dead as well. My congregation has so attached itself to a seemingly untouchable pot of money, connected to four long-dead bodies in our cemetery, that the members are finding themselves fit for that same cemetery.

But the Gerasene demoniac is set free. Jesus declares, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" and he sends the legion of unclean spirits out of this man and into a herd of swine that promptly drown themselves in the sea. The next thing we know, to the amazement of all who know him, the man is now clothed and in his right mind, freed from his place among the dead.

To our need to cling to all that would lead us to death, Jesus Christ speaks freedom, just as he did to the demon-possessed man. Christ has set us free so that we would not live among the dead, but rather among the living; free from striving with all our might for fleeting treasures. In his harsh warning against storing up treasures on earth, we hear the good news of Jesus Christ; he is enough; he is all we need; he is the treasure of everlasting value. God's word brings us out of the cemetery and into the land of ever lasting life.

Katie Koch is pastor of United and Our Savior's Lutheran Churches in rural northwestern Minnesota.

BLUE RIDGE

Once an ocean,
These mountains thrust
Their stony waves
Against the sky.
What motion
Still stirs the stillness
Of these green
And hazy peaks?
Erosion,
The secret, grateful longing
Of the mountains for the sea.

Charles Strietelmeier

Riding with Mani

A. Trevor Sutton

I AM A SEMINARIAN. I LOOK MY BEST UNDER the florescent lights at the library. I think that church pews are comfortable. I am the ideal potluck dinner guest. It goes without saying that I do not fit in at motorcycle rallies.

God and my editor were both looking for a laugh, so I was sent on assignment to write a story about a group of motorcyclists riding cross country for charity. Along their route, they would stop at various biker rallies to raise funds and awareness for their charity. Knowing remarkably little about what I was getting into, I took the assignment. On Friday, I was in a seminary classroom learning about early church history; on Saturday, I was attending a biker rally as an embedded journalist, five states away from my beloved potlucks.

My education did not cease when I left the seminary classroom. At the rally, I learned many valuable life lessons. I learned the basics of leather jacket maintenance and why only sissies wear helmets. I learned that loud pipes save lives. The pragmatic lessons that my biker friends taught me were helpful, but my favorite lesson was a little more ethereal. Unwittingly, these bikers taught me how to be a modern-day Manichean.

My biker friends had little intention of teaching me about the third-century heresy of Manichaeism. They were entirely unaware that their beliefs were Manichean. They had never heard of Mani, the Persian founder of the religious sect of Manichaeism. To my dismay, they were indifferent when I told them about Saint Augustine's dabbling in Mani's teachings prior to his conversion (a solid conversation starter at the seminary).

Though half a globe and fifteen hundred years separated Mani from my biker friends, the similarities in their beliefs were uncanny. Everything that I had learned about Manichaeism at the seminary came alive and was riding a Harley with me across the country. During my week among the biker community, one question repeatedly hogged my brain's gray matter: How did this subculture that knew nothing of Manichaeism end up creating an identical belief system?

The biker community is a deeply religious bunch. Like the Manicheans of the third century, the bikers that I stayed with were a very pious people. Patches or handlebars salvaged from a wreck possess special salvific powers. Rather than being kissed by the pope, these items had been kissed by the asphalt and were now relics. Tattoos of the deceased have a sort of sacramental presence, connecting the living to the dead.

One lady that I met had lost her right leg in a crash. At the time of the accident, she had a tattoo of her late grandmother on her arm. She was certain that her grandmother's inked presence kept her from dying in the crash. Following her amputation, she got a tattoo of a fairy with a pink prosthetic leg to commemorate her recently lost leg. The spiritual presence of the one-legged fairy and her grandmother help her bear the earthly agony of rehabilitation. If you ask this one-legged Manichean, she will tell you that tattoos are gateways that permit the benevolence of the spiritual world to infiltrate the evils of the physical world.

Looking back on his nine years as a Manichean, Augustine wrote, "I concluded that there were two masses, both infinite, but the evil rather smaller, the good larger." Dualism is a hallmark of both Manichaeism and the biker religion. My biker friends were not fully com-

fortable when I mentioned the personal God of Christianity; they preferred to speak in generalities about eternally warring forces of good and evil. They were riding for charity, on a mission to promote good and stomp out evil. Like all good Manicheans, my biker friends were certain that good would win out.

To be certain, there were times when the bikers would speak of the Trinity; however, even the Trinity was understood through the Manichean-Biker cosmos. When one of the bikers, a Vietnam veteran named Big Tow, found out that I was studying to be a pastor, he immediately asked me a theological question.

Photo: istockphoto.com/RonTech2000

"I have talked to very religious people, and they say that they do not believe in Satan. I don't get how you can *not* believe in Lucifer. With everything that is holy—God and Jesus—you have to have something that is evil to balance things out," Big Tow said. I did not know where to begin my response.

Much like the original Manicheans, my biker friends salivated over a smorgasbord of religious outlooks. They appreciate parts of Christianity. They appreciate parts of Buddhism. They appreciate parts of Humanism. In this buffet of religious doctrines, I frequently heard the bikers utilize words like "Karma," "Sin," and "Nirvana" in the same sentence. It was refreshing to hear a flurry of religious words away from the seminary; still, my ears pinged when I heard "Karma" being used interchangeably for "Sin." Like Mani, my friends accepted all faiths while maintaining that their Manichean-Biker faith was just a little more supreme.

My week with these Manichean motorcyclists left me confused. What would Mani have thought about this group of motorcyclists? Would my biker friends have fit in with the Manicheans of third-century Persia? How did this group of bikers become Manicheans without even knowing such a thing existed?

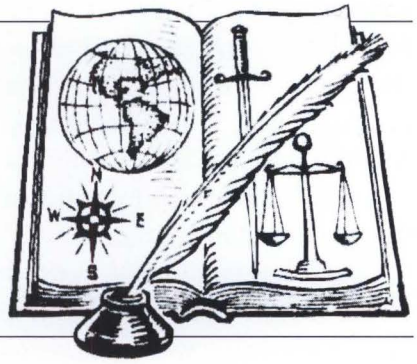
Perhaps the answer is in the common existence that Mani and motorcyclists share. Mani frequented the open road between Iraq and India. He spent some time in the pen. History deemed him a rebel. Somewhere between the open road and his death in jail, Mani became a rebel. Still, this realization hardly gets me closer to understanding why these motorcyclists have become accidental Manicheans.

Either way, I am certain of one thing. Were he alive today, Mani would definitely ride a Harley.

A. Trevor Sutton is a student at Concordia Seminary in Saint Louis, Missouri. His essay "Modern Love: The Findings of a Sorority Chaplain" (*Relief*, Spring 2009) was recently recognized in Houghton Mifflin's 2010 *Best American Essays*.

Reviewed in this issue...

Lit: A Memoir

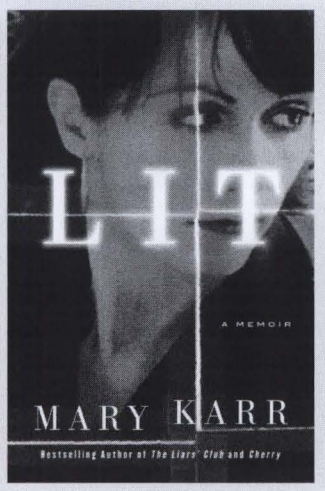


"I DON'T THINK YOU'RE A VERY GOOD MAMA," my nearly three-year-old informed me one afternoon.

"Oh, really?" I replied. "What would I have to do to be a good mother?"

"You would have to do some different things. You would have to do some things like Dada. You would have to play rough."

My daughter's frank assessment marks the end of that golden period in which I could do no wrong—or very little. I can now start counting myself among the countless ranks of mothers whose daughters suspected they've somehow been shortchanged.



LIT: A MEMOIR
Mary Karr
Harper Perennial, 2010
400 pages
$25.99
Reviewed by
Martha Greene Eads
Eastern Mennonite University

Among my comrades is the late Charlie Marie Moore Karr, mother of poet and memoirist Mary Karr. In *Lit*, Karr plumbs her memory to come to terms with Charlie's maternal failings and grapples with her own along the way. Karr's desire was not that her mother be more "like Dada." Although Karr loved her father, Pete Karr was as desperate a drunk as Charlie and never a serious contender for Father of the Year, even in gritty Leechfield, Texas, where Karr spent most of her girlhood. However much she wanted Charlie to be a different sort of mother, Karr reveals in *Lit* her even deeper desire: that she herself be a different sort of mother from Charlie. As she recounts her struggle to be a decent mom in spite of her own alcoholism, Karr grows in compassion for her own mom. In receiving forgiveness, she finds resources for forgiving Charlie.

Karr's son Dev Millbank never tells her to "do some things like Dada" either—at least not in her account. He quite reasonably could have. Karr describes Dev's father, whom she calls "Warren Whitbread," as an ideal father: patient, kind, and resourceful. His family is to the Social Register what the Karrs are to the Leechfield newspaper's police blotter column, even though he too had a dysfunctional upbringing. When Karr, half in admiration and half in resentment, asks her husband how he became such a good parent, Warren says, "I imagine what my father would've done with me, then do the opposite" (179). Karr, in contrast, repeatedly makes familiar choices that endanger her son, her marriage, and her own life. When Charlie finally dries out, Karr "get[s] drunk at her again, driving to the liquor store for a bottle of Jack Daniels like [her] poor old daddy used to drink (no scrap of awareness in the similarity)." She continues, "I drink it in the garage while flipping through my wedding pictures, where Mother looks walleyed

and very pleased with herself. I could drag her behind my car, I think. Instead, I drain the poison I hope will kill her" (130). She manages to stop drinking before conceiving Dev but a few weeks after his birth accepts a beer (from her mother, of course) to help her breastfeeding milk supply, and the downward spiral resumes. "That's how," she muses, "in some cosmic accounting of our family's rampant dipsomania—Mother's recovery dovetailed with the start of my own years' long binge, for from that day forward, I drank in increasing amounts, as if our gene pool owed the universe at least one worthless drunk at a time" (156). With her mother on the wagon and her father in the grave, Karr's demons prevent her from even trying to match Dev's father's outstanding performance in the parenting department.

Fortunately, Karr develops a relationship with her heavenly Father, and *Lit* proves itself over time and pages to be a spirited conversion narrative. The book is not, however, likely to show up on a Christian family bookstore shelf. Even as Karr (kicking and screaming) gets to know her higher power through AA and comes to recognize that His name is Jesus, the four-letter words keep flying. A divorce from Warren, injudicious romantic interludes, and unflattering losses of temper lie ahead, as well. The book is tough to read, from start to finish, albeit nowhere nearly as tough as *The Liars' Club* (1995) and *Cherry* (2000), both bestsellers, in which Karr describes her harrowing childhood and sexual coming of age, respectively. I had to put each of the first two books aside, finding incidents in each of them too painful to contemplate.

But this English prof/parent/Christian was a sucker for *Lit* as a celebration of both poetry and redeemed parenting. Think of Anne Lamott's work; *Lit* is just as fresh and frank but a little more obviously erudite: name-dropping the likes of "Toby" Wolff, his brother Geoffrey, and David Foster Wallace; employing extended Homeric metaphors; offering esoteric epigraphs. Beneath it all, though, is a highly accessible appreciation for stories and story-telling, especially for the Gospel story as it continues to bear upon the lives of desperate parents and children. As mothers, Charlie Marie Moore Karr and Mary Karr "played rough" in ways no child would ask for, but each managed by God's grace both to claim blessings and bless her offspring.

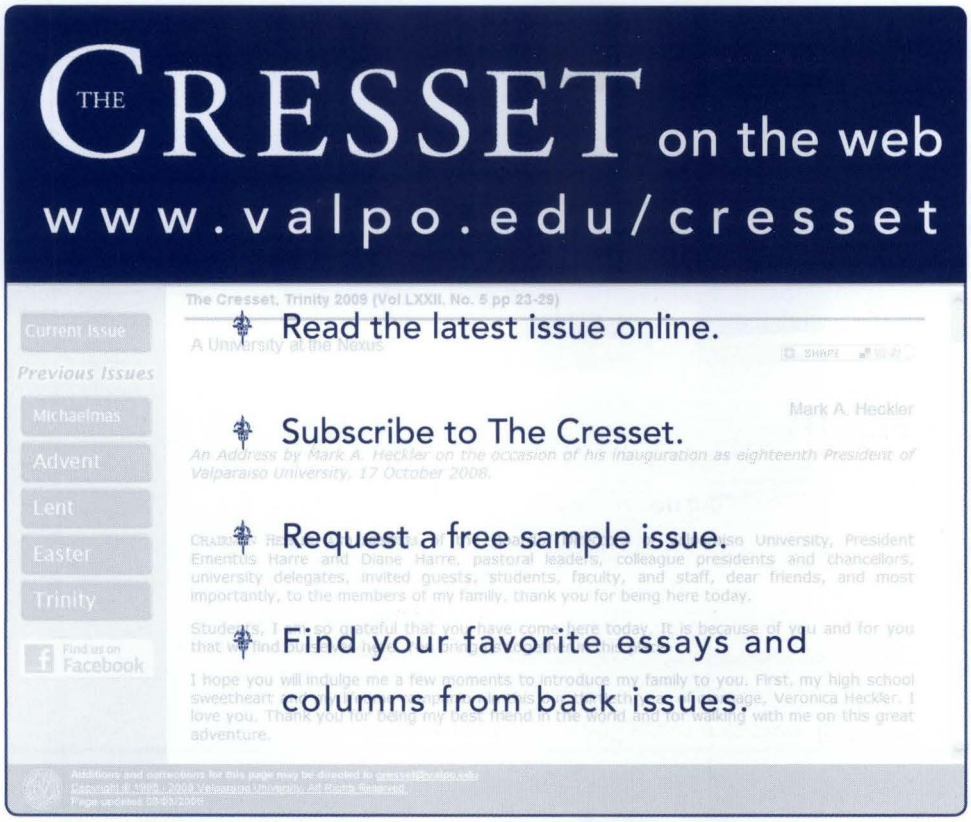
The memoir's title is a pun I didn't originally get. Having grown up in a Baptist teetotaling home, I needed my Catholic-school-educated husband to point out that "lit" keeps company with "soused," "trashed," "stoned," and just plain "drunk." In her *BookPage* review quoted in testimonials at the front of *Lit*'s Harper Perennial paperback edition, Katherine Wyrick caught the double-meaning: "That pleasing monosyllabic title encapsulates this writer's entire journey so far—one that is about drinking and the illuminating revelations of sobriety, about the redemptive power of literature and how the act of writing can save a soul" (viii). Indeed, *Lit* is certain to appeal to nearly anyone who wants to read about deliverance from a crushing addiction and to those who savor solidarity with other avid readers. But you should also buy some copies to give to people in your life who, even if free of addictions to alcohol or literature, might need a reminder that God can bring good out of even our worst familial screw-ups, whether done to us, by us, or both.

FLIGHT

The angel speeding down the runway pulls up
her wing flaps, and, wouldn't you know it, wobbles,
then dribbles to a stop. She stands on the windy
tarmac, embarrassed, brushing her blond hair
from her eyes, trying to remember how to elevate
herself, wishing she'd worn jeans instead of
the girly skirt that looks good when she's flying.
It's gravity's old malice, showing up in the strangest
places, now at the corner, where the fortune cookie truck
forgets how to turn, tipping gracefully, sliding on
its side as cookies spill into the summer night.
Then mercy stalls in every precinct of the city

and we're just bodies, only protoplasm for a wasp
to sting. Even love is a sad mechanical business then,
and prayer an accumulation of words I would kill
to believe in. There's no happy end to a poem
that lacks faith, no way to get out. I could go on,
mentioning that doubt, no doubt, is a testing. But
meanwhile the bedraggled angel glances towards
the higher power, wondering how much help she'll get,
not a manual, for sure, but a pause in entropy perhaps,
until she can get her wings scissoring. Call it cooperation
that helps a fledgling rise to build, sustain itself, and
lift her past the tree line. And then she knows she won't
fall, oh holy night, can't fall. Anything but.

Jeanne Murray Walker



Submission Guidelines

What We Publish: *The Cresset* publishes essays, reviews, and poetry, not fiction. Essays that we publish generally are not opinion pieces but expository, personal, or exploratory essays. We will, on occasion, consider interviews or selected other genres. Almost any subject is possible. We are highly selective about personal essays of faith experience and about homilies. The editor reviews all manuscripts and, when necessary, solicits opinions from members of an Editorial Board, consisting of faculty members at Valparaiso University.

Guidelines for Authors: 1. Our readership is educated, most with some church connection, most frequently Lutheran. Articles should be aimed at general readers interested in religious matters. 2. *The Cresset* is not a theological journal, but a journal addressing matters of import to those with some degree of theological interest and commitment. Authors are encouraged to reflect upon the religious implications of their subject. 3. Style and spelling are governed, in most cases, by *The Chicago Manual of Style* and *Webster's New International Dictionary*. 4. We do accept unsolicited manuscripts; however, before submitting a manuscript, you may want to contact the editor at cresset@valpo.edu about the suitability of your topic for the journal. Our review columns (film, popular culture, music, and so forth) are usually supplied by regular columnists. 5. The preferred method of submission is in Microsoft Word for Window format. Email your file to cresset@valpo.edu. Or you may send your manuscript via USPS to: The Editor, The Cresset, Huegli Hall, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, IN 46383. 6. Poetry submissions should be sent via USPS. Poetry submissions via email will not be accepted. 7. The use of notes is discouraged. Notes of supporting citations should be placed in parentheses in the text, listing: last name of the author, year of publication, and page numbers where appropriate, e.g., (Wright 1934, 232). 8. In a separate section entitled "Works Cited," list alphabetically by author (and, within author, by year of publication) all items that are cited in the text. Provide complete bibliographical information, including author's first name, publisher, and place and date of publication. Examples:

Bass, Dorothy, ed. *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997.

Wright, Basil. "Filming in Ceylon." *Cinema Quarterly* 2/4 (1943): 231–32.

_____. *The Long View*. London: Secker and Warburg, 1974.

On The Poets

Mark D. Bennion has taught English courses at BYU-Idaho for the past decade. Parables Press recently published his first collection of poems, *Psalm & Selah: A Poetic Journey through the Book of Mormon*. Mark and his wife, Kristine, are the parents of four daughters.

Michael Kramer teaches English at Orange Lutheran High School in Orange, California. He advises the school's literary magazine, *King Author*, nationally recognized as one of the best in the nation for the past nine years. His work has appeared in numerous anthologies and literary magazines. His poem, "For Despairing Love on Prozac," published in the *Pacific Review*, was nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

Tony Dawson is Auxiliary Services Director at Wheaton College (IL) and co-author of *From the Library of C. S. Lewis: Selections from Writers Who Influenced His Spiritual Journey*.

Charles Strietelmeier is pastor at Augustana Lutheran Church in Hobart, Indiana and a regular contributor to *The Cresset*.

Jeanne Murray Walker is Professor of English at the University of Delaware. Her poetry has appeared in *Shenandoah*, *The Gettysburg Review*, *Image*, and *The Hudson Review*.

Valparaiso University

Shield of Character

The Shield of Character is one of the most important and powerful symbols of Valparaiso University. At its center is the Light, the source of all truth, serving as a reminder of who we are and what we strive to be.

The Shield of Character reflects what we protect and defend as an interconnected Valpo community: the common set of shared characteristics and values found among those who live and work here and those who have walked this campus.

- truth-seeking
- free to inquire
- humble
- compassionate
- service-minded
- purpose-driven
- empowered
- ethical

Our Motto: IN LUCE TUA VIDEMUS LUCEM
In Thy Light We See Light