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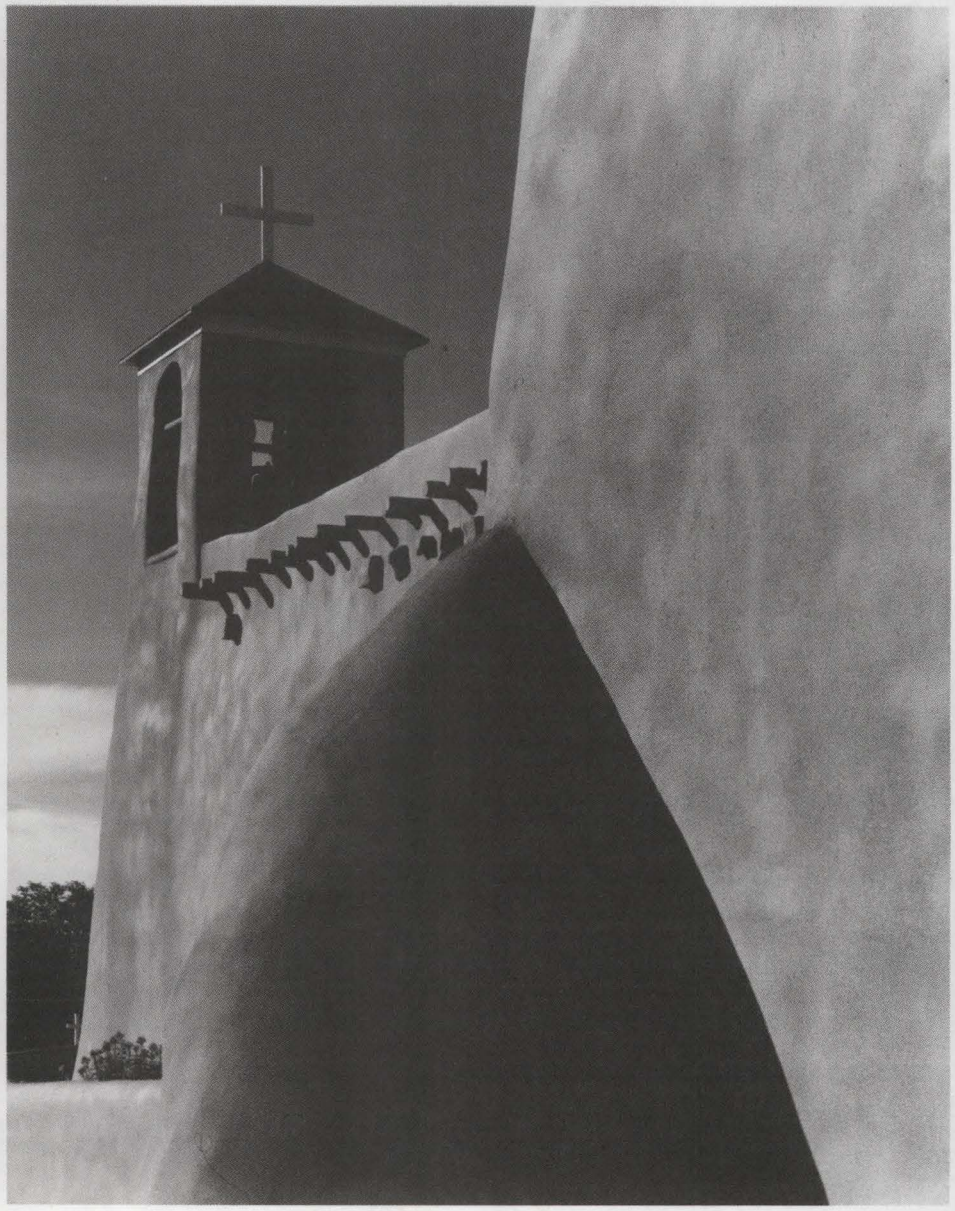
Valparaiso University

A Symposium on the Academic Vocation with Richard Jungkuntz, Leon R. Kass, Martin E. Marty, Richard John Neuhaus, Mark R. Schwehn, & Jonathan Z. Smith

the CRESSET



A review of Literature, the Arts, and Public Affairs

September, 1985

the CRESSET

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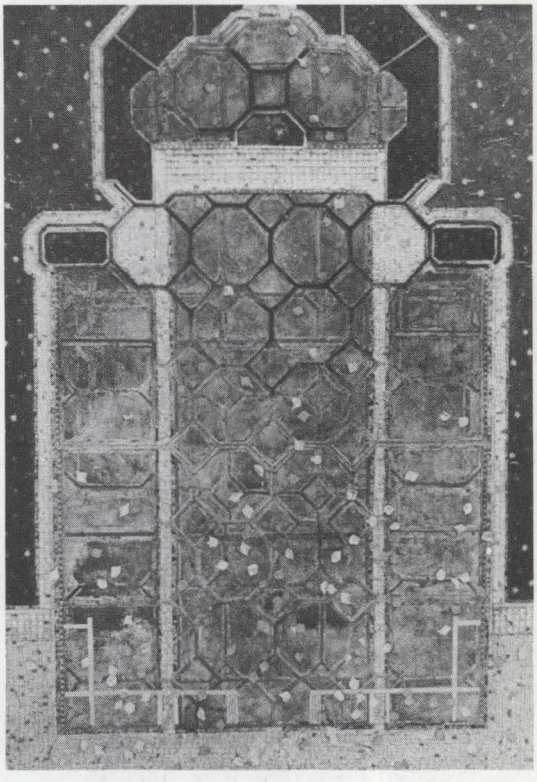

Above: Robert Eustace. *The Church at the End of the 20th Century.* 1982, construction on canvas, 48½ x 34½.

Cover: Robert B. Miller. *Church at Picuris Pueblo, NM.* 1979, black and white silver gelatin photographic print, 16 x 20 in.

These art works are in September exhibits at VU. RHWB

IN LUCE TUA

Comment on Contemporary Affairs by the Editor

Address to the Freshman Class

To the young men and women of the Class of 1989 of Valparaiso University:

You have already learned that adults—parents, teachers, authority figures of every kind—find it impossible to let pass any occasion that offers them the opportunity to instruct you in the conduct of your lives. I hope that you have by now also learned to indulge them—us—in this relatively harmless form of compulsive behavior. We do it not, as you might expect, because we assume it will affect what you think or do, at least in any immediate sense. Adults can believe many foolish things, but none of us believes either in the tooth fairy or in the efficacy of advice offered to teenagers.

Why, then, do we persist? Because, as I have already suggested, we cannot help it. We know that such behavior is somehow expected of us—even by you—and we want, if nothing else, to offer some sort of statement for the record. We need, God help us, to be able if necessary to say, to you and to ourselves, that we told you so. The words that follow may therefore be viewed primarily as an exercise in psychological therapy on the part of their author. That may or may not make them more palatable.

You will be relieved to know that I have no intention of telling you that these are the best days of your lives and that you should act accordingly. For some of you they will be—which is rather sad when you come to think of it—but for others they may well be among the most miserable, and you ought to be prepared for that. I remember one fellow in my freshman dorm who spent a good part of the fall semester huddled under his bed and who never came back after Christmas vacation. I hope he had better days later on. Your college experience will not likely be that traumatic, but it will not probably be one long exhilaration either. I have never understood why adults should burden young people by suggesting to them that it ought to be.

You may also count it a blessing that I do not propose to advise you concerning love, sex, and related matters. Such advice, if it is to be given at all, should be given in private on an individual basis. Besides, I am not at all sure that mature years lead to mature views on the subject. Most adults I know, at least most male adults, are not all that wise when it comes to sex. They are simply a bit less feverish about it than they once were, and that can sometimes pass for wisdom. In any case, few people in my acquaintance, young or old, have been able to benefit from others' experience in such matters; here, if nowhere else, we must learn for ourselves.

Learning for yourself will be in many ways the central theme of your next four years—about affairs of the heart, affairs of the mind, affairs of the spirit and will, indeed about all those things that go together to make up what will constitute your central project: the making of a self. That's an enormously complicated and protracted exercise, of course, one that began well before you got here and that will extend well into the years after you leave. In some ways, it will never end. But most of the people I know agree that their college years were particularly crucial to the formation of their own identities, and it is reasonable to assume that the same will be true for most of you.

The making of a self with which one can comfortably live involves, along with a great many other things, arriving at some fundamental decisions concerning work, politics, and religious faith. None of these things is at the heart of what a university, as university, concerns itself with, but your university experience will be an impoverished one if you do not, in your years here, grapple seriously with all three of them. In the limited space available to me, I want to offer some brief observations on each of them for your consideration.

Work at its worst is what we subject ourselves to

Special Notice

This is the third of the four issues of The Cresset *that the VU Alumni Association is sending free of charge to alumni during 1985. The Alumni Association hopes that this experimental venture will provide a service to the alumni, the* Cresset, *and the University. Comments on this venture are invited and should be addressed either to Walter Kretzmann, President of the Alumni Association, or to Richard Koenig, Vice President for Public and Alumni Affairs, at Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana 46383.*

only in order to keep ourselves and those for whom we are responsible from destitution. I can imagine few experiences more dreary than those in which work amounts to no more than that. It is not a question of prestige or income level. Many people find meaning and satisfaction in jobs that others would deem menial or insufficiently rewarded, even as there are a great many well-paid individuals for whom work is a continuing experience in misery and futility.

Yours appears to be a silent generation, as politically apathetic as was my own in the late 1950s. You need less to be turned away from intensity than roused up from apathy.

Your generation has a reputation concerning work that precedes you. We have been told that you are narrow materialists, yuppies in the making for whom vocation has meaning only in terms of its financial pay-off. I have doubts on that score; the students of this generation seem to me oriented less to the imperatives of the bottom line than to yearnings for economic security and, to a lesser extent, for possibilities of leisure and pleasure. These things are not to be considered among the final ends of man, but neither are they, unless they become idols, evils in themselves.

The dangers that present themselves to your generation, therefore, are not so much materialist as instrumentalist. Work can become valued not for itself but for its use as a means to desirable ends. But that can make sense only in the short run; work will be too central to your lives for it to be relegated to secondary purposes. Take great care in choosing your occupation, and do not lock yourself into one too soon. Much of what we are and of how we value ourselves is bound up in our work; to have found useful and satisfying work is to have gone a long way toward creating a livable self. Be as careful about it as you expect to be in choosing a spouse. It is no less important.

It is only for a very few of you that politics will fill a place in your lives at all equivalent to that of your work. That is as it should be. Few prospects are more chilling than that of a fully politicized community. Indeed, a society forced to choose between widespread political indifference and widespread political intensity would be well advised, for the sake of its stability and social peace, to learn to live with indifference.

But I strongly suspect that for the overwhelming majority of you excessive political commitment poses no danger. Quite the reverse. Yours appears to be a silent generation, as politically apathetic as was my own in the late 1950s. You need less to be turned away from intensity than roused up from apathy. Consider this: under the conditions of modernity, in which politics determines so much, to be indifferent to politics is to be indifferent to life, at least life at it exists anywhere beyond the purely private. For Christians, vocation implies more than work; it suggests the doing of God's larger work in society. And that means, among other things, politics.

What is called for—and it requires a delicate balance—is commitment to politics without moral zealotry. A politics bereft of moral foundations is a bankrupt politics, yet we need always to remember that most political issues are morally ambiguous and call for debate and resolution in terms of prudential considerations rather than moral imperatives. The ends we seek in politics are various and not always commensurable with each other (e.g., freedom and equality), and even when our goals are morally indisputable (e.g. avoidance of nuclear war, an end to apartheid in South Africa) the means by which they might be achieved are seldom easily discerned and not often susceptible to simple moral judgment. We need, in short, to recognize how urgent our political choices are and yet maintain toward them an attitude of moral humility. And as Christians, we ought always keep in mind the proximate and contingent nature of politics: the Kingdom toward which our lives are pointed will never be realized within the political order.

The sense of transcendence and the knowledge of where it can and cannot be found should protect Christians (though it does not always do so) from the temptations of political religion. For most universities, that is not a significant question; it is here. While this is a university rather than a theological seminary or a bible college, it takes theological questions seriously, and it expects its students to do so as well. It is not our business, as a university, to be concerned with the state of your souls, but as a university *community*, we do have that concern.

It follows from this that it is the distinctive purpose of this place to demonstrate to its students that serious intellectual inquiry is not inconsistent with serious Christian commitment. For a university that aspires to academic eminence in a militantly secular intellectual environment, that is an odd, even quixotic, burden to assume. Yet we do so without reluctance or apology. We truly are fools for Christ, and we summon you to join us in our foolishness. It would be dishonest of us to promise to make religious belief easy for you, but we can promise to summon all our energies to help you make of yourselves men and women of faith as well as of intellectual and professional competence.

THE ACADEMIC VOCATION REVISITED

A Symposium on Teaching, Learning, and Publishing

(Editor's Note: The April and May issues of The Cresset *featured Mark R. Schwehn's two-part essay on "Academics as a Vocation." The widespread response to that essay indicated that the issues it raised were of such fundamental importance to the academic enterprise that they warranted further investigation.* The Cresset *therefore commissioned the following essays from Leon R. Kass, Jonathan Z. Smith, Richard Jungkuntz, Richard John Neuhaus, and Martin E. Marty—as well as a response from Mr. Schwehn. We thank our distinguished contributors for their willingness to participate in this symposium and we trust that their essays will stimulate our readers to their own further reflections on the issues presented.)*

Leon R. Kass

In his wide-ranging and thought-provoking article, "Academics as a Vocation," Mark Schwehn explores the failure of the modern academy to provide a decent, let alone honorable, home for the activity of teaching. He first proposes an institutional remedy—distinctive teaching and publishing faculties, each self-selected—and defends his proposal against likely criticism, theoretical and practical. He then traces the present hegemony of research-and-publishing to the thought of Max Weber, which he begins to challenge in the name of a certain understanding of tradition, especially in regard to Christian universities. I share deeply Schwehn's concerns for teaching and community and find myself nodding in agreement with much that he says. But, in my opinion, neither the remedy proposed nor the underlying analysis go far enough. The following comments are offered as friendly, if more radical, amendments, intended to advance the discussion, primarily of the subjects of teaching and tradition.

I begin with a practical difficulty. Schwehn's proposal for separate faculties is not intended for all academic institutions. He is apparently quite content (in my view, mistakenly) with the present emphasis on original research and publication "at universities and elite colleges," where he discerns "no systematic problem." Yet it is precisely these places that train the vast majority of faculty for *all* academic institutions. So long as these prestigious institutions set the standard, so long as their graduates are reared in the ethos of original, specialized research (under the threat of publish or perish), and so long as the colleges treat a Ph.D. from such universities as the indispensable prerequisite for faculty appointment, no important reform can be accomplished at *any* college or university. Schwehn himself admits as much (e.g., "To expect a recent Ph.D. to think otherwise [than that publication is all] would be the same as expecting a recent law school graduate to think like an engineer"), but he does not draw the necessary conclusion. Either the ethos of the graduate schools (and elite colleges) must themselves be reformed so as to take teaching seriously, or colleges seriously interested in educating the young must look elsewhere to find appropriate teachers.[1]

Schwehn raises, only to set aside, the crucial question of whether teachers can be taught to teach while in graduate training. In a few places, he seems to suggest that graduate schools could provide academics who prided themselves on their teaching if only they were prepared and encouraged to do so in the course of their professional training. Perhaps this is so. But whether such reform of graduate education—even if it were accomplished—could go to the heart of "the conundrum of teaching and research" depends on a prior and more fundamental question: What is "teaching"? Schwehn's failure to address this question thematically is perhaps the most serious theoretical weakness of the entire presentation.

In the course of trying to show that college teaching has a dignity equal to that of original research,

[1]St. John's College (Annapolis, MD, and Santa Fe, NM), perhaps the American institution most serious about liberal education and about teaching and learning communally, is absolutely indifferent to the graduate degrees or publishing record of its prospective (and current) faculty.

Schwehn assimilates the teacher to the researcher in several ways, distinguishing them finally only by their mode of "public-ation." He asserts that "all good teachers are researchers" and that teaching, like publishing, is a form of public-ation of original research: "All good teaching involves research and public-ation, making public the best of one's own thoughts." Is this true? Or, rather, of what view of teaching might this be true?

If teaching means or is primarily the oral, orderly presentation of some "subject matter"—be it information, concepts, evidence, methods, results of experiments, or reports of scholarly publications—then Schwehn may be right. Such teachers, like researchers, must keep up with their field or subject, arrange for its orderly and convincing presentation, and make public the best of their own thoughts on the subject. A fount of knowledge, the professor[2] pours forth the distillate of his own learning, presumably filling the empty (but, it is to be hoped, open) student vessels who are his public audience.

Teaching is not performance, display, or the making public of a finished product. Indeed, the activity may be at its best when it goes unfinished.

The students. It is good to be reminded of them. Not the graduate students, but that vast body of college youth whose initiation into adult life is somehow connected with the life of the mind and the academic vocation (such at least is the pretense of our colleges; otherwise they might as well take their rite of passage through gainful employment or in the armed forces, and we professors might join research institutes or, like the students, enter "the real world"). What if the account of teaching begins not with the subject-matter or academic discipline, but with our students—with their needs, hopes, and possibilities? What if teaching is not "delivering the goods" but rather providing the occasion for the students' own learning, for awakening and quickening the germs of wonder, interest, and thoughtful and appreciative understanding of the various matters that can attract the human mind? What if liberal education were defined not as the transmission of accumulated knowledge, culture (or tradition), or so-called "skills" of the mind, but as the thoughtful search for understanding of the world and of ourselves within it, conducted by means of serious questioning and the careful study of the writings of other and better inquirers? Teaching, under this view of education, no longer looks like a different version of research and public-ation.

Such a teacher will, of course, study hard and think "for himself" (all real thinking is one's own work), but he is not seeking an original contribution of hitherto undiscovered knowledge. Though a devoted student—he may even believe in some cases that "the fate of his soul" is connected with his inquiry—he is not engaged in *wissenschaft,* literally, the making or production or creation of (new) knowledge.[3] Rather, he is seeking insight and understanding, often by means of trying to understand the work and thought of another; the quest for originality and novelty is, to say the least, an insignificant matter here—indeed, it is a positive hindrance.

Thus, though teaching for such a teacher is a public activity, it is not an act of public-ation, and especially not an act of publicizing *his own* best thoughts. In some respects more public than original scientific research, such teaching is a *public activity* because it comprises open, common, and shared inquiry—at its best, with students and teachers inquiring together. It is not performance, display, or the making public of a finished *product.* Indeed, the activity is often at its best when it goes unfinished: questions publicly asked elicit answers tentatively given, which when publicly scrutinized turn out to be ill-conceived for reasons that are themselves quite clear. Socrates, the master of such obstetrical teaching, always insisted that he had no teaching, only a way of life. According to the Platonic dialogues, most of his fellow Athenians did not believe him and treated him as just another professor (*sophistēs*); they understood his kind of teaching no better than do contemporary academics, who, by the way, would never hire him as their colleague—and not only because he did not publish.

This judgment of Socrates shows us one reason, among others, why teaching understood in this way—

[2]Jacob Klein, in translating the Greek term *sophistēs* in the Platonic dialogues, often rendered it as "professor" (rather than "sophist"), one who professes his wisdom in public speeches. See his marvelous *A Commentary on Plato's Meno* (University of North Carolina Press) for a profound exploration of the subjects of teaching and learning.

[3]Schwehn's translation of *wissenschaft* as "academics" is, though properly defended, unfortunate in that one loses thereby the crucial etymological clue that the Weberian vocation—and view of science—is one of "knowledge-production"—rather than, say "discovery" or "reflection" or "contemplation" or "understanding." The crux of the present difficulties is that the vocation of *wissenschaft,* thus understood, has become the main vocation of the *academia* (named for Plato's school of liberal learning). There is no reason why the main home of *wissenschaft* should be the home also of liberal education of the young. (Consider, for example, the National Institutes of Health, Bell Laboratories, All Soul's College at Oxford, the Institut Pasteur in Paris, and the various Max Planck Institutes in Germany.)

as nurturing the will and ability to learn, to question, and to become thoughtful about important matters—is recalcitrant to the kind of public evaluation by peers that Schwehn endorses: Who are such a teacher's peers? But there are difficulties also with the matter to be judged. Course syllabi, reading lists, and exams can be evaluated, to be sure, as can the clarity and distinctness of lecture presentations. In some forms of teaching, where lecturing may be not only unavoidable but positively desirable on pedagogic grounds, such measures of teaching excellence may be sufficient. But how does one publicly measure what is stirring in the minds and hearts of students—above and beyond their memories, with their (probably only short-lived) recall of material "transmitted"? Though the activity of teaching and learning may proceed in full view, the most important goings-on are often invisible and inarticulate, even for the participants themselves. Any teacher worthy of the name knows how hard it is to find out what is truly going on in the various souls seated around his table. How, then, are a bunch of outside evaluators, invited in for a few days, going to judge the long-term or even short-term consequences of a good conversation or even a stray question, especially when master teachers have trouble doing so with their own students?

Here, by the way, we have stumbled on an area of genuine research for genuine teachers: how to help young people learn—and also what and when and why. In fact, when my own institution, during the Hutchins College era, had a separate College faculty, devoted only to the collaborative teaching of undergraduates, their appointment to the faculty of this center of research scholarship was frequently justified in this way: they, too, did research, into the content and the ways and means of a good liberal education. No university I know of today continues this idea or practice.

Now I suspect (from knowing him as a friend and colleague, and from knowing his involvement in Christ College) that Mark Schwehn is much friendlier to the Socratic sort of teaching than the earlier part of his paper would suggest. Indeed, toward the end of the second installment, he endorses—at least for the Christian university—a living concern with tradition, expressed as "an ongoing conversation between the present and its own past." His final formulation: "To make the tradition our own in order to keep it alive for our students: this is the academic vocation."[4] Schwehn urges us not only to think *about* but also to think *with* (by which, I take it, he means "with the aid of") the great authors of the past, and to consider not only what they are saying but also whether they speak truly and centrally.[5]

But here a different difficulty arises, which I can only begin to discuss: How does this quest for what is true and important, here and now, fit with the view of teaching and learning as transmission of *tradition*? Schwehn recognizes this difficulty, I believe, in distinguishing between traditionalism and tradition. If old texts are treated as authorities, they cease to be instruments for genuine inquiry; authoritative opinion, however good, is inimical to thinking and learning insofar as its authority rests on anything other than evidence of and for its rightness. Yet if what is called tradition is in no way authoritative, then it ceases to be tradition, that which is handed over as heritage.[6]

Part of the difficulty may be that Schwehn takes up his opposition to "Weberianism" in defense of the Christian tradition and the Christian university. Against the arch-enemy of rationalism-in-the-service-of-mastery (which he calls, in the Christian manner, "diabolical"), Schwehn counterposes what "Christians know, by virtue of who they are and especially by virtue of the Biblical stories that both form and inform them." Here, if not exactly to authority, Schwehn appeals to authoritative belief as the basis for knowledge. This may be good enough for Christian universities. But the academy at large will be unmoved, for it will see this as external criticism of the sort that enlightenment thought has always rejected.

It will not do, therefore, to counter Weberianism only by resorting to tradition. An internal and philosophical critique is required—and possible. One may begin by exposing the shrunken notion of mastery that Weber (and, before him, Descartes and Bacon) embrace: How can one even pretend to be a *master* without knowledge of ends and "goods" or without self-knowledge and self-mastery? One must take up again the philosophical challenge to the views of reason as a mere instrument of calculation, of knowledge as mere human creation in the service of mastery, of *wissenschaft* as the only dignified work of mind, and of the impossibility of reasoning well about better and worse. This challenge was begun long ago by Socrates, who noticed that the scientists and professors of his day (and, we might add, of all other days), in their quest for clarity and the resolution of perplexity, dis-

[4]Can this view of our vocation be squared with his earlier formulation, publicizing "the best of one's own thoughts"?

[5]Here we are in full agreement. My questions to my students are: What does the text say (and mean)? Why does the author say it? Is it true? What difference does it make (or "So what?")?

[6]For a full discussion of this paradox of "tradition," see Chapter Two of Eva T. H. Brann's *Paradoxes of Education in a Republic* (University of Chicago Press, 1979), the best book I know of on the subject of American education.

played an inadequate and rather thoughtless relation to their own hypotheses or starting points.[7] They too preferred problem-solving to questioning, the technical to the ordinary, the abstract and partial to the concrete and complete, the how to the whether and why.

But the Socratic challenge to the pretensions of demonstrative and calculating reason is conducted not by appeals to the limits of reason or to some ancestral beliefs or texts, but by tenacious and thoughtful inquiry into all opinions and notions, over the whole of being. This pursuit of wisdom—passionate yet reasonable, thoughtful yet precise, disciplined yet free—is the more universal alternative to the Weberian spirit. Here and there, even at Harvard and Stanford, its light is flickering. But only where it flourishes can liberal education thrive; and only there can teaching acquire its true dignity and honor.

Leon R. Kass, *trained as a physician and biochemist, is presently Henry R. Luce Professor of the Liberal Arts of Human Biology in the College and the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago. He is also chairman of a new undergraduate program, "Fundamentals: Issues and Texts," in which students concentrate on important basic questions by means of the intensive study of a few selected classic texts. He has taught at St. John's College and is the author of* Toward a More Natural Science: Biology and Human Affairs *(The Free Press, 1985).*

Jonathan Z. Smith

In "Academics as a Vocation," Mark R. Schwehn has raised a number of important issues confronting the enterprise of higher education, including the "conundrum of teaching and research."[1] This aporia plagues the profession, especially since the Sixties when the Ph.D. became the all but universal (and, in its present form, utterly inappropriate) credential for college teaching. At one level, Schwehn is able to state the issue succinctly: how can the faculty be "honored, not scorned" for a career largely, or exclusively, devoted to teaching? The proposed solution, a social contract of "self-selection," recognizes the dilemma at the cost of institutionalizing it. The proposal is an ingenious thought experiment to provoke reflection on the consequences of our present modes of behavior. As a practical solution, it is a conservative remedy to a radical situation.

I find far more promise in thinking about two issues which Schwehn briefly raises and sets aside: graduate education and the professional, collegial review of teaching. Given his diagnosis, one cannot merely concede the "socializing power of our graduate schools," nor be content with "leaving aside the very important question of whether or not any teacher-training program could be successful at the graduate level." Given his concern for parity, the sketch Schwehn presents of a process of serious peer-review of teaching must not be impeached as "verging on utopian fantasies." Both strike at the root of the problem.

There has been much self-congratulatory talk lately among colleges about reforming high school education by imposing stricter requirements for college admission. While some of the rhetoric is unfortunate, such proposals do recognize a very real relationship of power. It is now time for colleges to "pick on someone their own size," and take on, in a similar fashion, the graduate establishment. After all, colleges are almost the sole consumers of the products of graduate education, but their needs have been largely ignored. It is far from clear that graduate programs hold themselves accountable to anyone beside themselves—perhaps to some vague notion of their wider professional associations, certainly neither to their particular educational institutions, nor to the profession of education.

Colleges have the power to insist on accountability. Let the deans of ten prestigious liberal arts colleges produce an open letter to their graduate counterparts detailing the reasons that they find their graduates incompetent to teach college students and suggesting that they will no longer hire their products, and, at the very least, discussion will ensue. There is no principled reason why graduate education cannot provide as much explicit training in matters of pedagogy as it now provides in matters of research. It is long overdue that the rhetoric that "teaching is an art" be questioned. Perhaps it is true at the outer margins of excellence (as true as it is for research), but teaching is, above all, a skilled profession which can be trained for in ways analogous to present training for research. As I have written elsewhere:

> The fact remains that, despite much talk about the relationship of teaching to research, the recognition that the majority of positions in the future will be in undergraduate programs, and the widespread employment of graduate students in instructional roles, there is little explicit attention to teaching in most graduate programs. What occurs, with heroic exceptions, seems to take place largely by accident or as a result of an uncommon, and ultimately countereducational, faith in imitation and trial and error. I would think that it would be possible to design teaching requirements as a part of the Ph.D.—at the very least, to require the submission of a proposed syllabus for a course of the student's design with a written rationale for the various elements and pedagogic

[7]See, e.g., Plato, *Republic* 510c ff. See also *Meno* and *Theaetetus.*

[1]Schwehn's point is more subtle than is suggested by the subtitle on the cover of issue in which his article appeared: "The Academic Life: Teaching vs. Research?"

strategies, or the preparation of a series of critical reviews of the major undergraduate textbooks in one's field of interest, with the development of seminars or colloquia in support of these. Such requirements, alongside the more usual modes of inservice training, especially if the latter included analyzing the pedagogics and performance of a course as well as its subject matter, would be a modest beginning. I would hope for a time when it would be as routine a matter to deny a degree to a student who failed the teaching requirement as it would to one who failed some linguistic or special-area examination.[2]

Indeed, one might go further and question whether the traditional, monographic dissertation ought to be the sole mode of testing for the conferring of a doctoral degree, whether there might be alternative means for rigorous evaluation which better reflect the kinds of tasks scholars and teachers perform in the present academy.[3]

I have raised the question of graduate training in teaching at the outset because, without it, Schwehn's *Modest Proposal* of "self-selection" appears empty. I applaud his insistence on processes of peer-review and his eloquent argument against the notion that teaching is a private act. But what guarantees the criteria used for evaluating excellence? As long as the presupposition is that teaching is a mysterious process, an art, will not such evaluative processes always bear the stigma of being mere opinion, or the charitable recognition of sheer good will?

Colleges must undertake required programs in continuing education on pedagogical matters for their faculty. Training in teaching does not end (if it ever began) with the conferring of the graduate degree. Teachers have as solemn an obligation to "keep up" with the literature and research in education and learning as they do in their particular fields of research—and they should be funded accordingly. Bluntly put, for example, no one should be permitted to teach an introductory course who is not conversant, among other matters, with the literature on the cognitive development of individuals of college age, with issues of critical reasoning and informal logic, and with techniques of writing instruction. It is not sufficient to be a Mr. Chips. That is to say, there can be parity between the teaching and research aspects of the profession, but the price of such parity is seriousness and work. *We* have allowed all the rigor as well as the concomitant advantages to accrue to the research side. We must learn to be as professional with respect to the one as to the other.

While I applaud Schwehn's "fantasy" of more rigorous and intellectually stimulating processes of peer-review, it is only one step, one confined to individual institutions. What is required is a national, professional establishment for college teaching parallel to the professional establishment for research. Lacking this, we give comfort to the canard that research is somehow capable of objective and public evaluation (the point of publication), while the evaluation of teaching remains merely subjective. One might imagine the most obvious components of such a parallel establishment, elements that would fill the teaching side of an individual's dossier to the degree that the research side is presently filled. Only by such provisions will the teaching enterprise be "honored, not scorned."

One might imagine a genuine professional association which has college-level teaching as its primary concern. We are presently ill-served by the educational associations which largely cater to administrative concerns and lobbying efforts, or by the quasi-union activities of other groups. Neither is capable of commanding intellectual respect. As a beginning, one might suggest the establishment of an invitational network (Pugwash-style) of concerned and competent individuals who would undertake to meet regularly each summer for a week on pedagogical and curricular matters.[4] Most teachers lack any sense of colleagues beyond their institutions. Two or three-day workshops, while providing a needed "high," quickly fade away with little tangible results. Individuals devoted to college teaching need to find the same sense of corporate identity and stimulation with respect to their educational concerns as they now are able to find in the annual meetings of professional societies with respect to their research interests.

There needs to be a national, refereed journal devoted to college pedagogy in which both the results of research in the various fields of knowledge relevant to teaching might be conveyed, and in which faculty might publish thoughtful articles on curricular and instructional experiments. There are a few models in specific fields, but nothing which addresses the profession as a whole.

Perhaps the greatest single scandal is the relative lack of competent reviews of college textbooks in the professional journals of the learned societies. This leads, among other consequences, to the anti-educational position of some institutions that textbooks will not be considered in making tenure decisions. A single

[2]J. Z. Smith, "Here and Now: Prospects for Graduate Education," in J. Neusner, ed., *New Humanities and Academic Disciplines: The Case of Jewish Studies* (University of Wisconsin Press: Madison, 1984), 37-8. See further the section on "The Profession of College Teaching" in the AAC Report, *Integrity in the College Curriculum* (Association of American Colleges: Washington, D.C., 1985), 35-9.

[3]For one suggestion, see Smith, 44-5, n.2.

[4]The rudiments of such a network were in place in the Danforth Program. The decision by the Foundation's trustees to terminate this enterprise was one of the more irresponsible moments in the history of private support for higher education.

organ for such reviews, whether as a part of the proposed journal or as a free-standing entity, which focuses not only on matters of content but on pedagogical strategy and effectiveness would go far to confer status on this central educational activity.

Finally, we need to spend as much energy and dollars crafting criteria and mechanisms for peer-review of teaching competence as we have spent creating national systems for the peer-evaluation of research proposals. There needs to be the presumption of trained expertise in such matters—not merely a collection of anecdotes (from students and colleagues) or the exercise of show-and-tell.

It is my presumption that each of these activities (and others that will rapidly be thought of) will receive the same sort of respect and financial support that is presently granted to a narrow understanding of research. That, in fact, it will be understood that all faculty must be expected to engage in research, whether in a discipline or in disciplined and sustained public thought about curriculum and pedagogy. Too much has been made in discourse about such matters of the reward system. It is not from Sinai. We have created the present inbalance, we cannot blame it on local boards or on the Federal government. If we don't like it, we can change it. There are no impediments beyond our own will.

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Richard Jungkuntz

What is Mark Schwehn's real question?

Is it the "conundrum of teaching and [vs.] research"?

Is it "how can faculty members extract more research subsidy from niggardly institutions?"

Is it "how can we stem the tide of intellectualization in order to recover an 'enchanted world,' " or ". . . in order to recover a sense of Christian identity?"

Is it "how can academicians gain a common and true sense of vocation?"

Depending on what paragraphs in Schwehn's two-part essay one happens to be reading, the question he wants to address might be any of the above, or perhaps all. That makes it rather difficult to respond with brevity and point. (As Harvey Cox once quipped to a critic who complained that Dr. Cox's second book was inconsistent with the first: "Hard to hit a moving target, isn't it?")

Nevertheless, Schwehn's essay does merit a serious and considered response, because the question(s) he raises is/are troublesome indeed for higher education generally and for church-related institutions in particular. In what follows I shall for brevity's sake say far less about what I found valuable in the essay than about some of the premises and lines of argument that seem to me somewhat lacking in validity.

For my text I take Mark 12:30 (cf. also Mt. 22:37; Lk. 10:27): "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . with all thy *mind.*"

In Schwehn's various descriptions of the "problem" I sense some vestigial remnant of the traditional catechumenate in American Lutheranism with its typical emphasis on the Reformer's familiar warnings against Dame Reason as Aristotle's "whore." Not that Schwehn is unaware of the dangers in anti-intellectualism. But he leaves the reader with a feeling that the essayist bears a sense of uneasiness whenever rationality, or the intellect as such, seems to occupy center stage in academe.

That uneasiness, however, is not reflective of a genuinely Lutheran perspective on the role and means of higher education. On the contrary, the Lutheran tradition at its best—like Luther himself—accords to human reason *per se* unqualified recognition as one of the Creator's noblest and highest gifts.

To return briefly to our text: loving the God of the Gospel with one's "mind" is in itself a response that springs from faith and without risk to faith. And what the "mind" (reason, intellect) does in the loving of God is to "calculate," that is, to employ all the canons and processes of logical rationality in striving to learn whatever there is to be learned about "reality" in all of God's creation.

To fail, or fear, to employ one's reason in this way is to be ungrateful to God; it is the failure of the unfaithful servant who buried his talent in the ground because he feared the master's anger on his return [Mt. 25:14-30].

What I'm trying to say here is that under the Gospel we should feel free, and in fact are free, to acknowledge gladly that Weber was entirely right in saying that "in principle we can master all things by calculation."

Note Weber's careful qualifying phrase, "in principle." Note also that the expression "all things" is not the same as "all things in heaven as well as on earth." Since Weber, in Schwehn's view as well as mine, was certainly no fool, it seems clear that what he had in

mind with the expression "all things" was not "all things whatsoever," but rather "all things that are intrinsically susceptible of calculation."

For, as Schwehn himself readily acknowledges, Weber was addressing a particularly vexing problem of his time (and perhaps of every time in human history), namely, that even the "educated" were all too easily inclined to deal with worldly realities as if they—and the world itself—were in subjection to "enchantment," and hence irrationally controlled by magic, necromancy, or whatever, rather than by "natural" cause and effect, namely, by what Lutheran theologians have sometimes called the "semiorders of creation."

What these preliminary observations all lead up to is, of course, the well-known, though all too often misunderstood, dialectic best expressed in Luther's "two kingdoms" metaphor, or the metaphor of God's "right hand and left hand."[1]

Stated all too briefly, God's working through "grace" (the force-less act of forgiving) and His working through "law" (the force-filled threat of pain and promise of gain) are the two—and only two—modes of divine regnancy. Each mode is divine and good; each is effective in its own way and for its own purpose; but only grace is salvific, and only law controls a fallen humanity this side of the consummation. The unbeliever remains always, though unwittingly, under the regnancy of "law," while the Christian is simultaneously under the regnancy of both "law" and "grace." "Law" is not something to be believed; it is simply experienced and experienced by every human being born into the world. "Grace" elicits and addresses faith. Where faith is absent, "law" elicits fear and the selfish calculus of advantage versus disadvantage. But where faith is present, the gift of human reason is freed up to do its proper "calculation" in regard to all of God's creation.

But what is the relevance of this for the questions that Schwehn raises? He concludes his essay: "What then is the academic vocation? . . . To make the tradition our own in order to keep it alive for our students: this is the academic vocation." No, it is not! Tradition does not need academic professionals to keep it alive. Long before Homer (or someone else with the same name) ever set the Iliad tales into dactylic hexameters, those tales and the tradition they conveyed were kept alive by generations of illiterate people for whom the notion of "academy"—if indeed they'd ever heard the word—had no reference except perhaps as a plot of ground sacred to the memory of the hero Hecademus.

That the academic vocation deals with tradition—among many other things—is not to be denied. But dealing with tradition is not what makes the academic profession a vocation *(beruf)*. Rather, for a Christian faculty member the academic vocation (as "calling") is to love the God of the Gospel with the *mind.* To employ one's mind, intellect, and reason for the continual, unflagging, loving inquiry into the created works of God—that is our academic vocation.

And love is a passion! Which means that Weber was essentially *right*—wittingly or not—in his description of "this strange intoxication" that prompts a genuine academician to feel as if "the fate of his soul depends upon whether or not he makes the correct conjecture . . ."

Moreover, like all impassioned love, this "vocational" love cannot be silent about itself, cannot hide itself, but finds itself needing to be proclaimed, shared, professed! Which ought to be—as Weber implies—the only reason anyone would ever want to become a "professor."

To me this understanding of academics as vocation also provides more satisfying answers to Schwehn's other questions than the pragmatic compromises he suggests.

Schwehn expresses concern about how we might stem the tide of intellectualization in order to recover an "enchanted world." Or, how we might recover a sense of "Christian identity" in the face of intellectualization.

The answers are, I think, evident. For those who love God, intellectualization is no threat. On the contrary, it is a divinely encouraged means of loving God. Hence, it ought to be recognized as one of the marks of a college's Christian identity. Or should Christian academicians revert to sorcery, thaumaturgy, witchcraft, and magic (or their contemporary equivalents) in order to avoid Weber's clearsighted "disenchantment of the world"?

Another of Schwehn's suggestions entails faculty self-selection into either the non-publishing cadre or the "publish or perish" cohort, with the latter to be relieved of some "course-load" and committee assignments, while the former are assigned additional teaching responsibilities. Regarding this astonishing *contra naturam* proposal I can only point out that merely assuring a second-class citizen that she/he is really not second-class (in the administrative mind) does nothing whatever to alter his/her *de facto* second-class citizenship. Of this it seems apropos to quote Schwehn quot-

[1]Space does not permit much elucidation of these fundamental and characteristically Lutheran perceptions. The reader to whom these concepts are novel is encouraged to consult B. A. Gerrish's excellent book, *Grace and Reason: A Study in the Theology of Luther;* or (for an abbreviated explanation) the present writer's article on "The Church's Responsibility in International Affairs" in the *Concordia Theological Monthly* (March, 1970).

ing Charcot: "*La theorie, c'est bon, mais ça n'empeche pas d'exister.*"

The related suggestion that "*public*-ation" of course descriptions, syllabi, and reading lists might serve as surrogates for "publishing" will not be taken seriously by any self-respecting academician in my acquaintance. Course descriptions are patently innocuous invitations to register. Syllabi reflect (at most) the teacher's unsupported claim that what needs to be learned can in fact be learned within the framework of x units spread over y weeks of the term. And reading lists that lack scrupulously accurate and astutely perceptive annotations ought to be forbidden altogether.

On the other hand, I readily and appreciatively grant that a carefully prepared academic paper, presented to and discussed by colleagues in the department, division, or school, may well be more significant evidence of a faculty member's scholarly competence than many an article that finds its way into print in some professional journal whose contents are seldom if ever discussed, much less disputed.

What this leads me to observe is that evidence of continuing *scholarly* growth (in whatever form that evidence may be seen) is a far more important and valuable measure of a faculty member's devotion to the calling than the publication of so-called *research* findings.

It has all too long been a fundamental American error to equate *wissenschaft* with what we call "science"; to equate "science," in turn, with "research"; and finally to make "research"—thus understood—the ultimate yardstick for measuring a scholar's stature in any discipline whatever. But what Weber and all his German colleagues understood by *wissenschaft* was simply "scholarship," with or without "research." And scholarship is simply the activity of a rigorously inquiring human mind, the kind of mind that is continually asking three question: Really? Why? What for?—the questions of fact, cause, and purpose.

No modern scientist would grant that what a classical scholar is engaged in while poring over an ancient text and staking his "soul" on a rational conjecture as to its *meaning* is in any real sense an act of research. It cannot be research because it is utterly and forever non-replicable and hence incapable of being "scientifically tested." But neither would an intelligent scientist derogate that classical scholar's activity as not worthy of an academician. It is, rather, highly worthy of the academician's true calling because it is the passionate application of a human mind (intellect) to the task of understanding something that is ultimately as much a part of God's creative handiwork as is the gene or the atom.

For an academician to be able truthfully to tell his or her undergraduate students, "I have *thought* long and hard about this, and I have reflected honestly on every *reasonable* interpretation, and I can only conclude . . ."—that, in my view, is an admirable way of fulfilling the academic vocation.

And I am genuinely grateful to my friend, Mark Schwehn, for obliging me to think seriously and explicitly about the "conundrum" he has so provocatively posed.

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Richard John Neuhaus

Karl Kraus, that prolific Viennese writer at the turn of the century, was once asked by a student, "Herr Professor Kraus, why do you write books?" He is supposed to have answered, "Because, young man, I have not character enough not to." That is not the whole story about the itch to publish, but I suspect it is an important part of it.

When I was about nine years old I came across one of these gelatin mixtures you put into a baking pan. I think it was called hectographing, but older readers will know what I mean. By rubbing sheets of paper against the impression on the gelatin one could produce about thirty copies, which was just right for the circulation of a really first-class neighborhood newspaper for Miller Street in Pembroke, Ontario. So you can see that from early on my lack of character was such that I assumed people would be, or should be, interested in what I had to say. There was recently an item in the *New York Times* indicating that an alarming percentage of today's writers started out as children producing neighborhood newspapers. Parents should take note. By nipping the habit in the bud they are perhaps in the best position to alleviate the glut of writing which is presently smothering what remains of Western civilization.

Because nobody caught me in time—and some adults who should have known better actually encouraged me—it has been downhill from the Miller Street Gazette. During a brief stay at Concordia High School in Seward, Nebraska, I wrote for the student paper. (Dr. Alfred Fuerbringer, then president, had the good judgment to advise me that my career probably lay elsewhere than at Concordia, so I never did finish

high school, which possibly makes me the only high school dropout in the Lutheran ministerium.) I remember doing a piece that particularly excited me on the operation of Concordia's cafeteria. Tough investigative reporting turned up, among other things, the fact that something like 700 loaves of bread were baked there each week. It was not that anyone was trying to conceal the fact, but neither was anyone paying much attention to it, and I thought they should.

But it was later, as an editor of *The Seminarian* at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, that the vice was exercised on weightier matters. Like the chronology of Genesis, the historicity of the Resurrection, and why it was all right to pray with Roman Catholics. We're talking about the late Fifties when Missouri was churning with controversies beyond numbering. *The Seminarian* was the favored foil of the seminary's conservative critics. The administration pooh-poohed our literary excursions into heresy (meaning anything beyond the boundaries of Francis Pieper and synodical resolutions), pointing out that kids will be kids. But the critics knew better. If you don't stop them now these kids might later write books that at least some innocent readers would take seriously. What the critics didn't know is that it was already about fifteen years too late. "Train a child in the way he should go . . ."

Later—twelve books, hundreds of articles, innumerable newsletters and reviews later—the toll taken on the minds and the patience of readers would be immeasurable. Karl Kraus' answer to the student was, I believe, astute. I am frequently asked by young people who take me to be a writer how one becomes a writer. As though it were similar to becoming a gynecologist or academic dean. My impulse, seldon restrained, is to say that if you aren't a writer already don't bother. A writer writes and writes and then writes some more, and then some day some people may take him to be a writer. And if he is never publicly recognized, he must then decide whether he will write as a solitary vice. I do not say that writers are born not made, but, if not born, they are at least bent at an early age.

There is the opinion that a prerequisite to becoming a writer is to believe that you have something to say. Meaning no offense to the fools who subscribe to that opinion, I think it quite wrong. I would not know that I have something to say were it not for the things being said by others which should not be said, or which are in urgent need of correction. I do wait a decent interval for someone else to do the correcting, but if that is not forthcoming I, with typewriter and a little time at hand, do my duty. I know an eminent and much-published writer who claims that he has never written anything except he was asked to write it by someone else. Such laissez-faire devotion to the market of ideas is striking but quite beyond my ken. To the best of my recollection, nobody asked for the Miller Street Gazette. I do not intend to suggest that all my writing is reactive, provoked by the silly things written by others, which it is my obligation to set straight. This very piece, like many others, is at the invitation of an editor (which he may be coming to regret). Then, too, you cannot be forever correcting arguments that other people got all wrong without somebody challenging you to make the argument the way it should be made. From the imprudence of responding to that challenge come books and, as Blessed Martin Luther might have said, other great shame and vice. And surely he should know.

Mark Schwehn's otherwise excellent essay is altogether too solemn about the purpose of publication, beginning with the assumption that publication always has a purpose. I am sure these assistant professors he discusses—hungry for status or eager to advance their discipline, or both—actually exist. But my hunch is that publication is more commonly prompted by what I suspect prompted Mr. Schwehn's fine essay: Dammit, here's a dumb situation about which people are saying dumb things and I think I'll try my hand at straightening it out. Anyway, Mr. Schwehn probably said to himself, I really do like to write. The clincher likely was that Editor Nuechterlein had the good sense to encourage him to act on his impulse. I rather doubt that Mr. Schwehn thought that with this essay he was either advancing his career or, in the manner of Max Weber, making some contribution to learning that will one day be vindicated in the consummation of human knowledge. Although, so admirable is the essay that I would not be surprised if it did both.

Mr. Schwehn is exactly right when he talks about publication as continuing the conversation. Over the years I have been book editor for several journals. I recall one bright afternoon talking with a visitor at my office on East 64th Street, surrounded by piles of the several hundred books received that month. And what are you doing now? she asked. Well, I'm working on this book about . . . And then I stopped, struck by the improbability of the world really needing another book. When it comes to the making of books the writer of Ecclesiastes didn't know the half of it. Last year there were over 55,000 trade books published in the United States alone. That does not include purely scholarly publications, nor at least as many books put out by corporations, institutes, sundry voluntary associations, and government agencies. Even if he sticks to his own field, anyone who is "on top of the literature" today is probably perched on a very high stack of unread books. A serious book today—which is to say any book that requires what used to be a 12th grade level

of literacy—does well to sell 3,000 copies and is a best seller at 15,000. Beyond that it is a sensation.

It might all be very depressing, were it not for the truth of what Mr. Schwehn says about the continuing conversation. Rather, the many continuing conversations, the most important of which, many of us think, is that of the community of reflective Christian faith. In publishing, and I daresay in teaching, it helps if one is at least in part a preacher. The preacher has no illusions about the novelty of what he has to say. Not novelty but fidelity is his concern. Although, to be sure, he tries to transmit the faith in ways that are fresh, if not new. Nor does he have any illusions about being able to demonstrate the effectiveness of his efforts. A long time ago I thought that the biblical promise about the word not returning void was the consolation of incompetent preachers. Twenty-five years later I know better, or maybe I just know that we incompetents can't get along without our consolations. So also in publishing, you do not know what effect your words may have, or even who are all the partners in the conversation.

A friend of mine announced upon sending another scholarly work of anthropology off to the publisher, "It is like dropping a very beautiful rose petal down a very deep well, never to be heard from again." Another friend, a philosopher, is confident of the place of his work in the history of ideas. No future laborer in the philosophical vineyard, he believes, will be able to go around what he has contributed to the conversation. Because this friend is a genius of monumental stature, I am not inclined to argue. But most of us are probably somewhere between the deep-well theory and being sure about our place in the world-historical scheme of things. And some people appear to have given up thinking about it and just publish to be publishing. One writer of my acquaintance published so many books and articles that it was said he had no unpublished thoughts. Then he, a presumably celibate priest, published a torrid book on human sexuality, after which it was said he had no unpublished fantasies. Such proliferous abandonment of restraint suggests a paraphrase of that ugly sentiment espoused by some soldiers of fortune: Publish them all and let God sort them out.

But that is not the kind of conversation Mr. Schwehn has in mind. His conversation has to do with discrete traditions and is closer to what Mr. Pelikan describes in that elegant book to which Mr. Schwehn alludes. Mr. Pelikan writes about the "florilegium." The florilegium was the product of Eastern Orthodox scribes who wrote history by stringing together quotations from earlier writers. The originality of the florilegium was not in anything that was said directly but in the originality of the way the tradition was arranged. Mr. Pelikan makes a convincing case that, far from being stifling, this procedure is one of exquisite creativity if we are but able to perceive it. Not incidentally, this aspect of his *The Vindication of Tradition* tells us much about Mr. Pelikan's understanding of his own work, for example his multi-volume *The Christian Tradition.* All of us who write should keep the idea of the florilegium at least occasionally in mind. Otherwise we are just pushing ourselves forward or, as they say, "expressing" ourselves. And that is not too different from putting out the Miller Street Gazette. Which is okay for kids.

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Martin E. Marty

Of course, Mark Schwehn is correct. When professors are forced to see, or choose to see, their "work" chiefly as their individual writing, they will not see, they will overlook, their calling to teach in the community called a college or a university. When they are forced to write chiefly because of the pressures a bureaucratized academic world places upon them, they are likely to contribute to a market glutted with sterile, unneeded, unread, unreadable productions. In sum, they will pervert culture to something like Simone Weil's depiction of it at its worst: professors teaching people to be professors teaching people to be professors. . . . Or: people believing they must produce setting a standard for other people believing they must produce setting a standard for . . . , etc.

Rather than spend time and space merely affirming and confirming Schwehn—and thus contributing to academic sterility by publishing with nothing to say, but merely under pressures of editorial cajoling and deadlines—let me try to push the point he makes into a context where it is no longer the only point to make. I think it is important to ask a question of another vocation: that of the different kinds of institutions, parts of institutions, and scholarly circles or scholars within institutions. I would hate to see the impression given that secular and state-supported universities and well-off pagan private colleges should be the places whence comes the scholarship, dross and valuable alike, while

the church-related college can satisfy itself with good teaching scholars. (I never get the impression that Schwehn wants a lower standard of scholar at the entry level in the church-related or vocationally-alert college, so let us keep calling these teachers "scholars." They are not meant to be hacks, repeaters of last year's notes and outlines, serving time.)

Just as individuals have vocations that antecede, underlie, and judge their professions, careers, jobs, or, in Schwehn's term, "work," so do institutions and parts of institutions. Thus Rockefeller University is called to be nothing but a research university, chiefly in the sciences. It could fulfill its calling with a staff of inept speakers, mumblers, chaotic absent-minded professors—so long as they are first-rate discoverers in the laboratory. DeVry Tech could fulfill its calling if it had nothing but very gifted and dedicated people who did nothing but teach others to be good electronics engineers in the radio-television fields. Most schools are somewhere between the pure-discovery type and the pass-on-skills type. What I am stressing is that one must discern the genius, character, what Aristotle would call the ethos of a school. On those terms, to ask the church-related college to define its calling in Rockefeller or DeVry terms would be to miss the intentions and to neglect the vocation of such a college.

Similarly within a college there are a variety of callings. At a good school, people who sense this do not demean or dismiss the others: hmmmm, a mere teacher who never "produces work," or hmmmm, a mere scholar who stutters in the classroom. No, various departments or types have various vocations which are to be nurtured in complementarity toward common ends. I do believe, however, that where that combination exists and receives encouragement from constituency, students, and faculty members themselves, the larger vocation of the church-related college will become apparent.

That larger vocation, over all, must include Christians, religiously-called people, who in that context also want to contribute to discovery. Not to keep that calling in mind for any of them would be to turn learning and discovery over to non-Christians only, or to isolated Christians who are Robinson Crusoes producing off there without stimulus or appraisal by their co-believers. I have become an adviser to *Faculty Dialogue,* a new journal of The Institute for Christian Leadership (write them: 9733 S.E. Frenchacres Drive, Portland, OR 97266), where issues of this sort get discussed and published—though, of course, never as sterile monographs or because not to publish there would be to perish.

At a recent board meeting, one adviser kept saying that we must encourage administrations to release restraints against scholarly inquiry and to give encouragement to publishing scholars. Then there might be a burst of creativity from these evangelical schools. A dose of realism came in when another adviser asked: are we sure there are that many people there trained to discover, gifted with the art to write, able to say what is not being said elsewhere? I do believe that there are many more, but I also believe that Christianity will have a hard time having its voice heard if the public deduces that our colleges and universities settle for people who reproduce knowledge and filter it through the glass of Christian greenhouses where students are protected from the unorthodoxies where adventure, and thus learning, occurs. Shouldn't some Christians in some parts of some schools see that their institutions have a vocation, as do they, to participate in scholarly inquiry?

Such a sense will occur only if the act of seeking to discover be perceived as itself occurring in a kind of sacred zone, just as entering the presence of the Other and the other[s] in the classroom is entering a kind of sacred zone. If that context is created, it is likely that more scholarship will come from Christian church-related or Christian collectivities within state-supported or private secular universities.

Where I believe a line can be misdrawn, where Schwehn can be misinterpreted, or where he misinterprets, is here: if it is assumed that all really good teachers teach and eschew scholarly productivity because they have not time for both. Or if it is assumed that all really productive scholars see and must see that as their work and then have no time to devote to teaching. That is not where the line is at institutions where encouragement is given to both activities.

Through these thirty years I have spoken or conferred at over 500 American colleges and universities. Give me a few days at most of them, and I could help assemble a list of what Ortega would call the "culture faculty." I translate his category to include in it that one-fourth or one-third of almost any faculty that is characterized by Marcel's *disponsibilite,* which means its "being available" to administration, alumni, campus visitors. These are the people who do not "use" a school but who "are" a school. They have time or take time or make time to honor colleagues who win prizes, to greet some recitalists or campus lecturers, who do not avoid parties for financial supporters, who risk interdisciplinary occasions.

Follow me to those campuses and after isolating that one-fourth or one-third, track their names in the library and indices and you will find a far higher percentage of them indexed as being scholarly productive than the faculty majority that was not there. Follow me then to dorm or classroom and interview students to

find out which professors are their exemplars. The percentage who are on that "available" list, who make up the college, as it were, will be higher than the percentage of those on the invisibles list. It is not possible to follow our two cohorts into their homes, nurseries, bedrooms, and the like, but I do carry away an impression that they are also people who are not more neglectful of family and friendship circle than are the invisibles.

Once one dismisses the Weberian productivity norms, then, I think the line should be drawn between people who sense a "whole" vocation at institutions whose vocation it is to encourage "whole" expression and those who live life at a lower-key level of stimulus and response. Colleagues turn each other on; they allow students to excite and incite them; then, with some institutional and constituent encouragement, they produce. Their production is not, then, sterile scholarly monographs published for publication's or for non-perishing's sake. They will have risked in the sacred zone where discovery occurs, on a horizon where the Other beckons them to help dispel ignorance, to learn from the wonder that such a zone inspires. Do they hear this Other calling? If they respond: *that* is vocation.

Martin E. Marty *is Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor at The University of Chicago. In light of the above, he is to be described as a superbly productive scholar of non-sterile monographs, a sensationally accomplished teacher, a clinker of glasses at president's receptions, a devoted family man, and in other ways a work-righteous achiever apparently not in need of grace. (He is also, at least on occasion, the author of his own biographical introductions.—Ed.)*

Mark R. Schwehn

Of the five respondents to my essay on the academic vocation, Professors Kass, Smith, and Jungkuntz have offered the most thoroughgoing critiques of my views, and it is to their comments that these remarks are addressed. As it happens, Kass and Smith differ almost completely with Jungkuntz. Thus, the two former writers agree with my critique of Max Weber, and they therefore by and large share my understanding of the nature of the problem that we presently face in the academy. They think, however, that portions of my analysis of the problem and/or my proposed remedies for it are insufficiently radical. Jungkuntz, because he apparently shares Weber's understanding of the academic vocation, thinks that my efforts to formulate theoretical and practical alternatives to Weber are unnecessary and hence invariably misguided. At times, he even asserts that my proposals are contrary to nature.

Kass and Smith properly identify the central questions that need to be addressed after one has been persuaded that teaching has lost its central place of dignity and honor within the academy, that this loss is a result of a Weberian understanding of the academic vocation that has come to dominate contemporary university life, and that such a loss is regrettable. What is teaching? What is good teaching? Can teaching be evaluated? Can teaching be taught? Kass elegantly articulates a view of teaching that I do indeed share with him, but he seems doubtful about whether such teaching can be appraised through the kind of "public evaluation by peers" that I have suggested. Smith does not develop his own view of teaching, but he seems certain that teaching must be subjected to rigorous and elaborate peer review procedures if it is to become "honored, not scorned."

I am persuaded not only by Kass' account of liberal learning and teaching but also by his argument that standard peer evaluation procedures will not work well in such a context. On the other hand, I agree with Smith: if we are serious about promoting excellence in teaching, we must discover and invent responsible ways of nurturing and evaluating it. Thus, I welcome

many of Smith's suggestions for fostering disciplined thought about teaching, especially his notion that "colleges must undertake required programs in continuing education on pedagogical matters for their faculty." Though I also welcome many of Smith's more ambitious ideas, I still believe that the restoration of excellence in teaching must *begin* (here I disagree with both Kass and Smith) locally within institutions that are primarily devoted to undergraduate education. Thus, my proposal to organize faculty meetings around the critical discussion of teaching materials (reading lists, syllabi, examination questions, etc.) is not intended, as Jungkuntz thinks it is, to elevate the reading list to an intellectual status equal to that of a specialized monograph. Rather, my hope would be that really thorough and serious critical scrutiny of such materials would lead quite naturally to the kinds of questions that Kass poses as an agenda for "genuine research for genuine teachers: how to help young people learn—and also what and when and why."

Within the context of a genuine community of teachers "devoted only (or at least primarily) to the *collaborative* teaching of undergraduates," some of the evaluative procedures that Smith recommends and others that Kass might, I think, accept would develop quite naturally. I recall, for example, that the fruits of the research into "the ways and means of liberal education" that was once undertaken at the University of Chicago in large part sustained the high quality of the *Journal of General Education* during the Hutchins era. And in the midst of a continuing community conversation about liberal learning, teachers would regularly teach one another as well as students. In such an environment the kinds of mechanical and sporadic teaching-review procedures that Kass rightly questions would be both irrelevant and unnecessary.

Interest in and devotion to any of the proposals outlined by Kass, Smith, or me presuppose a conviction that the present understanding of the academic vocation *needs* redefinition and reconstruction. Both Kass and Jungkuntz question my formulation of the academic vocation as the transmission of tradition. Kass agrees with me that Weberianism is to be opposed. But he argues that a philosophical critique is to be preferred to one that resorts to tradition. Jungkuntz supports Weberianism; therefore, he opposes my definition of the academic vocation just as he would presumably oppose any other alternative formulation. Or, more exactly, Jungkuntz perceives no conflict at all between his definition of the academic vocation ("To employ one's mind, intellect, and reason for the continual, unflagging, loving inquiry into the created works of God") and Weber's. He therefore has difficulty understanding what my problem is, and, insofar as he does understand it, he denies that it is a genuine problem.

Kass has not yet fully persuaded me to abandon my emphasis upon the centrality of tradition in favor of a more philosophical critique of Weberianism. I would argue that the kind of liberal learning that he and I espouse is supported by and perhaps even dependent upon tradition (though liberal learning conflicts with traditionalism, as we both recognize). Liberal learning does not begin *de novo.* Inquiry begins with opinions, and the best inquiry begins with an examination of the best thoughts that our predecessors have written down about matters human, natural, and divine. Though we should not ascribe definitive authority to any one of these predecessors *a priori,* we should, I think, begin with the presumption that we have much to learn from the great books of our tradition and that *we cannot think as well without them as we can with their aid.* Indeed, I would push this obvious point one step further: it is *only* in conversation with the tradition that we think well at all. I sometimes even wonder whether it makes sense to speak of our best thoughts as being fully our own.

I think that Kass is himself quite properly uneasy with notions of ownership as applied to thoughts or ideas. Thus, for example, he begins one paragraph with the parenthetical remark that "all real thinking is one's own work," and he later remarks within the same paragraph that teaching, for the good teacher, is "not an act of publicizing *his own* best thoughts." I would argue that the latter remark is true in a sense that is somewhat different from the sense that Kass intends. The good teacher finds himself doing his best thinking in class precisely at those times when his thoughts are not fully his own. Talk about exclusive ownership of thinking belongs together with talk about "knowledge-production," and these notions, as Kass has helpfully reminded us, pertain to the Weberian conception of the academic vocation. For me, the concept of tradition best captures this strange and elusive character of our best thinking: that it is a public activity, as Kass observes, and that it is in some sense ours but it finally is not fully "our own."

Most, though not all, of Jungkuntz's disagreements with me stem from his excessively charitable and hence faulty reading of Weber. Thus, contrary to what Jungkuntz supposes, when Weber boldly proclaims that we can in principle master *all things* by calculation, he means exactly what he says. He is not stating the kind of mild truism that Jungkuntz here attributes to him: "we can master by calculation those things that are intrinsically susceptible of calculation." For Weber, there is one and only one kingdom, the natural order; thus, he does not seek, as Luther did, to restrict the

operation of reason to its proper realm. The operation of instrumental rationality is, for Weber, unrestricted, since the natural realm is the *only* realm. Finally, for Weber, reason *just is* calculation, what Hobbes had called a reckoning of sums, of causes and effects. Thus, as I pointed out in my essay, Weber emphatically excluded from his version of the academy the questions that Jungkuntz most wishes to consider, questions of purpose, of the good and the bad, and of the ultimate meaning of our lives.

Since the intellectual revolution that gave rise to Weberianism did not begin until a century *after* Luther (it began, as Kass observes, with Bacon and Descartes), it seems dubious at best to apply Luther's appreciation of reason in a straightforward way to an appreciation of Weber's instrumental rationality. Jungkuntz nevertheless derives what he takes to be an appropriately Lutheran approval of Weberianism from Luther's nuanced appreciation of the Scholastics and the Biblical Humanists. But there really is a world of difference between William of Occam and Erasmus on the one hand and Max Weber on the other. When the two former thinkers spoke of "reason," they, like Jungkuntz and Luther, referred to the full range of those human mental powers that make possible a disciplined understanding of the worlds of nature and culture. When Weber speaks of reason, he means only the instrumental rationality that calculates the relationship between causes and effects, ends and means. Occam and Erasmus reasoned about and wrote about moral and spiritual matters that Weber excludes *in principle* from the realm of rational discourse. When Luther *did* oppose the reason of an Occam or an Erasmus, he almost invariably did so in order to curb its vanity. Yet Occam and Erasmus, in terms of the claims that they made for the powers of reason, were humble by comparison to Weber.

So long as Jungkuntz does not ascribe *his* views of reason, learning, and vocation to Weber, I find myself in agreement with much that he says. I am troubled, however, by his claim that my proposals for elevating the status of the teacher within the academy are astonishing and somehow "*contra naturam.*" I can imagine that such proposals may be insufficiently radical, as both Kass and Smith suggest, but I cannot imagine that they are contrary to nature. Indeed, here I fully agree with Smith: "Too much has been made in discourse about such matters of the reward system. It is not from Sinai. We have created the present inbalance. . . . If we don't like it, we can change it. There are no impediments beyond our own will." Unless Jungkuntz believes that the "two kingdoms" doctrine simply legitimates as an order of nature/creation whatever institutional arrangements happen to obtain at a given moment within polities and academies, I think that he will agree with me, Kass, and Smith that the present second-class status of teachers is not a natural fact and that this status can therefore be fundamentally changed. Whether he can be also persuaded that current academic arrangements *should* be changed along the lines that any one of us has suggested remains to be seen.

Unfortunately, I cannot possibly, in the space allotted to me, do justice to the range of thoughtful comments my five critics have offered. I can only say that I am grateful to Messrs. Kass, Smith, Jungkuntz, Neuhaus, and Marty for accomplishing so well the purpose of this symposium. The critical observations of these five gentlemen should surely provoke and guide further reflection by interested parties on matters of teaching, learning, publishing, and vocation within the modern academy. And these are all matters that require serious, immediate, and, yes, radical reconsideration.

Mark R. Schwehn *teaches in Christ College at Valparaiso University and contributes regularly to* The Cresset.

Gabriel

The wires strung to concrete,
where are they? The supporting beams?

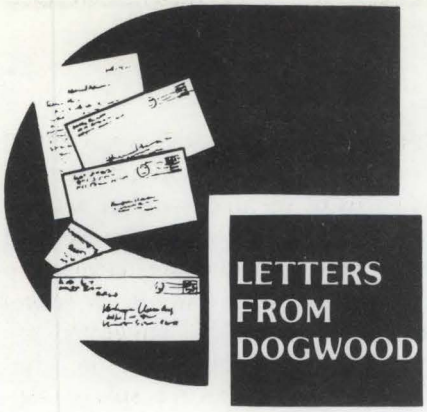
He looks to me, and I cannot look
away. Now he looks—with his hand
from behind the construction of wings.
The cornice of his heart is on fire.

Doric columns over the darkness.
He watches me.

And he whispers that one day
his sister Cecilia, all geometry
and air, will bathe me
in her music, as the angels

Pour the sweet oil over the catechumens
on the eve of Easter,
after the eternal bath
before the eternal meal.

Travis Du Priest



Listening to Students

Charles Vandersee

Dear Editor:

One reason I write so often about matters of education is that virtually every day during the school year, in my role as an academic dean, I listen to undergraduate students.

This time of the year they arrive in Dogwood, a remote town in central Virginia, officially to get an education. But also to have a good time, to get a job and a spouse, to escape from parents, and possibly to try a new lifestyle. There is often conflict here, a kind of dissonance—how does one make music out of the rustle of currency and the nervous voices trying to impress people, not to mention the whoosh in the air of time's wingèd chariot?

So I am always listening before talking—listening for elusive melodies and possible rhythms. Emerging adult life is a sort of composition just being started. Sometimes after listening for a while I repeat back the music that I hear, and the composer sometimes affirms that my echo is faithful. Sometimes we actually engage in collaborative composition, ending with a sort of mutual applause; other times we break off almost arbitrarily, as if today is a day not for music but for the silence between movements.

Even after some ten years, I can still be surprised by both dissonance and melody. Right now, as classes resume, I think for example of A., a brilliant student who has not done well. He has test scores in the 700s but mediocre grades. Last year, in several careful and analytic conversations, we tried to get at the difficulty, and he has of course not confined himself to me, an amateur, for counseling.

We finally constructed a moment-by-moment account of what it feels like when he tries to study. His story is new, without the conventional dissonances: procrastination, partying, a bad choice of courses, a time-consuming job, agony over a career, conflict with parents, financial misery, nonexistent study habits. Also not that enervating drone called "depression."

The story of A. has to do with "woolgathering" or the "mind wandering," but on a transcontinental scale. When he starts to read an assignment for class, any sentence or idea can lead him away into extraneous thoughts—into a fascinating sequence of ideas and speculations. Soon hours have passed, in absorbing mental activity, but the work assigned has not been touched.

Since there must be a name for this sort of thing, I referred him to a friendly, knowledgeable person in the psychology department, with instructions to report back. A day or so later, seeing the psychologist at a Dogwood garden party, I told him to expect a visit from A., and why. To my astonishment, he not only recognized the problem but is himself plagued by the same tendency of the brain to roam uncontrollably along the blue highways. He too had been a mediocre student in college. No, there is *not* a name for this condition.

Yes, there are things you can do about it. First, plan to work for no more than ten minutes at a time. If you get that far, stop to congratulate yourself. Then start in for another ten-minute stretch. Second, do all your work—all your reading, writing, figuring, thinking—standing up. Get a drafting table or some other big surface, but never sit down at a desk, lie on the floor, or stretch out on a comfortable couch. You are different.

The student and the professor have since connected. A. says he feels, for the first time in recent years, some hope for accomplishment in the future. It has helped to know that one other live human being suffers the same way. The professor is emphatic about the agony and reality of the problem. "I have outlined a thousand books in my mind, over the years," he told me, "when I was supposed to be doing other things."

Another student comes to mind because her mother wrote me just after spring semester ended. Her daughter, B., is a quiet person, who had stopped in to see me a number of times, feeling the enormous stress of a university perhaps oversupplied with glib, rather sophisticated suburban Yuckies-to-be. A first-year student coming from a small town in the mountains has a lot of adjusting to do.

Examining her record and her abilities, I had urged B. to take a literature course for majors rather than one of our introductory courses. So her mother writes, in a long, emotional letter, and B. took the course. She not only received an A, but had her term paper read aloud by the course instructor (one of our more demanding teachers) as exemplary. What's more, her suitemates, mostly from the

Charles Vandersee *has returned to Dogwood from Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas.*

Washington area, have pleaded with her to visit them during the summer. They want her company. A child almost desperately lacking in self-confidence, feeling dismally different from everyone else, has seen and heard incontrovertible evidence about her abilities and her place in Dogwood as an adult valued and loved by others. Her mother has to put her joy into words.

I think of C., a black student, raised by his grandmother in a pentecostal church, a fellow with gifts of charm, social ease, resolution, and intelligence—and musical and political skills—beyond the deserving of any one person. He is now in Harvard Law School and loving it.

I also think of the many talks we had over four years, conversations of candor and caution. He knew he would have an edge getting into a top law school, by being bright and black. I knew that edge meant nothing unless he showed academic accomplishment while here in Dogwood. Our four years of "collaborative composition" emphasized his taking the strong courses and honors program he was capable of, while keeping under control his commitments to student government and a half-dozen other activities. Occasional wavering needs a few timely words.

D. comes to mind, who phoned me at home with a story I could not have suspected from our casual talks in the office. Uncontrollably driven by the desire to do well, but paralyzed by timed exams, she had made a halfhearted suicide attempt. Fortunately friends were close by and took her to the emergency room. She was now letting me know of the situation; facing and admitting her crisis, she was going home to spend the summer under professional counseling.

In cases of this sort it is a mistake not to ask gently whether any religious or spiritual tradition is familiar enough to draw on. More surprising information: "I don't know. I was raised as a Roman Catholic, but this year I've been involved in an evangelical Protestant group, and now I'm confused about religion." *That* kind of dissonance, on top of everything else!

There really are few satisfactions equaling the successful effort to echo the music that is inside someone else.

I think simultaneously of E. and F., alumni, the former a brash, energetic editor in New York with one of those expensive newsletters for entrepreneurs. When E. told me he needed an assistant, but that a lot of super people in New York were also applying, I made known the opportunity to current members of our scholars' program. F., also brash, energetic, bright, and ambitious, about to graduate with an interdisciplinary major in bioethics, immediately stormed into my office, eyes flashing (I used to think "storming" and "eyes flashing" were absurd bits of rhetoric): "I'm going to get that job!" We discussed strategy.

Two years later, he still has the job and has been promoted. He has done substantial writing for the London *Economist,* has learned from trade fairs and much interviewing what is going on in technology today, and has become a professional writer, brisk and quick. He knows his talents well and has contemplated a career in New York, investments or journalism. When he stopped by last summer, however, his aim was to secure a recommendation for medical school.

Could I carry on this alphabet of engrossing stories to Z. and beyond? Easily, just as the rich hymnody of today offers us not only German chorale music and French medieval chants but Negro spirituals and shape-note tunes from the Southern mountains.

A few general observations instead.

First, the hours spent weekly as an undergraduate academic adviser, particularly as dean of a program for extremely gifted people, are hours of unpredictable interest and stimulation. Even for one who is not a great natural lover of people and ideas, preferring the vitality of words and places. I learn a lot. The variety of existential coping and crisis is always before me—the materials out of which books and ballads could be made.

Second, though it's a fad these days in counseling to stress careful listening and then the attempt to repeat in one's own words what one thinks one is hearing, there really are few satisfactions equaling the successful effort to echo the music inside someone else. It must be something like a definitive choral or instrumental performance. A hole in two, a triple with bases loaded.

Third, we live by words and places as much as by people and ideas. Merely for the sufferer to put things into words, as the person listening keeps asking for clarification, often mutes the overlying noise. The dissonance itself changes, as various components of the noise begin to wane. Beneath, the music seems to have some sort of form and shape.

Many a conversation in the dean's office ends with a thank-you from the visitor, the dean having said almost nothing, having given little overt help. He may only have affirmed that he too heard the music. Feelings got placed into words, and words got shaped into sentences dealing with causes and

effects. To the repeated question, "What else might have a bearing on this situation?" responses not only accumulated but began to shape themselves into a coherent whole.

And the change of place was important. The student walked away from the institutional walls of a dorm or a stereo-ridden apartment and entered a Stanford White room with a high vaulted ceiling and a view of the sky. That itself may have conferred new insight; to think well, one needs distance and detachment, and awareness of the cosmos.

I am often reminded, especially at the beginning of the school year, that life does not routinely become art.

A fourth conclusion reached over the years: Though problems tend to be paradigmatic, and, yes, there is such a thing as North American twentieth-century "human nature," nonetheless, the cardinal assumption to make is that Student G., now walking in, will present a case that is different. No one in this room over the years has displayed quite her own personal history and configuration of possible decisions.

This is why it took several visits from Student A. We had to get rid of the paradigms first. One by one we examined and discarded—as, I suppose, Pound had to escape Browning's influence, and Eliot had to get past Laforgue. Composition is a strange process; it seems to involve improvisation, systematic search, and a fair amount of *bricolage*—picking up bits and pieces of things, in different places. When making up the special advising packet last spring, for the 165 new scholars this fall, I put on the cover some words of Martin Buber: "All journeys have secret destinations, of which the traveler is unaware." Finally, though these transactions with students are the kinds of human materials out of which novels and stories might germinate, I am frequently reminded, especially at the beginning of the school year, that life does not routinely become art. In reporting a few "cases," I recognize their dramatic possibilities. But I limit and modify the data. What transpires in a counselor's office is confidential, despite the collective insight into our Zeitgeist. I make notes, sometimes brief, sometimes elaborate; they remain locked in the office files, from which they are purged and destroyed after a while.

Though absorbing, the stories are evanescent, fragmented, and sometimes, after four undergraduate years, such unfinished compositions that the imagination wants to supply denouement and closure. One would like to see these stories of young Americans turned into art, by someone conscientious and deliberate like Willa Cather, who in the persona of her narrator, Jim Burden, tells of the "Danish laundry girls and the three Bohemian Marys" of pioneer Nebraska. There is a "relation between girls like those and the poetry of Vergil. If there were no girls like them in the world, there would be no poetry."

So I greet each new year with mixed expectations. Again this year I probably will begin and not finish *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* just as I will not get any farther into *Remembrance of Things Past* or reread *Ulysses.* But I will know once again from A. to Z. why novels and stories worth reading have been written, and why without them we do not have very much music or knowledge in our lives.

From Dogwood, yours faithfully,

C.V.

The 18th Brumaire Of TV News

James Combs

John Chancellor was mad. I know it is hard to imagine such a thing from a man who seems so owlish and calm, like a comfortable political science professor who usually speaks as if he were delivering a seminar lecture on Kant's influence on political philosophy. But this time gentle John was good and mad. And he was mad not at Jesse Helms, who wants to fire Dan Rather and turn CBS News into Mr. Reagan's Neighborhood; nor Ted Turner, who doesn't have an ideological agenda but does let his will-to-power hang out; nor Phyllis George, the penultimate dimpled graduate of the Ken-and-Barbie school of broadcasting; nor Werner Wolff, the highly-paid sportscaster who pioneered the idea that sportscasters have to shout. Nope, John was mad at Tom Shales, the syndicated *Washington Post* TV critic, who had the effrontery, the gall, the misguided and uninformed and mean-spirited gumption to suggest, both in print and on one of those interminable ape-contemplating-himself-in-the-mirror shows where

James Combs *teaches Political Science at Valparaiso University and comments regularly on Television for* The Cresset.

media types analyze how they're doing, that "the hostage crisis had to be wrapped up this [past] weekend simply because the viewing public was getting sick of it."

Oh, did that make the venerable anchorman furious. Why, to suggest that the news divisions of the networks were *using* the hostages, that they were scripting the crisis like a mini-series, that the visibility and play given the story was somehow related to Nielsen ratings and market shares—why, the very *idea* runs against the grain of all those lectures on "Ethics and Objectivity in the Media" that John would like to have given if he had followed his true professorial calling.

Shales caught a lot of heat for his cynical suggestion that television newspeople have motives of hype similar to their colleagues over in programming. His was an argument that few Establishment critics will countenance: that news *is* hyped, that stories like hostage dramas get extensive coverage because of their dramatic power, and that newsmakers' interest in, and conferral of the status of "crisis" on, a story is most assuredly related to the fact that people want to watch such stories. With that old textbook on Journalistic Ethics on the bookshelf in their offices, the powers that be who "decide what's news" will not admit to the principle of hype as blatantly as, say, Madonna's agent, but hype nonetheless it is: the deliberate selection of the sensational, the shameless focus on the emotional (close-ups of crying relatives), the cooperation with wrongdoers, the packaging and selling of news. TV news has often been accused of reducing everything to bad melodrama, and the hostage story had it all, from sentimentality to intensified peril to bathos to reunion.

Chancellor's outburst did symbolize one thing that was made crystal clear about TV newspeople. They are almost pathologically self-conscious nowadays, and during and after such a "major" story spend as much time covering the coverage as covering the story. Everything from Accuracy in Media to attempted hostile takeovers has contributed to this, as has, no doubt, their own learned sense of "responsible reporting" which nags them through the more outrageous moments of hyped news. So during the Beirut affair, they bent over backwards to be self-critical. Dan Rather expressed outrage at the press for the staged "press conference" the hostages were allowed to hold during their captivity. ("That was a disgrace for us," he said.) They criticized each other: ABC, for example, caught a lot of flak for the rumors that it paid the Amal Shiites $30,000 to interview the hijackers at the plane site.

One had the sense during the hostage crisis that TV reporters, and the national press in general, were trying hard to be more royalist than the King.

Indeed, one even had the sense that TV reporters, and the National press in general, were trying hard to be more royalist than the King. They were quite familiar with the charge that they are all liberal softies, unpatriotic, sympathetic to evildoers, and so on. So everyone from Rather to David Broder out-Reaganed Reagan. Rather's emotionally-charged lurid language describing how the one passenger was executed was worthy not only of *True Detective* but also *Human Events*. Broder urged turning the Beirut airport into the Grand Canyon. Tom Braden favored assassination. (By comparison, Reagan was a voice of moderation and restraint, rather gracefully eating a bit of crow but avoiding any really precipitous talk like "Iran will cease to exist," *circa* 1979-80.)

Shales was right about the hype, but he was wrong on an associated point. Shales came to the wrong conclusion when he wrote, "Ronald Reagan says, 'There will be no forgetting,' but that's debatable. If all we learn from history is that we do not learn, all we remember from television is that we do not remember." That is just not so, in two senses. Television may be an "immediate experience," part of our life in the simultaneous world of now-ism, but it is part of a culture, and cannot help but reflect some of the enduring themes of that culture. Too, television viewers have memories, and in particular memories of what they have witnessed on television in the recent past. Let us look at how these two forms of memory related to the mass-mediated hijacking of TWA Flight 847.

Two researchers, John Lawrence and Bernard Timberg, recently did a book entitled *Ritual News and Images of Captivity*, tracing a remarkable and revealing theme that endures in American popular culture: the captivity narrative ritually retold, in ever new forms and media, ranging from the books written by whites who were taken captive by Indians and later escaped, to the dime novels, down through cases such as Hearst's hype over the Spanish in Cuba jailing Evangelina Cisneros and the Lindbergh kidnapping. Such tales are "ritual news" in the sense that the melodrama has certain repeated features: people who are part of Us are taken by Them, often innocent women and children; we fear that they will be possessed and converted by Them, or killed, or sexu-

ally violated; we must search for and free them before they no longer want to come home, and punish those who have taken them away from the peaceable kingdom.

It is important to note that not every culture (the Soviet Union, for example) has so much fascination with the captivity narrative. But in America the story line pops up again and again, and news stories about captivity continue to fascinate us. One can think of several recent captivity stories that have dominated news and inspired popular dramas and even serious thought. Younger readers will not remember the uproar and interest generated by the "twenty-one who stayed," the American POWs who chose to stay in North Korea rather than return to America after the Korean War. We could not imagine that Americans, especially soldiers, could consciously choose to stay in an Un-world rather than return home. So we, through the medium of pop psychology, diagnosed them as crazy (a much earlier explanation of the Stockholm Syndrome). Since then, we have focused our anger and frustration, and indeed our fascination, on hostage dramas such as the Pueblo capture, the Vietnam POWs, the Patty Hearst case, the Mayaguez fiasco, and of course the Iran ordeal. We marveled at the surgical success of the Israeli commando raid at Entebbe, made two instant docudramas for TV about it, modeled rescue teams of our own after their unit, and tried to send the cavalry into the seized embassy in Tehran to demonstrate to both Them and Us whose mythology would prevail.

In the 1980s, two recurrent captivity narratives persist. The domestic one is missing children, either runaways caught up in alien undergrounds such as porn and prostitution rings or those who have been kidnapped by a parent or worse. TV responded by stories such as *Adam* and *Missing,* exploiting a national phenomenon but also intuitively understanding our attraction and revulsion toward captivity stories. The continuing foreign captivity fantasy, of course, is the Vietnam MIAs, which both politicians and popular culture have kept alive.

Those among us who have doubts about the President will be much relieved if we hear that he is watching movies like *Friendly Persuasion* rather than *Rambo.*

The MIA story has really hit a nerve in the Eighties, and both the movies and TV have used that tale to great advantage. Angry Vietnam vets return to Nam to rescue their buddies whom the government won't get out, and in the process wreak vengeance on those slimy Slopes, proving that we could have won the war after all if only the politicians had let us. The most notorious of such fantasies was Sylvester Stallone's *Rambo,* who manages to ice some Russkies for good measure. (Reagan's understanding of popular culture was never better illustrated than in his grasp of the importance of the captivity narrative, first in the Grenada speech, explaining that there the cavalry did come "just in time" and that "the nightmare of our hostages in Iran must never be repeated"; and secondly in his appreciation of Rambo: "Boy, I saw *Rambo* last night. I know what to do the next time this happens." Those among us who still have doubts about the President will be much relieved if we hear that he's watching movies like *Friendly Persuasion.*)

The hostage crisis brought new life to the captivity narrative. The bizarre odyssey and then the disappearance into the Beirut netherworld of the American passengers of Flight 847 riveted our attention once again. It was the latest version of our oldest tale. And this is the second sense in which Shales was wrong. The television audience for the story had learned from history, and recognized immediately the importance of the captivity drama. *And* they had remembered and learned from TV history, especially the Iranian story, how the drama is supposed to unfold, how the roles are played, what the possible outcomes of the story might be (including death), and how the actors are supposed to respond to the cameras. Everyone, including the hijackers, knew the history and importance of media coverage of hostage dramas, and conducted themselves with those references in mind.

For that reason, if you had a sense not only of *deja vu,* but also of bathos (i.e., flatness, triteness, insincere or overdone pathos, sentimentalism, elements of ludicrousness), it was probably for that reason. It was not an original drama, and everyone was self-conscious about it. Thus it seemed less interesting, more forced, after a while less perilous, even in many ways preposterous. One is reminded of Marx's famous remark from *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon* about how history repeats itself, first as tragedy, and then as farce. The Iranian story, in that light, would have been the original "tragic" media drama—serious, sad, consequential—leading to the remarkable denouement of Inauguration Day, 1981. The Beirut story was a secondary drama, almost farcical, but certainly a simulated drama—ironic, mimetic, even comic—that lacked the intensity and originality of Iran.

This is not to say that the Beirut story was not "real," only that it

was stale, and Shales' argument that so enraged Chancellor may have a kernel of truth in it. The Beirut story was a variation on a cultural theme, but it was too much like the original Iranian story to sustain prolonged interest. If such storytelling is "ritualized," then this version lacked the didactic function of ritual. When the hostages were photographed fraternizing with their "captors" (a much nicer term than "terrorist"), driving cars, taking pictures, eating nice meals, holding press conferences, this seemed a bit much. When the networks trotted out the same media psychologists and out-of-office expert consultants, when they began to count the days of captivity, maneuver their way into the hostages' relatives' homes to get reactions to televised reactions, try to scoop each other with Washington rumors, and fill in the dead spots with features of reporters interviewing each other, they were repeating the kind of coverage of the Iran story without the same ability to evoke emotions.

It began to turn into what Bernard Goldberg of CBS admitted was "theatre of the absurd," and everyone began to understand that audiences were tuning out. We may even speculate how much of this was sensed by the Middle Eastern actors in the drama—the terrorists, the Amal leadership, Berri, Assad, even the Iranians. They understood the importance of American media exposure or the hijacking wouldn't have occurred in the first place; so perhaps they understood the hard facts of ratings and fickle audiences, and decided they had made their point and should not further test the audience's patience. Like the American viewing public that tired quickly of the story, they had learned more than the media people had from the precedent of Iran. The second time around is a self-conscious second act, so hype it for what you can, and quit while you're ahead. (Terrorist schools probably have classes not only in Arms and Explosives but also in Media Tactics.)

"Television turns everything, finally," wrote Shales in the same offending column, "into television. All the world's a show . . ." Perhaps the television show of Flight 847 is a good example of what has been called "the society of the spectacle," the tendency of media such as television to focus on the spectacular, to be sure, but also to enjoin our passive participation in the spectacle *as if* it were only a show. Such a confusion of reality and appearance has been one of the most telling criticisms of television, and one the networks cannot easily explain away with journalism-school rhetoric. But they also cannot easily abandon the formula of mixed "real-fictions," nor ignore people's mythological and media expectations. The spectacle of Flight 847 was a creature of television, and included all of the strengths and weaknesses of that medium. Every actor in the story needed television for one reason or another, and the logic and thrust of the story proceeded on the assumption that the appearances projected around the world would affect perceptions and power. We now live in a political world in which we cannot turn the cameras off, except by everyone's consent. Then we turn the cameras on another spectacle. Television is itself an actor in the drama.

The centrality of spectacle was sensed by Barbara Rosen, the wife of one of the Iranian hostages, who appeared on *CBS Morning News* during the mini-crisis. She said that she told one of that show's producers that she wouldn't "come on and talk about 'what it's like to be a hostage's wife.' This isn't a drama. This isn't something that's on Broadway. This is a real-life crisis." Yes, but the real-life crisis is transformed into a television appearance, which, as Shales said, "denatures horrible events and packages them in a convenient container." So the hostage story had a happy ending, and everybody in the TV spectacle got what he wanted. But Rosen's point reminds us of the limits of appearance. I keep thinking of the one person who didn't get what he wanted, the beaten and murdered American soldier lying dead and abandoned on the tarmac at Beirut airport.

What's My Cue?

John Steven Paul

While staying in Williamsburg, Virginia (which is, by the way, just down the road from Dogwood, Virginia) one tends, inevitably, to think of things national. In the taverns of the old Colonial capital of Virginia the ghosts of our forefathers are never further than a bended elbow away, and the College of William and Mary (home of the Virginia Shakespeare Festival) is the alma mater of the nation. The town is also within easy driving range of Washington, D.C., where every third building houses the national something-or-other, including the new major non-profit theatre company at the Kennedy Center called "the American National Theatre."

But a journey to the American National Theatre this month puts one in the middle of its "Chicago season." For this writer, that is a time and space journey in a backward and westerly direction to four productions which originated in Chicago during the past two years.

John Steven Paul, *who teaches and directs plays at Valparaiso University, spent the summer directing Shakespeare for children and business-managing the Virginia Shakespeare Festival in Williamsburg. He is the Theatre critic for* The Cresset.

Jack Henry Abbott's dramatized prison letters, *In the Belly of the Beast,* and *Kabuki Medea* have come to the nation's capital from the Wisdom Bridge Theatre, and *Coyote Ugly,* a comic tale of incest on the Great American Desert, and David Rabe's third Viet Nam play, *Streamers*—the latter starring Gary Sinise and the former directed by John Malkovich—from the Steppenwolf group.

There is again a ringing Chicago presence in New York this summer. *Orphans,* a new play by Lyle Kessler and a Steppenwolf original directed by Gary Sinise, is playing to raves on Theatre Row on 42nd Street, and John Malkovich has recently directed a warmly-received production of Shaw's *Arms and the Man* for the Circle in the Square theatre. Perhaps the most interesting development in the New York non-profit theatre is the accession of Gregory Mosher to the Artistic Directorship of the Lincoln Center Theatre Company, which will reopen the Mitzi E. Newhouse and Vivian Beaumont Theatres that have been virtually dark for years. Mosher has been the artistic leader of Chicago's Goodman Theatre for the past several years and has recently inaugurated The New Theatre Company in association with playwrights David Mamet and John Guare, and others.

The Mosher-Mamet team made May a Mamet month in Chicago. Mosher directed two of Mamet's newest plays, *The Spanish Prisoner* and *The Shawl* at the Briar Street Theatre, and the Goodman revived Mamet's 1978 play *The Water Engine* on its main stage.

There is very little that is graspable in *The Spanish Prisoner.* What we know is that a man (played by Peter Riegert) and a woman (by Lindsay Crouse, David Mamet's wife) sit in conversation at a table. The man speaks and the woman listens, and she occasionally speaks a word or two herself. The table is set in no locale; it surfaces, lighted, out of a lake of darkness and floating in the smoke of the man's cigarette. The man and the woman are unnamed and unremarkable. Their relationship is unexplored, their story untold. Mamet, in this case, has either never invented plot, character, and setting, or he has pared them away, submitting only the unconnected (dare I say "dangling") conversation to be considered by the audience.

The nature of the exchange itself is obscure. The man embarks upon a monologue. Is the man reciting, reminiscing, or rehearsing? Is the monologue a speech from a play, a memory, a dream, an alibi? The content is undecipherable. (There is no reference to a "Spanish Prisoner.") The story seems momentarily traceable; then, the woman interrupts. Is she prompting? Correcting? Coaching? At her intrusion the monologue changes course. The pattern continues: an extended segment of monologue, a diverting interruption, a new direction. And so to the end of the conversation, which ends at a no more logical point than it began.

Like *The Spanish Prisoner, The Shawl* opens on a man and a woman in conversation at a table. This table, however, is located in a room. Three windows at the back are heavily draped floor to ceiling with olive-toned drapery. When they are shut, the room is sealed and stifling; when the curtains are drawn they reveal only that the flat is above street level. The speakers are identified as well. The man (played by Mike Nussbaum) is a professional medium. The woman (by Lindsay Crouse) is a potential client, who has come to communicate with her deceased mother. Distraught and desperate for counsel on a financial matter, she simultaneously wishes to believe in the medium's supernatural powers and

doubts his power to reach beyond the grave.

A light on the table brings it into focus in the dimly lit room. The medium directs the conversation. He tells the woman a story that seems to be about her life, herself, her family. As he develops the story, the woman guardedly contributes a word or phrase. He generalizes; she specifies. He suggests; she confirms. He asserts; she wonders at his knowledge of things only she would know. By the end of the conversation, the medium has won a modicum of the woman's confidence. After agreeing to return, and leaving a small unrequested earnest payment, she departs.

When the woman leaves, the drapes are drawn and the man is joined by a coarse and attractive young hustler (Gary Cole). The boy finds the man's profession intriguing and the man finds the boy desirable. Eager to make a score, the hustler presses the medium to ply his techniques in separating the woman from her money. The man assures the boy that he cannot work that way. A successful transaction, he notes, is the result of a painstaking series of sensitive conversations that form a culture of trust which then sprouts information. Self-interested references to money might corrupt the trust that is necessary for the process to bear fruit. Information comes from the client, unwittingly, in the form of verbal and visual clues. The professional medium seizes each bit of information and enlarges upon it by researching documents in libraries and other public repositories. In subsequent conversations, he offers this information to his client, implying that he has gained it from a supernatural source, thereby gradually bonding his client to him. When a suggestion or an assertion is off the mark, the bond is loosened.

The boy loses patience with the process, and the man, realizing his affection has been misdirected, sends him away. In the final conversation, there is only the medium and the woman. The man again takes up the story, piecing together bits of information which, we now believe, he has gotten not from the realm of the spirits, but from very mundane sources. The conversation proceeds, the suspense builds. The medium's knowledge of the woman's interior life startles her and her confidence in him grows. Has the medium contacted her mother? She confirms more of his assertions, until, at the climax of the play, the medium specifically describes a red shawl in which the woman's mother had lovingly wrapped her; a shawl now lost. It is clear to her, and to us, that no material source could have yielded this image. The psychic bonding is complete.

David Mamet explores conversation with the curiosity of a child who takes apart a clock to see how it works.

The Shawl sheds some light on the more difficult *Spanish Prisoner.* The first piece is structurally similar to, perhaps even a study for, the second. The centerpiece of both is a conversation between a man and a woman. In *The Shawl,* conversations are means to an end. In *The Spanish Prisoner,* there is only a conversation, a phenomenon which the playwright seems to be exploring with the curiosity of a child who takes apart a clock to see how it works. What is the nature of its mechanism? What is its function? What is its purpose?

Conversation is not a new interest for Mamet. In his first play, *American Buffalo,* Mamet takes us through a day's worth of conversations in which three men complain, philosophize, plot, and commiserate while passing the day in a Chicago junk shop. The first act of his recent play about real estate salesmen, *Glengarry Glen Ross,* is set in an out-of-the-way booth of a Chinese restaurant, into which pairs of men slide for private conversations. In these intimate, intense exchanges the men reveal their disappointments, their needs, their fears, their resentments. The most memorable speech in that play is one delivered by the real estate firm's ace salesman to a total stranger. Although the listener contributes practically nothing verbally to the conversation, there is a clear sense of communication between the two. And, as the salesman articulates his philosophy of life, a bond develops between the salesman and the stranger which is similar to that between the medium and his client in *The Shawl.* In both situations, conversation is used to build trust and produce a successful transaction.

Conversation is a form of dialogue. That dialogue would be the foundation of Western drama was established when the ancient Greek actor Thespis stepped out of the chorus line and exchanged speeches with the chorus leader. Twenty-five hundred years later, European dramatists of the later nineteenth century, especially Ibsen and Shaw, moved dialogue out of the public arena and into the drawing room, rendering it into the natural conversational form that we have come to expect from modern domestic drama. Talk and action may sometimes seem to be opposite aspects of drama, but it was the particular innovation of the early modern dramatists to make conversation the *vehicle* of action. That is, conversational language, charged with the forces of ideas and emo-

tions, became the ground of action. The conversationalists became combatants, as the dramatists employed statements and responses in lieu of fist and sword. The reciprocal strike and counterstrike of conversation moved the action of the plot from exposition through complication to climax and denouement.

While David Mamet's language is certainly emotionally charged, he is less interested in using it to drive his plot—indeed, his plays reflect little interest in plot in the traditional sense at all. Mamet's conversations have their own integrity; they are not necessarily setting us up for the next scene. Formally, they enlarge upon the present moment, rather than look to a future one. And, unlike *Glengarry Glen Ross,* in which the playwright takes care to tell a story, *The Spanish Prisoner* and *The Shawl* are focused almost exclusively on the conversation as an object of dramatic interest.

In a David Mamet conversation, characters are engaged in more than reciprocating line for line and speech for speech. After one of the conversationalists opens with a subject, his partners lend support in developing that subject: contributing a word, clarifying a concept, even finishing a sentence. The characters build the conversational structure together and the conversation, in turn, bonds them. In this typical conversation from *Glengarry Glen Ross,* two salesmen, desperate for a break in their string of bad luck, move haltingly toward a partnership:

Aaronow: How many leads have we got?
Moss: The *Glengarry* . . . the premium leads . . .? I'd say we got five thousand. Five. Five thousand leads.
Aaronow: And you're saying a fella could take and sell these leads to Jerry Graff.
Moss: Yes.
Aaronow: How do you know he'd buy them?
Moss: Graff? Because I worked for him.
Aaronow: You haven't talked to him.
Moss: No. What do you mean? Have I talked to him about *this*? (*Pause.*)
Aaronow: Yes. I mean are you actually *talking* about this, or are we just . . .
Moss: No, we're just . . .
Aaronow: We're just "*talking*" about it.
Moss: We're just *speaking* about it. (*Pause.*) As an *idea.*
Aaronow: As an idea.
Moss: Yes.
Aaronow: We're not actually *talking about it.*
Moss: No.
Aaronow: As a *robbery.*
Moss: As a "*robbery*"?! No.
Aaronow: *Well.* Well . . .
Moss: *Hey.* (*Pause.*)

How does a Mamet conversation, any conversation, work? What drives it? The answer is as simple as the answer to the question, "When is it my turn to speak?" Or, as an actor would ask, "What's my cue?" Both the skilled conversationalist and the skilled actor know how to give a cue and to take a cue. The listener may take his cue from something spoken or unspoken, from vocal tone or silence, or from any of a variety of gestures with the head or hand. He may speak in turn, interrupt, or chime in. Cueing drives the conversation and gives it its rhythm. Because conversation is such a standard part of our own experience, we recognize and respond to the rhythms of Mamet's conversations. And, perhaps because the actor is trained and experienced in the art of cueing, Mamet's conversational language is best realized on the stage.

II

The Water Engine was originally written, in 1977, in the style of a classic radio melodrama for presentation on National Public Radio's *Earplay.* It is a complex work with several story lines, all of which develop almost simultaneously, but each on an individual aural channel. On one channel is the story of an idealistic young scientist, Charles Lang, who comes up with a revolutionary idea: an engine that uses distilled water for fuel. The young genius has discovered a way of separating the hydrogen from the water and using the gas for fuel. Of course, such an engine would forever change the industrial world. However, as soon as the inventor takes his idea to a patent lawyer to protect his rights of ownership, persons opposed to such radical change move in to keep him from manufacturing the device. First they try to buy the engine from him and, when he resists, they try to take it away from him. Ultimately, the anonymous representatives of reaction murder the young man.

Both the skilled conversationalist and the skilled actor know how to give a cue and how to take a cue.

Charles Lang's story is set in Chicago in 1934 during the time of "The Century of Progress" (The Chicago World's Fair). The voices of the Fair and its main attraction, the Hall of Science, are on a background channel. Thus, Science is in the air and on the air. "Science," the announcer intones the credo of the great Hall, "the Concrete Poetry of humankind. Our thoughts, our dreams, our aspirations rendered into practical and useful forms. Our science is ourself."

On yet a third channel, a chain letter makes its way from recipient to recipient. The letter has its own "voice." The letter tells each reader the stories of people who maintained and who broke the chain; promises beneficences if one dollar is sent to the top three people on

the list, and threatens dire consequences should the letter's instructions fail to be followed. At the end of its long message, the chain letter offers the following wisdom:

> Great Wealth and Fame stand just beyond your grasp.
> All civilization stands on trust.
> All people are connected.
> No one can call back what one man does.
> Much is known and much will *yet* be known and much will not be known.

There are other channels in *The Water Engine,* including those over which voices champion and attack the American free-market economy, but Mamet brings these particular three together in a clever way. Those who would destroy the inventor's idea rather than let it change the world have wrecked his laboratory and kidnapped his sister. Now a goon squad is out to kill the inventor. In order to protect himself and his invention, the young scientist takes the blueprints for his engine and ducks into the crowds at the Exposition's Hall of Science. He remains until closing time, when a friendly guard ushers him to the door. The guard, noticing that the young man is glum, reads him a letter that he received in the mail that day. It happens to be the chain letter, with its words of wisdom: "All people are connected. No man can call back what one man does." The words reassure the inventor that an idea is not the property of one man or another; that no one can own or protect a thing as important to the world as an engine that runs on water. He shows the blueprints to the exposition guard and then mails the plans for the marvelous engine to the people listed in the chain letter. The next morning, the *Daily News* will report the mysterious drowning death of a young man and his sister. That same morning a boy, a promising student of science, will receive in the mail a set of blue prints for a mysterious engine.

When *The Water Engine* was transformed from a radio production to a fully staged work for the St. Nicholas Theater, directed by Steven Schachter, and later for the New York Shakespeare Festival, its radio character was retained by staging the play as a live radio drama in production. The recent Goodman Theatre revival offered a visual feast. The big-time radio studio was reproduced on stage in all its Art Deco glory. Every visible surface and line paid aesthetic homage to technology triumphant as smoked glass and brilliant chromium reflected each other's image. Every single piece of equipment was consistent with the larger design: microphones, stands, chairs, tables, doors, and the inexorable clock.

The recent Goodman Theatre revival of Mamet's *The Water Engine* offered the audience a visual feast.

The theatre audience was integrated into the production as the live audience at the studio. The evocation of the studio experience was flawless. When we arrived we were welcomed from the stage by a host, who directed our attention to the clock, warmed us up with a couple of jokes, and taught us the signals for applause and quiet. At a given moment, the studio "went live" and suddenly we sensed our connection with a far-reaching radio network in whose flagship studio we rose to sing the National Anthem. Then followed a series of songs from a torch singer in sequined sheath gown; these were interspersed with commercials and promotional announcements for the imminent network presentation of *The Water Engine.*

As the time approached for the play to be aired, the actors took their positions at tables and microphones, the musician at the keyboards, and the sound effects man—in some ways the most dazzling performer in the show—moved to his console. The actual performance of *The Water Engine* resembled nothing so much as a symphony of sound and movement. Each individual in the studio knew his assignments, moved to his positions, and executed his tasks with precision. The controlled dynamism of the production was enthralling. Some scenes were played from stationary positions, others were simply staged in various locations on the stage. All settings were suggested by sounds. The voices on Mamet's various channels were distinguished, not only by spotlighting the actors who embodied them, but also by effecting tonal coloring through levels of amplification, proximity to microphones, and musical accompaniment.

The key to the smooth functioning of this production was efficient cueing, thus linking the piece formally to Mamet's other work. In a sense, *The Water Engine* is a theatre piece about cueing. One imagines the director's job to be similar to that of an audio mixer in a recording studio, deciding when each element should come in: "cue doorbell," "cue theme," "cue singer," "cue dog food commercial," "cue telephone bell," etc. But it was David Mamet who cued the entrances of various channels of his play as he constructed the script. He decided how to mix the Charles Lang channel, with the chain letter channel, with the Hall of Science channel and the several other channels that together make up *The Water Engine.* This process of layering or weaving language together to make a poetic whole is, in effect,

the same technique Mamet uses to bond his characters and their language together in a conversational structure.

David Mamet is one of several American playwrights searching for new ways of structuring dramatic language. The experimentation is fascinating and occasionally entertaining. David Rabe's recent *Hurly Burly,* for example, is a virtual montage of words and phrases drawn from the drug and entertainment culture of California and exaggerated to a farcical level. It must be said, however, that dramatists who focus their attention on language at the expense of plot risk neglecting the soul of drama. Mamet's focus upon the conversation is both a source of interest in his theatre and a reason why many audience members will find his theatre tedious. His lack of attention to story will leave some people unsatisfied, no matter how well each conversation is played.

The Mad Girl

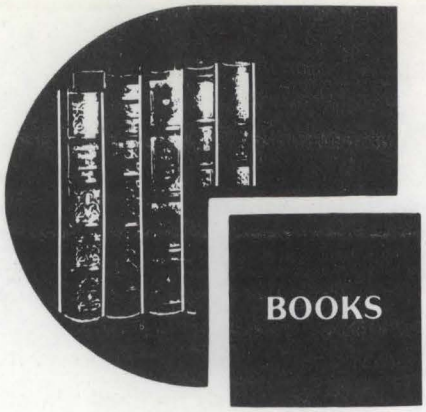
Her shadow stands
near the corner, clutches
a brown paper bag.

Her shadow has eyes,
smudge of wind filled sky
with whirling pigeons.

The shadow opens
its face, no tongue
for her to scream.

Her silence darts
up among the pigeons,
calling, calling.

B. R. Strahan



Bringing It Home

By John Gehm. Chicago: Chicago Review Press. 281 pp. $14.95.

Envisioning ourselves as a part of history is not easy; ordinary life seems too filled with lost pencils, stupid quarrels, and miscellaneous trivia to qualify for such an exalted phrase. But we are history, however unlikely that may seem to us at times, and books like John Gehm's *Bringing It Home* can help to convince us of that ineluctable truth.

This book, whose author is an alumnus of Valparaiso University, is "a true story of the families who moved from America's most brutal public housing to all-white, small-town Indiana." Along with those words, the book jacket shows a small color snapshot of a neat little blue house surrounded by trees, against a background of graffiti-covered brick wall. A telling piece of graphics, for the contrast so clearly presented here is the contrast that shapes the book, and gives to its narrative the impetus that can only be provided by something true and important. Gehm is telling history, and the contrast is black and white.

His subject, on the surface, is simple. A couple meets and becomes friends with a person in a bad situation. She needs help; they want to help. If she could move, she'd be better off. So they and their friends make arrangements to help her move. She moves. Why isn't the story that simple? Because this is the late Sixties, the couple is white, the person in a bad situation is black, her situation is Cabrini-Green, and the move is to Valparaiso, Indiana. Those realities of history change the story from one of the simple logical series of events that might have taken place to an altogether different scenario.

Gehm's book aims to establish those realities of history for the reader. He describes Cabrini-Green, as well as other public housing projects of the same era. He describes the biography and almost stereotypical career of the welfare mother, his central character, whom he calls Anstice Travers. He describes the political climate of Chicago under the thumb of Mayor Richard J. Daley, and what happened when intelligent, curious, and benevolent outsiders went to Chicago to learn about modern urban America. He describes the university community from which these intelligent, curious outsiders came, and what happened when they returned to that community with what seemed their simple suggestion: why shouldn't one person move from a terrible situation to a better one if she has friends who can help her do it? And he describes the larger community in which the university was located, the pleasant, tree-shaded streets with parks and playgrounds, the safe neighborhoods and prosperous businesses.

Though all this description is excellent, the screen of false names is distracting, at least to a person who was there. The decision to clothe the events of history with fictional devices was no doubt made with some care, for Gehm is far from careless or ignorant. But the fictionalizing does not serve the book well, nor does the corresponding decision not to document material in a traditional way. Somehow what ought to be the hard thrust of truth gets blunted. Did a member

of Valparaiso's largest Lutheran congregation really say that it "didn't need any colored 'forced down its throat' by 'certain radical elements of the congregation' "? If so, who said it? Why call it St. Matthew's, when history would call it Immanuel?

Gehm's chosen method involves him in quotations like that above, with all the problems that raises; surely the careful reader wants to know if the speaker used the word "colored" or only the words "forced down its throat." Which words are remembered? Are any written down? And in what source or form? Problems of this kind characterize the book, and, though the approach is probably meant to universalize the story, it seems more often to work against the essential purposes of the book. Why does Gehm appear to distrust the particular, when his headnote, from Kierkegaard, asserts that "faith is in this paradox, that the particular is higher than the universal"?

The outcome of Barbara Cotton's sojourn in Valparaiso is not entirely clear, either in the book, or in the day-to-day version of history that we tend to call reality. She's gone, and the organization that gathered itself to support her and other families is also gone. The effects on the community are uncertain; some people still get angry when they think about those years and struggles, many others don't remember or have never heard of the Valparaiso Builders Association.

Did all that effort do any good? Are the individuals whose lives changed so radically for awhile any better off today? The book's epilogue is ambiguous; an account of children and grandchildren notes successes and failures, graduations and murders. Possibly these particulars are better off than the universals, since the ghettos exist worse than ever, black poverty is at higher levels today than at any time since 1965, black unemployment is still far greater than white. Driving on Chicago's South Side still exercises one's ability to sustain a belief in America's "peace and plenty" in the face of appalling poverty and hopelessness.

What then does the book chronicle? More than anything else it gives a picture of what it is like to live and to work cheerfully for a goal you cannot imagine. The families in *Bringing It Home* believed that doing a good work could not wait until one was certain whether it would be worth it. Their actions made are now history, but their examples of faithful lives are very present, and very necessary.

Gail McGrew Eifrig

Power, Intimacy, & the Life Story

By Dan P. McAdams. Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press. 336 pp. $21.95.

Dan McAdams did his undergraduate work at Valparaiso University in the Christ College honors program in humanities. This is the first opportunity that I have had to review a book by a graduate of the university where I teach. Fortunately it's a good book. I'd hate to pan the work of a former student, especially in a journal published by this university. Not that I can take much credit; McAdams was not one of my students. Would that he had been. I would like to bask in some of his reflected glory.

This is a fine book by a social scientist who takes a fresh look at the formation of identity. The term identity has been made familiar to a whole generation of people both inside and outside the scholarly world by Erik Erikson, who describes identity as one among a series of developmental tasks within the life cycle. Though a lifelong task of the personality, the critical period for the formation of identity is in the period of adolescence and early adulthood. The term has become immensely popular throughout the culture because it seems to have captured what many think is the central quest of a whole generation, a search for "who I am" and "where I'm going" and a yearning for a sense of sameness and continuity in a highly pluralistic world.

McAdams understands the problem of identity to be the problem of unity and purpose in human lives. He uses the metaphor of story to reinterpret and expand Erikson's understanding of identity as a developmental task within the human life cycle. According to McAdams, an individual's story has the power to tie together past, present, and future in his or her life. It is a story which is able to provide unity and purpose. His book "examines the proposition that, beginning in late adolescence, we construct stories to integrate the disparate elements of our lives."

Identity is a life story, a configuration of plot, character, setting, scene, and theme. Identity stability is consistency in a life story. Identity transformation is story revision, which may range from minor editing to a total recasting of the entire drama. The problem of identity, then, is "the problem of arriving at a life story that makes sense—provides unity and purpose—within a socio-historical matrix that embodies a much larger story."

McAdams explores the life myths or stories that people construct to serve as their identities. He draws upon a variety of theoretical sources inside and outside psychology, as well as interviews, questionnaires, and psychological tests administered to men and women in the college years and at midlife. With these sources McAdams develops a model of identity as nar-

rative construction. The model specifies four major components of the life story (nuclear episodes, imagoes, ideological setting, and generativity script) and demonstrates how two personality variables (power and intimacy) influence and are influenced by the content and structure of the story.

Individuals high in power motivation are likely to emphasize themes of impact and strength (physical, mental, and relational) in their life stories.

McAdams understands his analysis to be in the tradition of personology, which emphasizes the study of the whole person in his or her sociohistorical context. Whole person, biography, and motivation are three major themes of the personological tradition, and each of those is prominent in McAdams' approach to the study of persons. Henry Murray is the father of this school, and David McClelland (McAdams' mentor) is its most prominent contemporary exponent. It was from McClelland that McAdams drew the inspiration to ask the "big questions"—questions about the relationship between identity and the social motives of power and intimacy—and design methodologies and measurement techniques for examining these questions in disciplined empirical ways.

One of the strengths of the author's treatment is the thorough empirical grounding which he gives to his model of identity as narrative construction. The model would be intriguing if it were nothing more than a reworking of other theoretical models, and particularly Erikson's model. McAdams is too much of an empiricist to be satisfied with that, and his book is loaded with references to empirical studies, many of them done by himself, which substantiate his findings. At the same time he is aware that many readers are put off by scholars who report such studies with too much attention to detail and technical language. Any educated person can follow McAdams' analysis with ease. Most of the studies are fairly simple and the findings readily accessible. Technical information concerning the collection and analysis of data is placed in appendixes.

Besides the simple and compelling idea of understanding identity as life story, I was most intrigued by the thesis that the motives of power and intimacy serve as organizing principles for life stories. Individuals high in power motivation are likely to emphasize themes of impact and strength (physical, mental, and interpersonal) in their life stories, whereas those high in intimacy motivation can be expected to structure their identities by relationships with others characterized by warmth, closeness, and communion. Power and intimacy as dominant human motivations are very similar to Freud's love and work, Rollo May's love and will, and David Bakan's communion and agency. What is unique to McAdams is the empirical grounding he supplies for these terms and the way in which he relates them to his understanding of identity as narrative construction.

Power, Intimacy, & the Life Story is a must for anyone who is interested in life-cycle theory. McAdams manages to integrate an impressive amount of the theoretical and empirical work done in this area into his comprehensive treatment of the subject. The only criticism I have of his work is that his reports of the work of others, though clear and readable, are lengthy and often tedious. However, one can scan sections of familiar material without getting bogged down.

Valparaiso University has many graduates who have done exceptional work in widely diversified areas of service and professional achievement. We are proud of them all, but those who serve in an academic institution have a special measure of pride when one of their own achieves prominence as a scholar since that is the behavior we model. With the writing of this book McAdams has achieved that prominence and will continue to be heard from for many years to come.

Thomas A. Droege

Amber

I always had
amber dreams
but you are
cream,
a texture
they make
pots from
and china for
the dinner table.

You add
strawberries,
blueberries,
fine veins
in your breast.
A wisp of
dark gold
caresses
your shoulder.

This amber
is enough.

B. R. Strahan

THE LAST WORD

Life in the Slow Lane

Dot Nuechterlein

Several months ago I spent some time on crutches. Now far be it from me to complain, but it was not what I would call a terrific way to get around.

Once I had a friend whose favorite expression was: "Every experience is a learning experience." Since I did learn a few things from being a hobbler, I thought it best to pass along this accumulated wisdom as a public service.

First let me hasten to assure you that my injury was not serious. In fact, the people I live with seemed to find the whole bit extremely uproarious—except, of course, for the part involving their waiting on me hand and foot.

Admittedly their amusement started because of the incident that brought those wooden pegs into our household. As I explained to curious inquirers at the time, I tried to catch a ball with my foot, a not recommended procedure.

People who know me are aware that I have none of the skills required to play softball. My one physical ability is to be able to run a fairly long way without falling down, but that's nothing to brag about since it contributes nothing at all to the sport in question.

When my team has a warm-up practice I manage to catch several of the balls tossed in my direction, although there is some difficulty throwing them back to the same vicinity in which my partner is standing. Things are better at the plate: I don't strike out very often, probably because in women's softball the ball must by law be pitched so that it gently floats over the plate. Anyone who can *see* can usually connect—except that in my case the ball doesn't move very far. My batting average has only one number in it, the round one.

My team is made up of people roughly half my age, and most of them have tons of talent. The sole reason they let me join was to avoid forfeiting games if some players are away. I make a pretty decent cheering section on the bench, and I know how to keep score.

The team's big problem comes when they are shorthanded and have to use me. Given my non-acquaintance with aim, pitching is out of the question, and the infield needs speedy, accurate throws. So I become one of the four outfielders, the go-fer for the balls that sail overhead.

Only one didn't, and being mindful of images of silly women who scream and jump out of the way when a ball comes near them, I didn't budge. The only trouble is my glove was in the wrong place, on my hand instead of on my ankle. Thus the crutches.

I shall not insult your intelligence by telling you to avoid getting into such a state in the first place. My advice is intended to help you cope should you ever find yourself with these long, skinny appendages growing out of your armpits.

(1) Try very hard to live in a one-floor building. Ours is split-level, one of those houses where everything is always on the other floor from where you are, even in the best of times.

(2) In fact, might I recommend a world without stairs altogether? Terror, I have discovered, is looking down a long flight of steps and seeing not even a handrail to grasp. Going up is even worse. The best way to navigate in either direction is to sit down and bump along on your whatever, but that is not really suitable in public places, and besides, bare stairs aren't much fun.

(3) Actually, universal shag carpeting would be ideal, if you can arrange it.

(4) Equip yourself with a backpack that you can wear on your front. Hands occupied in bearing weight and maintaining balance cannot also carry things. But a shoulder bag or tote tends to flap around, and a backpack on the back is un-get-at-able. Pay no attention to the stares and grins.

(5) Be warned—everything will take ten times as long as usual, and your independence will vanish. On the other hand, it can be a great excuse to get out of some of your usual chores. I had nearly forgotten what it was like to lie around reading novels, sipping cool things.

(6) Finally, it helps to have a sympathetic family. At least I imagine it would be very soothing to hear some oohing and ahing. I got that sort of thing from a few friends, although others developed uncontrollable giggles as I jumped around like a wounded jackrabbit.

But it was the folks at home who came perilously close to getting crutch marks on the skull. I think it was the remarks made when I crawled on hands and knees that got the most tedious. Or maybe the cute comments about old people playing kids' games getting what they asked for. Not to mention the "Gimp" and "Spas" and "Hopalong" stuff.

Of course it wasn't an easy time for them, either. They did keep me fed and clothed, and nobody ever outright refused to fetch and carry for me, so I guess I should really give them all little gold stars and promise undying gratitude.

Anyway, even if you never hold a crutch in your hand, let alone use it, try to have a little compassion for those who do.

And if you are one of those for whom crutches or canes or wheelchairs or whatever are a way of life, God bless you, friend.