Contributors

3 The Editor / IN LUCE TUA: THE LADY SINGS THE BLUES
7 Paul Manz: CANTATE DOMINO CANTICUM NOVUM: TE DEUM—A LIFE IN CHURCH MUSIC
14 Walter Sorell / NOTES WRITTEN ON THE MARGIN OF TIME
18 Normand Widiger / BAPTISTERY, CHAPEL OF THE RESURRECTION (Photograph)
19 Bernhard Hillila / THE BAPTISTERY AT THE CHAPEL OF THE RESURRECTION (Verse)
20 J. T. Ledbetter / ENERGY: A RESPONSE TO A QUESTION (Verse)
21 Walt Stromer / SPARKS: LIMBAUGH AND LUTHERANS
23 Bernhard Hillila / HAIL AND FAREWELL (Verse)
24 Karl Lutze / THOUGHTS
26 J. T. Ledbetter / TO ONE IN LOVE (Verse)
27 BOOK REVIEWS: Hillila on Robinson; Meilaender on Miles; Mullin on Pattison; Hodgkins on Walhout and Ryken; Konyndyk on Davies, Fox; Faber on Morris

Departmental Editors
Michael Chasar
Assistant Managing Editor
Richard H. W. Brauer, Art Editor
Thomas D. Kennedy, Book Review Editor
René Steinke, Poetry Editor
Jane Layman, Ralph Klapis Copy

Advisory Board
James Albers
James V. Bachman
Richard Baepler
James Caristi
Christine H. Lehmann
Alfred Meyer
Arlin G. Meyer
Frederick A. Niedner, Jr.
Mel Piehl
Mark Schwehn

Business Manager
Wilbur H. Hutchins

THE CRESSET is published monthly during the academic year, September through May, by the Valparaiso University Press as a forum for ideas and informed opinion. The views expressed are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the preponderance of opinion at Valparaiso University. Manuscripts should be addressed to the Editor and accompanied by return postage. Letters to the Editor for publication are subject to editing for brevity. The Book Review Index and the American Humanities Index list Cresset reviews. Second class postage is paid at Valparaiso, Indiana. Regular Subscription rates: one year - $8.50; two years- $14.75; Student subscription rates: one year - $4; single copy - $.75. Entire contents copyrighted 1993 by the Valparaiso University Press, Valparaiso, Indiana 46383, without whose written permission reproduction in whole or in part for any purpose whatsoever is expressly forbidden.

Above:


Back cover:
Walter Sorell, Movement, c. 1989, gouache.
The Lady Sings the Blues

It will not surprise anyone adept in psychology to know that my feelings about this month’s issue are deeply ambivalent. Last spring, when it began to dawn on me that I had in hand some material from older folks—sometimes explicitly remarking on their age, sometimes simply reflective of their perspective generally—I thought that an “Elders’ Issue” would be a good idea. It would balance my much-loved “Young People’s Issue.” (See the Cressets for February, 1991, and February, 1993.) It would give readers an opportunity to hear again an important voice from the Cressets of the past. It would put other voices in a new context. It would be topical, since older folk are (perhaps as they assume a larger proportion of the population in this country) an increasingly weighty factor in national affairs.

But a funny thing happened on my way to this deadline. Oh, I got the material, and I put it into format, and I sat with it and shove it around until it became this issue. And I like what is here, both for its content and for the sake of these writers, whose work always gives me something good.

But in the process of spending time with and thinking about our relationship to previous generations—to our Elders—I have been confronting, or trying to confront, some powerful demons that have nothing to do with the material in this magazine, but everything to do with a kind of free-floating, generational resentment. As soon as I acknowledge what these resentments are, or even begin to think about them, I am conscious of the Fourth Commandment. Its demand that we honor our elders seems to require that I swallow some bitterness in silence.

Perhaps though, the command should be used both to underlie and direct a search for a better understanding. Better to acknowledge and review a whole complex of feelings, to let the command to honor become the means to explore one’s relationship to those whose lives were so important a shaping influence on one’s own, rather than to stifle under the mantle of “appropriate” feelings the very powerful and authentic realities that are inescapably a part of that relationship.

Why does thinking about some of my elders make me angry? And what should I do with that anger? Ultimately, as with anything that is at least in part sinful, I can recognize it as part of the Cross, or to use another language, I can “bring it to the Cross, and see it laid upon Jesus.” But, granting that ultimate disposal, what use is my anger in helping me to understand how I came to be where I am, to be the person and the history that are not only mine, but shared with many others of like mind and history.

Who are these elders I’m talking about? I have in mind a rather specific group of men who, among them, formulated the thinking I thought I absorbed in the late fifties and early sixties. The Kretzmanns, of course, and then the contingent of their contemporaries whose thinking had so powerfully shaped the Valparaiso University I knew. Mostly they were not my teachers, but the teachers of my teachers, the large presences behind those people who actually talked to you and assigned you books, and marked your papers and helped to explain the world to you. As I think about it now, I only begin to see how much, and how deeply, these elders taught me. I fell in love with them, and I believed their view of the world and how it worked.

They were great men of faith, and everything they said explained a connection between life and faith that I found thrilling. They were “worldly” in the sense that they seemed to know about and move in the world beyond the Church. They mixed martinis and read The New Yorker. They talked about Zeitgeist and corresponded with Thielecke. I especially admired their wit and their savoir Jaire because I had thought that wit and savoir faire could not co-exist with piety, much less Lutheran piety. They seemed to set a tone whereby the music of the World was no longer a siren song, but formed a harmonious counterpoint with that of the Gospel and its message of suffering for others. They wrote wonderful things about suffering, for instance, and I do not doubt—even now—that they meant every word.

They appeared to have absolute confidence in their knowledge of Things in General. When one of them (who was my teacher) told me to ignore offers from Stanford and University of Chicago and go to Bryn Mawr, I never hesitated, in part because he didn’t say, “Well, I don’t
know... maybe you ought to think about Bryn Mawr, which might seem to suit some things about you, insofar as I know anything about you, which of course may not be altogether accurate, since I'm not always the best judge of character and inclination..." No, he just said, "Go," and I went.

Which certainly says as much about my character as about theirs. You can read about that in "The Charge of the Light Brigade." Obedience was the prime virtue to teach to the young, and to praise—in others. I learned a kind of grudging and aggrieved form of obedience, and my misapplied version of this trait accounts for some of my worst failures as a person. I wish that someone had been successful in teaching me to distinguish between the virtue of obedience and the laziness of giving in.

Though I paid them very close attention, I failed to hear two things the Elders were saying that would have been good for me to recognize. One was that, though their talk about grace and gospel was enchanting, most of them also truly loved and trusted the games of power and politics. In fact, (if I had listened more carefully I could have connected this sooner) they talked a lot about a doctrine which provided a structure that explained, accommodated and even authorized those two loves. Grace and power might seem at odds, but with the doctrine of the Two Kingdoms, they could be harmonized and made one. I still do not readily accept the Two Kingdoms doctrine as doing much but attempting to reconcile, or rationalize, those two loves, which I think were probably strong also in Luther.

The other thing the Elders said was almost impossible to hear. Perhaps it was never said. I almost hesitate to mention it because some people will say that it is really the whole point of what I'm angry about, but I don't think that's true. What I ought to have heard was the statement their actions announced loud and clear: "You, my dear, are an interesting listener to the conversations about the Church and the World, but you can never play the game. Women are wonderful creatures, but they're not like us. See, there aren't any women here, are there? That's how we know."

Fortunately, as a woman, I had some innate suspicions about their games anyway. I did want to play, because they impressed me with their glamour, their genuine piety, their genuine knowledge, and, yes, their age. That indisputable advantage gave them an authority no external accrediting body could confer with equivalent force. They were older; they must know what was true about the world.

Plenty of the people who were young when I was young heard these Elders too, but must have heard them differently. Either they heard them more skeptically, or they were listening to enough other messages that the voice of the Elders was diluted to a more potable strength. They took the words about "not trusting human power" with a grain of salt, because they understood how much these men enjoyed the power and position they had. Some of my contemporaries apparently knew just how far to trust the stirring sentences about "humility" and "bearing the cross" and "taking the lower place." More than ever, it seems to me, the World calls the shots. More than ever, it pays to be a player, to know who to know. You do get ahead by getting ahead, even in the church, even in a university. I should have known better. But I'm not the first middle-aged woman to have regrets about having fallen in love.

About This Issue

Last spring, Walter Sorell sent some photographs to Richard Brauer, mostly as a matter of interest. Mr. Sorell wrote for the Cresset as drama critic and general writer on arts from 1951 to 1978. An Austrian with an international reputation as critic, teacher, and writer seems an odd person to be attached to the arts and letters review of a Midwestern university, but Walter Sorell's career defines "unorthodox." His thoughts on his life as critic are nicely matched and in some senses contrasted with those of Paul Manz on his life as church musician. That both sets of reminiscences are appropriate to The Cresset speaks to the broad-ness of conversation this journal still supports and engages.

Other, almost serendipitous engagements: when asked for a poem, our emeritus colleague Bernice Hillilla sent one about the Baptistry of the Chapel of the Resurrection, which prompted us to ask another of our emeriti, Norm Widiger, to exercise one of his extra-curricular talents and illustrate the poem. So, we have a professor of education whose poetry is illustrated by the work of a professor of theology. I can't imagine that Jack Ledbetter, of California Lutheran University is retired, or what that term might mean if it were attached to him, but his poetic thinking is as sharp as ever. His work is greatly loved by Cresset readers, but he is not one to stay put; his pieces here are, he says, "something a little different." The same passion, though, and the same love.

Many others, beloved among our elders, could be represented here. Let Karl Lutze, who now directs the new organization Association of Lutheran Older Adults, stand for them. And Walt Stromer? A surprise, one of the many unexpected pleasures of editing. And I suppose it should be mentioned that the book reviewers in this issue are not a part of the Elders group; I hardly need another thing for Gil Meilaender to be annoyed with me about.

Finally, thanks and honor to So, Helen, Pat, Anna, Della, Clara, Alice, Margaret, and Irma. I should have listened more closely to you.
Are you interested in spirituality and higher education?

In June 1993, The Cresset published a special, extra issue in connection with the Lilly Fellows in Humanities and the Arts Program. Based in part on the Fall '92 Lilly Fellows conference whose subject was Spirituality and Higher Education, the issue has been highly praised by teachers, administrators, graduate students, and many others who are concerned about the vital links between education and religious life.

CONTENTS:

The Editor / IN LUCE TUA: LESSONS
Roberta L. Bondi: SPIRITUALITY AND HIGHER LEARNING: THINKING AND LOVING
Bernard McGinn / THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT: SPIRITUALITY AS AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE
John Steven Paul / LORD, HEAR—AND SEE—OUR PRAYER: ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE AS EXPRESSION OF PERSONAL SPIRITUALITY
James Champion / WRITING IN THE DARK: THE SHOWINGS AND POLITICS OF DENISE LEVERTOV
Lee Hardy / REVIEW ESSAY: CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND THE POSTMODERN RECONFIGURATION OF PUBLIC SPACE
BOOK REVIEWS / Wolterstorff on Schwehn; Kennedy on Long
Robert Siegel / TWO POEMS: RAPHAEL; HOW TO CATCH A POEM (Verse)

Copies of this issue were not mailed automatically to overseas and Canadian addresses on our subscription list. But if you would like a copy, please write to request one, enclosing $1.00 toward the costs of postage and handling. Multiple copies are also available for use with faculty study groups, for the cost of mailing. Please call the Editor’s office for information. (219) 464-5274
CANTATE DOMINO CANTICUM NOVUM

TE DEUM: A LIFE IN CHURCH MUSIC

Paul Manz

Introduction:

Some years ago, I attended the retirement banquet of a dear friend of mine, Donald Ferguson, a Professor of Music at the University of Minnesota. After all of the speeches lauding his outstanding work as a teacher and musicologist, he was asked to respond. As I recall, he went to the podium, thought for a moment and then said, “Before I speak, I want to say something.” So, I too, should like to say something before I speak to you.

I thank you for the opportunity to return to the Twin Cities, ‘home’ for us for forty years! Ruth and I have just celebrated our 50 years together which, in contemporary society is somewhat unusual, so we rejoice to see so many of our friends and family once again. Our returns to the Twin Cities are now somewhat less frequent since we have sold our home in Edina and have chosen to alternate between Chicago and Colorado. Our roots—spiritual, familial, musical and social—are deep, and we often look back to our times here with much nostalgia; we look, however, to the past for learning and to the future with enthusiasm and hope in dealing with new challenges.

If you do not know the name Paul Manz, then you can find out something about his history and his contributions to church music by reading this article. Cantor Manz gave these words to an enthusiastic audience at the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians meeting this summer in Minneapolis, at Augsburg College. He says that if only he had known how to do it, he would far rather have played these thoughts than written them. But fortunately for our readers, here they are in words.

Having now spoken, I wish to say a few words about my favorite subject, worship and church music.

Why CANTATE DOMINO CANTICUM NOVUM?

Why a TE DEUM: A LIFE IN CHURCH MUSIC?

You could not, or should not, be expected to be interested in this person who has been actively engaged in practicing church music for over 50 years. Rather, I suspect and sincerely trust you are interested in what has happened to church music and to the church over this period. Hence—

CANTATE DOMINO CANTICUM NOVUM

In Johann Sebastian Bach’s time, nearly all were musicians. Music was simply another language, and almost everybody spoke it fluently. Society today, however, is made up of musical eavesdroppers. Music is what we turn on when we get into the car or what we tune out in the elevator. Music is what we frequently enjoy at concerts, recitals, on C.D’s, records and cassettes and often endure when we are put on telephone hold or all too frequently in church—yours, mine and that other church! Music makers for us are not so much the artists of musical instruments but are stereos, tapes, records, CD’s and cassettes. We take great pride in having fine equipment but are out of touch with the song within us.
I. MUSIC AND THE CHURCH

One of our sons tells me that a review of the literature in psychology seems to indicate that people come to church to be normalized. They attend out of a desire to be connected especially at the point of brokenness. Well, we already know that. All of us have had to deal with the range of feelings which span the life cycle within the community of faith. We are familiar with tears of joy at weddings and tears of sadness at funerals. We have seen the empty look in eyes on the Sunday after, witnessed the hurt, the hope, the fear, the frustration, the feelings of despair. All are found in the community of the church. We also see boredom and apathy, which might be the most prevalent feelings today.

Still the church is the one place where all people are gathered and called upon to be music makers. The church is not a place for passive and stoic onlookers. Long ago, the church realized that something deeper gets conveyed with music. I dare say now after fifty years that theology is well taught through hymns, the church’s liturgies, its anthems and through all of its music. Historically, we have been persuaded however, that all theology and its resultant promise of salvation originates mainly from the pulpit. Our role is to nurture the music makers. Our role is to give the congregation a sense of its own ability to make worship with music. We must communicate to our parishes that they are capable of doing great things. All too often we assume, “My parish can’t do this; it’s too difficult!” Our role is to empower the new song within them and help them find their voice. We are about the work of permission giving, as well as teaching and modeling. One definition of church might be the collected people of God in Christ Jesus who dare to meet the chances, choices and changes of life with a new song.

CANTATE DOMINO CANTICUM NOVUM

II: Music and My Story

In suggesting the scope of my presentation, your planning committee wrote, “We would like to have the focus of your presentation to be autobiographical, incorporating your views on the role of worship, the role of the cantor, the preservation of tradition and how church music has changed over the course of your service.”

There is a misconception here. I am often seen as a doer of music, when perhaps most deeply I perceive myself as simply a part of that community which finds its voice in song. Yes, I have devoted my life to the music of the church and have made the necessary sacrifices and preparations required to develop the art of music. From early on, my life was surrounded by music and by the prayers of my parents and grandparents. Father and Mother were born in what was then Russia but is now Poland. My paternal grandfather (Christian Maliszewski) was Cantor of a large German Lutheran parish in what is now Nowawiesz, Poland and came to the United States in 1922 when I was three years old. Following World War I, he and my grandmother had been exiled to Siberia. Oma and Opa Maliszewski (aren’t you relieved that my parents did not keep that name?) lived with us for a number of years. My musical training began with piano lessons when I was about five years old. My grandfather, an old world disciplinarian, insisted I have a solid keyboard technique before I could play the organ. I longed for that day as today’s children long for their Nintendo. During that time, my grandfather and my father set out to build me a reed organ with pedals. Studying the piano was a means to the end, and I did this for a number of years with the promise and the hope of organ lessons.

I adored Mrs. Dinda, my first piano teacher. I was almost six years old. She was strict but very encouraging. I probably studied with her the greater part of two years and remember well the final piece I played when all her students gathered for that special event called, The Recital. I remember it came from the old Etude Magazine, and it was called “Dorothy.” I think I could still play it today. My encore was Percy Grainger’s, “Country Gardens.” I believe Mrs. Dinda is still living today in Florida where she moved after her husband’s death. A few years ago, I played a recital in a large Roman Catholic church in Lakeland, Florida and she did me the honor of attending.

Mrs. Dinda advised my parents to have me continue my studies with Henry J. Markworth, an excellent piano and organ teacher who was the fifth-sixth grade teacher at Trinity Lutheran Church and School in Cleveland, Ohio. He accepted me on the condition I would agree to take 2 two-hour piano-theory lessons for every organ lesson he gave me. I came to his studio on 3901 Whitman Avenue every Saturday morning, and before Mr. Markworth entered the room, Mrs. Markworth had some cookies and a glass of milk for my strength and encouragement. I needed both, because before the age of nine he ran me through the Bach Two and Three Part Inventions, Mozart, and some of the easier Beethoven sonatas. The last hour at the piano was spent in theory and composition. I hardly knew how to spell counterpoint, but I soon learned and wrote exercises for him in the various species together with those nasty alto and tenor clefs! At that time we had a two-manual tracker instrument in church with, of all things, a water-powered blower to produce the wind pressures. Working at home on my own reed organ—flat
When I was very young, twelve or so, I believe, I had to make a decision and choose between the study of theology and the study of music. My sainted mother would rather I had chosen theology—but music had chosen me—and this other—theology—was richly added to me. The decision then was made. Rather than go to Concordia College in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, as a pre-theological student, I would enter as a high school freshman at Concordia High School, River Forest, Illinois, as a pre-education student hopeful of getting an excellent music training.

My experience there was not always happy. Hazing was still a popular sport for upper classmen, and as a thirteen-year-old and an only child coming from an old world environment, I was very homesick, so I solaced myself with my music, not always to the pleasure or approval of older students. Playing the organ was forbidden to high school students, and many a night with flashlight in hand I would escape to the aula and play on the softer stops of the organ. Professor Rohlfing, the band conductor, recognized that I delighted in musical challenges and had me play the Schuman A minor Concerto, which he had transcribed for the band, as a high school freshman. Since I was not permitted to study organ, he ran me through the Ballades of Grieg, Brahms, and many of the Chopin works. Still as a freshman in high school, I played an organ recital in a large Roman Catholic church whereupon the Lutheran Ministerium of Cleveland, Ohio, wrote a letter of protest to the President of Concordia College, River Forest, Illinois, accusing me of 'unionism.' I was called to the President’s office one evening and was threatened with expulsion.

As a freshman too, I heard the famed European-trained organist, Wilhelm Middelschulte, play a stunning recital. As I recall, he had a prodigious memory and a sharp wit. His program that afternoon consisted of the Bach Fantasy and Fugue in G, the Prelude and Fugue in A, the Toccata and Fugue in D, and the complete Theme and Variations by Thiele, a contemporary of Julius Reubke. This boy was blown out of the water! Later at the reception, someone told him of my interest in the pipe organ; his comment, whether polite or prophetic, was indeed most inspiring—shortly thereafter I saved enough money to acquire the Thiele work which, incidentally, contained one movement employing both tenor and alto clefs!

Later, I was finally permitted to study organ with Professor Martin Lochner in a class setting. Four students were assigned to an hour slot, and since three of them were beginners (one of them, the fullback on the college football squad, was not given to practice), I was given a cursory hearing towards the very end of the hour. When my frustrations became almost unbearable, my parents intervened and made it possible for me to do my organ studies at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago where I studied with Edwin Eigenschenk, a former pupil of Joseph Bonnet and Louis Vierne. At this time I received strong, adverse criticism from sources I would rather not identify. My parents had very meager means. Sending me away to school was a great personal sacrifice. To enable me to study at the Conservatory, my mother sold Sunshine Greeting Cards. Studying organ off-campus was resented, and I was given very restricted practice permission. Mr. Eigenschenck was most generous with his time and, knowing that I often missed the meal at the college, took me out to dinner after lessons. He also gave me opportunities to substitute for him at Second Presbyterian Church in Chicago when he was away on tour and often gave me tickets to hear well-known European artists.

Concurrent with my studies in music was the musical career of a cousin in Germany, also named Paul, of the same age, born the same week in May. He was a fine young organist and musician. His father, a pastor of the largest Lutheran church in Warsaw, wanted him to study theology in Berlin where he had done his studies—much as my own mother had hoped and prayed that I, too, would become a pastor.

When the tuition bills for Paul Maliszewski did not continue to come from Berlin as per parental hopes, but came from Leipzig instead, Onkel Gustav (whom I got to know in 1955) finally knew that his Paul had made his choice. In Leipzig he enrolled at the Hochschule Fur Music and studied with none other than Heinrich Fleischer. Many years later, when Heinrich was our dinner guest, on a hunch I showed him a book on Bach once owned by Paul, complete with his notes and signature. Heinrich was stunned at that signature and spoke of Paul with the utmost respect and hope. He regarded him as an excellent organist and predicted a brilliant future for him. He had known that cousin Paul was forced to serve in World War II, as was Heinrich, but had not heard of his death. I deeply regret that Paul and I never met; he was killed while serving in Hitler’s army in France.

During our early sojourn in Minnesota, as principal of a parochial school in St. Paul, I began studies at the University of Minnesota with Donald Ferguson in Music History and Composition and worked in Organ with Arthur B. Jennings, a church musician and composer. He was an excellent teacher, and I learned many things from him—style, registration, fingering and hymn accompaniments. Years later I became his legal guardian for the last years of
his life, appointed by the Hennepin County Court. ‘Herr’ and ‘Frau’, as they were affectionately known by their student friends, adopted us as their family.

During the summers of 1941-1943, I also worked with Albert Riemenschneider, the eminent Bach scholar who, after my last lesson with him, invited me into his private studio and allowed me to handle his precious Bach manuscripts. Also during the same summers, I was privileged to work with Edwin Arthur Kraft, organist and Master of the Choirs at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Cleveland. From both of these men I learned to appreciate yet another style of playing: Riemenschneider and Bach/Kraft with contemporary English and American music. My pattern then, now, and always: study the music of the masters in preparation for the worship service itself.

The Lutheran community of the church was not at all supportive when in 1955 I went to Belgium to study with Flor Peeters who was a Roman Catholic—because (they said) there were any number of good Lutheran organists in Germany with whom I ought to associate. After my studies in Belgium with Peeters, where I received the First Prize in Organ and Improvisation with High Distinction and the Firmen Swinnen Award, I received an extension of my Fulbright Grant and worked with Helmut Walcha at the Dreikonigskirche in Frankfurt, Germany and found him to be equally supportive and helpful. Flor Peeters played and taught in the Flemish-French style and could trace his musical lineage all the way back through Widor, Forkel and finally to Bach. Helmut Walcha, a Lutheran, traced his training back through Straube and then to Bach as well! I returned to Belgium three more summers to continue working with Flor, both in composition, organ and improvisation. I did not study improvisation with Helmut Walcha, as he did not teach this discipline during the time I was there. I have been blessed with excellent teachers through the years, and they became my dear friends. My greatest teachers, however, have been my parishes and my students.

I came to Mount Olive, Minneapolis, in 1946, first as Director of Music and Education, then in 1957 as Director of Music, and finally in 1976 as Cantor. For the most part these were very happy years with a full choral program and in 1964 a fine instrument to assist and stimulate. The church’s leaders were good, creative and supportive, though in the 80s very protective of their turf.

These experiences, along with teaching organ at the University of Minnesota and at Macalester College, and the opportunities to play in churches, cathedrals and concert halls in many states and countries, gave me detailed preparation for the musical challenges to come. Much patience and understanding were needed, however, for many of us were to enter by choice into the Elim and Seminex days. Coming in 1957, my work as a professor and chairperson of the Division of Music and Fine Arts at Concordia College, St. Paul, Minnesota was very exciting to me. We started with nothing and left there with a full staff in Music and Fine Arts, a new building, and many gifted students. Incidentally, in May of this year, Concordia College granted me an Honorary Doctorate—a great way to complete a puzzle that still had a few missing pieces.

In 1964, I was given a leave of absence, both from Mt. Olive Lutheran Church and Concordia College, to tour with the famed choral conductor Roger Wagner and his superb Chorale. For eleven weeks we criss-crossed the United States from coast to coast doing 66 concerts. Roger had a two-manual 8 stop organ designed for me, together with its own truck. After each concert, the crew tore down the instrument and drove to the next city. By the time our bus arrived the next day, I usually could count on at least two hours solid practice before concert time. Since Roger was an expert on Gregorian Chant and sacred Renaissance music of the church (he held an earned Doctorate in Musicology writing his dissertation on the masses of Josquin des Prez), I was introduced to yet another style and palette of church music. Martin Bernheimer, music critic for the Los Angeles Times, wrote of him:

At his best, Roger Wagner was something of a genius on the podium and a splendidly feisty old walrus off it. He knew how to blend vocal sounds with uncanny flexibility, sensuality, color and point. His interpretive ideas were particularly compelling in the French repertory that he inherited and adored. He was a showman par excellence, and luckily his generous ego was matched by his talent.

I had to leave Concordia in 1976 and returned full-time as Cantor to Mount Olive here in Minneapolis until 1983. The call issued to me at that time specifically commissioned me to serve the whole catholic Church and to ‘share my ministry with generations yet unborn by creative composition for the blessing of the church through all future years.’ The unique call as Cantor of Mount Olive was orchestrated and commissioned by thoughtful and generous men and women of the parish. The call specifically commissioned me to work in the parish, as I had been doing, but to regard the church at large as my field of activity. Upon our leaving in 1983, Mt. Olive established a Ruth and Paul Manz Scholarship in Church Music, and a number of fine young organists have been recipients of the stipend since then.

The past ten years have been spent as Cantor of The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saint Luke, Chicago, where I preside over two instruments—a large, three-manual Schlicker in the rear, and a small, two-manual instrument in the left transept, each with its own console. Incidentally, my own two-manual Schlicker Pipe Organ is
now in the Great Hall of St. Luke. Concurrently, I served as Christ Seminex Professor of Church Music and Artist in Residence at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. I retired from this position last September and became Professor Emeritus but continue as its Artist in Residence. I am also now Director of the Paul Manz Institute of Church Music in Chicago. We currently have four graduate students enrolled.

For many years I have been a professional church musician serving mostly in the Midwest. During this time, I have seen many changes in the practice of worship in our churches. I grew up in a large parish in Cleveland, Ohio, where the parish had just introduced the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* of 1917. It was a new form for a generally German congregation, and, as I think back to those times, it caused more problems than it was supposed to have solved. It contained text only—no music. In 1924 a revised version of this *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* appeared. In many respects, this was a great improvement; however, it had a limited hymnody, questionable meter notation and measure mark ambiguity. It was not until 17 years later that a new effort was made with *The Lutheran Hymnal*. For the most part this was a better realization. New hymns were added, together with some doxologies, chants and the *Order of Matins and Vespers*. Some of the original problems from the 1929 version still carried over to the 1941 effort. All hymns were metered, causing some awkward, un rhythmic singing because of unwanted, unplanned-for rests and organists who gave literal interpretations of the note and rest values. Beside this, an 'Amen' was to be sung after each of the hymns!

The high point of the service, the homily and Holy Communion, was usually tacked on after the Benediction. Sometimes the Eucharist was moved to a separate service, either before or after the main service. Today, with *The Lutheran Book of Worship*, the Eucharist appears within the service itself, thus postponing the Benediction. The idea of frequent participation in the Eucharist was still unpopular. Today, however, people rarely leave before the benediction and welcome the weekly Eucharist.

III. Music As a Sacrament

Words are not my favored medium. But words are necessary to help us understand what we are doing in music. Music is also necessary to convey what words themselves are incapable of conveying. Theologians might want to correct me, but it seems to me that music is sacramental. The prerequisites according to Luther are God's Word and the instituted external sign or means.

Alfred von Rohr Sauer of Seminex wrote that God's creating word in Genesis 1 needs to be sung. This makes profound sense to me. Can't you just imagine the chorus of God's Voice summoning order out of chaos? Job speaks of the morning stars singing at creation (Job 38.2). Songs on the occasions of the miracles of deliverance were on the lips of Moses (Exodus 12.1-8), Miriam, (Exodus 15.21), Deborah (Judges 5.131), Hannah (I Samuel 2.1-10), David (Psalm 7) and Mary, the Mother of our Lord (Luke 146-55). The one account we have of Jesus singing took place on the night of his betrayal, when he sang a Psalm with his disciples. Of course. That's the way they did it.

The external sign is not the pipe organ or the choir and certainly not the LBW. It is the congregation reaching deeper into another way of communicating. The church ever since the beginning has taken this cue and sung its dialogue back and forth—

"The Lord be with you."
"—"And also with you."
"Lift up your hearts."
"— "We lift them to the Lord."
"Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God."
"— "It is right to give God thanks and praise."

With this we are touching the deeper truth, the mystery, as best we can. Music is the vehicle we use. The purpose of music in the church, we believe, is to worship God with a new song.

*CANTATE DOMINO CANTICUM NOVUM*

The sacramental part is that music is also a conveyer of the grace of God—in, with, under and even beyond the words. There is something salvific about how music reaches into the heart and speaks a deeper word from our God. There is that ever-present cloud of witnesses, not only on this shore, but on another shore and in a great light who with us sing that great hymn, *Sine Nomine*.

In thinking of the sacramental nature of music, I keep coming back to how music is created in the community of faith. It transcends denominations and languages and even the ages. The congregation is the one place where music is more than music. It is a gift of grace from God to empower our worship.

As I look upon my experiences through the years, I see many changes. Our hymnody is richer and broader, our liturgies are many and more diverse, our edifices are new and in many cases non-traditional, and our people are no longer entirely ethnic North Europeans. Furthermore, the musical instruments we bring into our churches—handbells, Orff instruments, small orchestras, fine choirs, newer, better-designed organs—make worship a joy and...
delight. There is much that I like in Lutheran worship, and I am pleased and proud to be involved in exciting Praise to God!

I don’t want to be a church entertainer and titillate the keys for the assembled people of God. I want to actively involve them in the worship of praise respecting and using traditional as well as contemporary hymnody and liturgy. If entertainment is wanted, let them go to the stage play, the theater, the concert hall or tune in to the Sunday Morning Special TV. But there are limits—have you ever known someone to receive the Eucharist from a TV religious program?

We should be making our hymn singing/playing and choral offerings more meaningful and more respectful of the Deity (God is not my buddy—God is Deity) In playing the hymns we must be mindful of not just playing the notes correctly (an IBM computer can do much better). We must be aware of the Word—the text—and interpret these appropriately. As an aside, it is my observation that church organists often continue their graduate organ studies with the same teacher as their college teacher did. We need to break this mold and encourage our graduate students to risk with grace and explore new fields of learning, to be less parochial. I long to find church musicians who experience the rich English tradition of church music as well as German and our contemporary American traditions.

Yes, I think God has a sense of humor! Humor in the church, however, is like tabasco sauce—a little goes a long way. The ‘cutesy’ anthems, the innocuous hymns and the homily which often consists of one story after another to loosen us up, is a distasteful practice and makes thinking people miserable. We must continue and renew our hope that all worship is carefully-planned and executed. Let us not get into the spontaneous, casual type of worship!

DEO AEDIFICATIO-SOLI DEO GLORIA

During the past 52 years I have been totally immersed in professional church music as a planner, leader and teacher. I have had many opportunities to observe, participate in, and work with other denominations in the practice of church music. This has been a revelation to me, not only from the viewpoint of the quality of music, but the liturgical practices, the drama and action of the service itself. I include in my experiences the Lutherans, Roman Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, Mennonites, Presbyterians, and the Jewish—in Europe and Canada, as well as in the United States. We recently lectured and played hymn festivals in South Korea where the Christian churches are vigorous and exciting, and congregational and choral singing is strong and vigorous.

From 1975-1980 the numbers game came into the thinking of the church leaders, its musicians, the architects who designed worship spaces, and it was genuinely acknowledged that the number of people attending church had declined. Something needed to be done. Television had demonstrated how useful it could be in communicating anything and everything. The entertainment industry took over many of the American churches which were having difficulties holding on to and increasing membership. Perhaps you have seen the Hour of Power with Robert Schuler, Jimmy Bakker, Oral Roberts, and Jimmmy Swaggert. These people have their “places in the sun.” I need not say more.

The entertainment industry has not stopped producing charismatic preachers, and they have invaded the music-making areas of churches as well. Guitars and amplifiers, so-called electronic keyboards with even higher levels of amplification, drums, etc. are standard equipment in many, though certainly not all, of our churches. Allow me to tell you of two most unusual advertisements which appeared in the May-June issue of Your Church, a publication addressing itself to church management.

ALLEN MDS-EXPANDERS

DESIGNED WITH THE ORGANIST IN MIND!

Apparently, all you need to do is to plug this into your electronic organ and you will be sure to have all of the advantages of a MIDI but none of the headaches. With two Expander versions to choose from, you will have harpsichords, lute, harps, celestes, handbells, strings, pianos, chimes, electric organs I, II and III, clarinets, oboes, bassoons, brass ensembles, bugles, posthorns, wood harps, marimbas, vibes, glockenspiels, xylophones, timpanis, and much much more.

How it works: Electronic microchips digitally store about

ORGANIST IN A BOX

A little electronic box is about to revolutionize worship accompaniment. No larger than a dictionary, the Electronic Hymnal does it all. You can set:

• Volume
• Tempo
• Key Signature
• Number of verses
• Instruments in Accompaniment (16 total)

• $695.00 and up!

The Cresset
A basic law of physics is that for every force there is an equal counter force. Since congregations are made up of people with diverse preferences, it is necessary to use a dichotomy of musical styles that reflect that basic law of physics—essentially “classical” and “non-classical.” The critical element is determining the proportion between these two styles and that proportion varies GREATLY from one congregation to another. It may be 50:50 in one congregation, 90:10 in another, and 30:70 in still another. Each must be considered individually. These styles are analogous to a hospital and an ambulance. When a person needs medical attention, the hospital can give them long-term, extended help but only if the patient is in the hospital. Conversely, the ambulance can “meet them where they are” but can give only short-term limited help.

We are in a society that has been conditioned to “having it our way, right away,” to be entertained—a “market-driven” mentality—but we must remember that the real “audience” in worship is not the congregation. The audience is God. Therefore, while it is important to “meet the people where they are,” we must also be equally intentional about moving people forward to where they could be. After all, children will usually prefer candy to vegetables. But imagine what would happen to a child if it were allowed to eat only candy. Further, fads such as “trendy” music come and go before congregations really catch up to them, and by then they are out chasing the next one. If we really believe God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, then music that has enduring qualities, regardless of style, communicates this most effectively. People coming to church are not really looking for a flashy show. (There is more than enough entertainment available and much of it is very professionally done! Why compete?) Instead, they are trying to catch a glimpse of God—to somehow come into contact with the Infinite, the Beautiful, the Almighty. Many recent articles say that “Baby Boomers” are disenchanted with the church because it is too much like the rest of the world, yet some church consultants advise making the church both look and sound like the world. How better to transcend this world and catch a glimpse of God through music with transcendent qualities?

Another important quotation comes from an article, "Whose Glory?" by Larry Christensen, from the November-December, 1992, issue of Partners:

In the church’s worship, music is produced to serve the liturgy. Self expression by the composer or the performer is the by-product. It would seem that the most important test of our motives is whether the choices we make and the music we perform serve the liturgies the church has developed through the centuries as a proper vehicle for the edification, prayer and praise of the assembly. Arguments about “art music” or “quality music” versus “folk-ethnic” or “pop based” styles rather miss the point. All may serve the liturgy; any of them may be utterly misused. Rationalizing that we are improving peoples’ tastes or blessing the people with what they can relate to hasn’t advanced the argument one bit.

The megatrend observer Naisbitt notes that classical music is being used more and more in commercials because it stands out, whereas popular music seems too ordinary. Does popular music, then, make worship ordinary?

It is rather clear where we were with church music some fifty years ago. Perhaps we can also agree on our current position with church music. Where we will be by the year 2000 and beyond is difficult to determine. What I think we must do, as I said earlier, is to balance the so-called “classical” with the “nonclassical.” We can’t throw out the crib and the Baby for some trendy substitute. Neither do we want to completely disregard the technological “new.” We need a wholesome balance, and that can only be determined by time, experience, integrity and most of all, prayer and wisdom.

I thank you for listening to what I have had to say. Our role as church musicians is to nurture the music-makers. We do not do music for the church, but we help the church discover its music. In addressing this group of Lutheran church musicians, I feel I may have carried coals to Newcastle. I would much rather have played this would I have known How! But words, too, are useful with they help us to focus our energy and purpose. □
The year was 1951. We stayed in Saranac Lake. I had written an overlong poem on the human hand whose meaning and the ramifications of its meaning have fascinated me all my life. I called the poem "Invocation." A few of its many lines say:

Who shall it be? Where is the architect
In our midst to build anew Your house?
Whose hands are full of skill, whose thoughts erect,
Whose soul unstained? Whose words do not arouse
Your anger? Who can lead the wayworn mob?

Oh God, behold those hands,
emaciated and bereft
of bare necessities and left
alone to seek the truth... And then behold those hands
which calmly fold to pray
and have the lightness of the breath,
their skin-deep feelings in decay,
delivered from the fear of life and death,
they will, when at Your gate, then know Your shibboleth.

And this six-page poem ended with the stanza:

A smile, the only gift I wish to save!
It is the finest gift of all God gave.
Whatever lucky cargo fills my ships,
a slow and simple smile shall shape my lips.
Should I be forced to face inhuman wrong,
a smile alone may be for what I long.
And should I meet with Death thus in a while,
oh God, then let me show him, too, my smile.

This poem seemed to be much too long for any commercial magazine. The Saturday Review of Literature, a prestigious magazine at that time, had previously published poems of mine. But I was certain that this one wasn't quite right for it. There was a very special religious tone to it. So I left the poem in my drawer for some time, almost sure the day would come when it would speak to those who would join me in my feelings and thoughts.

One day, by mere chance, I came across a periodical called The Cresset. The tenor of its essays seemed to be right for this poem which I sent to its editor, John Strietelmeier. This was the beginning of a 27-year, monthly contribution to this magazine. I enjoyed every month of it.

"Movement is the cause of all life," Leonardo da Vinci wrote in his Notebooks, and movement per se has always fascinated me. How people gestured, how they smiled and walked, how they stood still—it all meant to me a way of coming closer to them, of understanding what made them tick. Already in my adolescent years I could watch and absorb with astonishment and pleasure the
By mere chance I became a dance critic. I think I was born a lyricist who was later cornered by the dramatist in me who was pushed aside by the critic. There must be poetry in every good critic, Baudelaire said. For some time I also worked as a translator of German books into English: Goethe, Hesse, Remarque—finally, I had seven book translations to my credit. Erwin Piscator, the eminent stage director in the Berlin of the 20s, famous for his concept of the political theater, came to the United States as a refugee from Hitler. In the 40s he was the head of two Broadway theaters and a very important theater workshop producing such actors as Marlon Brando. He asked me to join his workshop as a translator and lecturer. One day he asked me whether I would dare to run the dance department of the workshop. I have never said “No” to any challenge in Life. What I had done for the actor students seemed to have been satisfactory. My lecture-demonstrations attracted the student body; the formerly shunned classes were crowded. I asked some of the better-known dancer/choreographers to work with me and on our students. I seem to have done something right. One began to speak about my work in dance circles. Soon after, the Editor-in-Chief of Dance Magazine invited me to write for the magazine. A new challenge to which I could not say “No.” This was in 1949. I am still writing for this periodical and for many others in this country and in Europe. This is how I became an internationally-known dance critic.

There are many autumns in one’s life, there are many deaths. There may be fewer springs and resurrections. But there is poetry in all seasons, even though with a difference. Autumn’s poetry is rhythmically less jubilant than the one associated with spring; on the other hand, it is more intense in content. Everything becomes more meaningful when we can hear the wind brush the branches and whirl the leaves to the ground. I remember the wind and the leaves which came falling down, turning and dancing in the air, pirouetting their farewell to the once secure heights from which they looked down with hope in their eyes and wings on their mind. I saw them lying there, hopelessly brown and withered, some of them turning around in sadness before a gust of wind picked them up again to sweep them from the ground and make them dance and dance a fantastic bourree. I remember watching them in the gardens of Schonbrunn in my hometown Vienna and wondering for the first time about the beauty of movement, about the rhythm that seemed as natural as it was casual.

I must have been twelve or thirteen years old when I first learned to see, to say “Yes” to the secrets of the silent movement that I found all around me. Without wanting to unravel those secrets I gradually realized that their meaningfulness was hidden in my own dream of their meaning. I became prepared to see the dance of life, to embrace its
minutest and its broadest gestures with love in my eyes. This was my first step into the world of dance, into a world of bewildering awareness.

The decline of artistic quality goes hand in hand with the decline of Western civilization, as predicted by Oswald Spengler during the years of the first World War. It is a gradual process of everyday corrosion, and, being daily witnesses to it, we are never really able to notice it. Commercialism has a dictatorial hold on us and forces all expressions of our time—the artistic and non-artistic ones—into the channels of the mass media. By virtue of its nature, commercialism must court the quick and garish, it must flirt with the lowest average to achieve the highest harvest. It is honest about helping and offering the arts to a larger audience, but by putting its signature underneath, it determines the point of departure as much as the direction. It not only controls the artistic product in itself; it determines the entire approach to the work process. In other words, the artistic intent becomes cheapened.

In 1982 the editors of Dance Scope asked me to write something on education for them which I speedily did, as if our lives depended on it—as, in reality, our lives do. I'll quote a few paragraphs from this essay:

"From the very beginning of all time the notion of knowledge has vexed man. Already the writers of the Bible had trouble with putting knowledge in its right place and defining it knowledgeably. 'A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength,' according to the Proverbs (24:5) which, however, are contradicted by Ecclesiastes (1:18): 'He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.' Indeed, the Socratic irony of scio nihil scire indicates that to know is as limitless as it is tenuous. 'Only when we know little do we know anything; doubt grows with knowledge,' Goethe elucidated. At the very end, if the man of erudition does not become enlightened enough to wed knowledge to wisdom, he may succeed superficially and even be 'doctorated' honoris causa several times without being able to 'utter wisdom from the central deep, / And, listening to the inner flow of things, / Speak to the age out of Eternity,' as James Russell Lowell wrote. More succinctly, as Alfred Lord Tennyson wrote in Locksley Hall: 'Knowledge comes, but Wisdom lingers.'

"Acquired knowledge is no guarantee against mediocrity. It should only be a crutch in helping us to promote our own thoughts. Of course, in acquiring knowledge we cannot avoid living on borrowed ideas from time to time, but we must learn to force our own rhythm upon any borrowed wing of wisdom. Lessing believed that he may have read too much for his own good. But it seems better to rely on a solid frame of reference before taking off on a flight of one's own imagination, especially if we are not quite certain of the strength and elasticity of our wings.

"It is said that we can learn from books or from experiences. Experiences are adventures in living of which one may read in books. Experiencing books becomes a second-hand adventure. 'To be true to oneself' is one of the best polished cliches. It only becomes meaningful if you have learned to grow and change while letting no one notice that you have remained true to yourself.

"The competitiveness of our social system is the most cruel taskmaster. The school is as unfair as life. Our speed-mad time gives us little chance to catch up with ourselves in order to find our real self. I cannot reiterate enough: Since our school systems omit the teaching of two of the most vital subjects, namely, 'A Philosophy of Living' and 'The Appreciation of the Real Life Values,' we are left without spiritual guidance and a non-material goal when thrown into the jungle of existence. Of what avail is the knowledge of higher mathematics if we do not master the simple algebra of living, if we fumble because we lack a viewpoint, if we stumble because we have no vision?"

As strange as it may sound, the process of becoming human is a question of spiritual exercise, it is something that can be learned. But no elevator leads up to the highest stop, to the point of being human. Everyone must use his or her own staircase. Going up in the elevator we would deprive ourselves of the possible experiences waiting for us at each turn of the staircase; we might never be surprised by those little joys which can engender tremendous strength, or we may never learn how to overcome angst at any next turn. While walking up, we may find it important to stop from time to time in order to look inward a little. We must also turn around to wonder. It will enable us to read between the lines (an ability no school teaches us) and to see the things between the things (where appearances will fall apart to show the truth behind the many truths). While walking up, we must try to carry our dreams to the edge of reality in order to test them and to bring them as close to fulfillment as possible.

Life is like a violin solo which we play in public while practicing on our instrument. Therefore, we cannot live long enough to learn from our mistakes. This should make the preciousness of time more clear to us. And how we treat it! If we had to account for what we do to time, for how we rob and rape her day in and day out, we would have to be sentenced to life imprisonment for it. And many of us have to atone for it all our lives without being aware of it. Like Bernard Berenson I also would often like
to stand at a street corner with my hat in my hand and beg all passers-by only for one of their many wasted minutes. Certainly, time is the while, the space and season in and with which we grow.

If tomorrow the world were no longer to be, and we had a last chance to see what the creative genius and ingenuity, the faith and daring of man at all times and places over the last three thousand years have achieved, we would have to admit that it was a worthwhile experiment of the Creator to have us thrown out of Paradise. True, we may never regain it. Too much wrong and evil have been done. We built and destroyed what we did in order to rebuild it. But when it is all added up, the miracle of humankind—created in the image of God—has been honored by humanity with its own acts of creative magic.

Every day we face midnight and the uncertainty of a tomorrow. In these frightful seconds when I see in the dark the hands united on my clock light up, I flee into private prayers and try to account for some last lost thoughts. The most difficult thing in life seems to be getting along with oneself. We enter the world like actors, already made-up for our role, even though the play is not yet written. We prepare ourselves for the next scenes not knowing whether the costumes will fit us, not knowing the lines we will be called upon to say, not knowing our properties. Like magicians without wands we gesture and motion, we plead with our partners, and like improvisators we search behind our masks for the right extemporized word.

I believe in man, because I can come close to him, even if he speaks another tongue, since he can weep my tears and laugh my laugh. I can meet her with open arms in the hope that she will understand my gesture and intention. But I am afraid of humankind, doubt it and despair about it because, as part of the masses, humans lose God’s face. The crack of a whip, the cajoling voice of a demagogue, can make one put on the mask of the mob.

Am I myself? Will I hang on to life with that desperate glee in my eyes as if I finally wanted to follow up on so many decade-old New Year’s resolutions? To unmask all fallacies, while enjoying them, to disapprove of my mistakes, but to defend to the death my right to be wrong; and never to admit that anything can harm me, on the contrary, to make good use of any adverse experiences.

With each embrace of the two hands on my clock I am aware of having made another step closer to the infinite finality. Does age surprise us, as Goethe said? Or do we have to burn ourselves alive and again in order to be reborn, as Cocteau thought? How much do we think and write about life, when, in reality, we mean death? To be old is admirable. To grow old is intolerable. But is the process of aging not an act of growing familiarity with death? It seems as if it all would happen gradually, when, in fact, it occurs in sudden leaps. Suddenly the light is being dimmed, and you grope for any ray of sun as though it were the last. Suddenly your outlook has changed, and you learn to see with different eyes. Suddenly you face the suddenness like meeting an old friend who you knew would wait for you.

I like to imagine that by then the earth will have become an electronic village in an artificial cosmologic assemblage. With true authority I will then feel charged to speak about God and the world, finally from my new standpoint I will also be able to do full justice to everything that is happening on earth.
The Baptistery
At the Chapel of the Resurrection

One floor below the Chapel's glass doors, resurrected lives enter the Church. This is no place for arid moralizing, drycleaning with pious abstractions—here a concrete fountain gushes life, a well of water flows for washing.

The spring bubbles from the center of a floor of smooth-washed stones polished by feet of pledge-bound sponsors, of parents together for a birthing, of pastors voicing names, signing a cross, of congregation surrounding with prayers.

The wounded candle, the empty cross, three weeping figs see cause for joy. Above the floor flare eight brass flames, higher still glows the halo of the sky.

Stairs scroll from the font, orbit full of human dreams, heaven's promises. Lights circle the steps to guide the feet, railings spiral to hold the hands.

Through a fabric window on the wall, we see past the Jordan, past a cleft Red Sea, to "The Days of Creation"—to primal separating of waters above, waters below.

Beyond the ring of fortress brick to the west, the campanile peals; beyond, to the east, the altar stands; beyond, to the encompassing Church of God; beyond, the circumference of grace.

This cylinder is God's sphere of work, this silo launches missiles of life.

Bernhard Hillila
Response to the Question

“What do you think of the First Law of Thermodynamics?”

(At a NEH Seminar on Clustering at California Lutheran University)

Maybe this refers to the magnetism between souls, as between my father and me. My father had lots of “strain energy.” I remember he strained to make our cow stop swishing her tail on his face as he milked her; finally, he picked up the milk stool and hit her in the head: all four of her feet spread out and she dropped like a rock. I was amazed. She got up, looking cowed, and my father finished milking her, her tail limp between her legs.

Maybe the energy is the same after it’s converted into something else. Maybe my father’s temper, which he walked around with all those years, was transformed to that Jersey cow, and maybe the raw, warm milk he squirted into the cats’ mouths as they mewed and mingled around the steaming bucket was the same energy that went into the braining of the cow. Maybe it was the same energy that he gave to me through his Father love on those cold December nights in southern Illinois when I watched him across the scarred linoleum kitchen as he ate the cold meat my mother took from the new ice box.

Maybe some kind of energy was passed in those days: I didn’t understand it then, nor do I now, anymore than I understand the First Law of Thermodynamics: still, after all these years of being an energy source myself, I can’t escape my father’s hard eyes, his hairy arm, and the swish-swish of the warm milk against the bucket.

If there’s a law at work here, it’s buried too deeply for me to articulate it. I can only marvel at those who do understand these things, while I must relive those farm days and nights when all the energy of the cosmos seemed centered on our forty acres, where my father waited in the dark and secret barn.

J. T. Ledbetter
Limbaugh and Lutherans

Walt Stromer

Since Rush Limbaugh has 15 million listeners in a week, and there are only 8 million Lutherans, it is appropriate to put him first. Also, because Rush says, "I am it, the epitome of morality and truth," and Lutherans are encouraged to be meek and modest, they ought to be listed last. If Limbaugh's audience is a random sample of the people, then about 450,000 Lutherans listen to him each week. Do they know what they are hearing?

Recently Rush expressed emphatic approval of Ted Koppel's comment, "What Moses brought down from Mt. Sinai was not ten suggestions but the Ten Commandments, which are relevant for all time."

I think he would be uncomfortable with a liturgy that includes, "I, a poor, miserable sinner," or with a Bible that mentions smiles and laughter 33 times, and sadness and weeping 149 times.

He is not an absolute egotist. Once he said, "I'm just an average schlub who happened to step in the right puddle. I'm just a regular guy." Score—1.

2. Do not misuse the name of God. His public language is mild, with an occasional "gosh" or "hell." "When they start to persecute us, we lift our eyes skyward and thank the Lord for our enemies." Is that sincere worship or merely audience appeal? With caution, an 8.

3. Remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy. Some may be glad he has not yet invaded Sunday, while some of his fans would gladly have him replace the usual Sunday fare. His replacement in April was Col. Oliver North whose patriotism and Protestant fundamentalism should not be questioned. Rush quotes scientists who say you can get 12 different bacteria from a communion cup. His comment, "This is just another poke at a fine tradition that has made America great." Which tradition?—wine, grape juice, or punch? Thomas Jefferson, who opposed Bible reading in school, was a deist, not much given to communing. For Rush's lack of enthusiastic support of the Sabbath, and for distorting our tradition, on this one a middling 6.

4. Honor your father and mother, and honor, cherish and obey those in authority. Rush casually mentions his lawyer parents, but he is strong on family values, especially in South Los Angeles. He talks about the "instincts of love in the parent-child relationship," but skips over the "instinct" to abandon, beat, or torture children.

How do you get respect for parents? "I think people should be pushed instead of coddled, driven instead of understood." As for high school, "Don't let the inmates run the asylum."

Honoring, cherishing, and obeying those in authority presents problems for Rush. He begins the program, "Day 72, America held hostage by the Clinton administration, the raw deal." Of Clinton and Perot he said, "They are both liars."

As for other authorities like scientists, "Who needs them? All we need is common sense." Common sense declared the world flat and the sun spinning around it, for thousands of years. "Ozone depletion? It has not happened!" So sayeth the prophet Rush. For ambiguity on honor and for not cherishing—a 4.

5. You shall not murder and this means you shall not harm your neigh-

Walt Stromer is retired from teaching speech at Cornell College in Iowa. He has been published in Lutheran Digest, Lutheran Witness, and America.

September 1993
bor in his body but support him in every physical need. Rush does not advocate killing, he only encourages strong dislike and disgust. If that leads to action, that is not his fault, is it? “Do-gooder liberals are compassionate fascists.” “The animal rights activists want to exterminate the human race.” “The NAALCP (L=Liberal), the Urban League, and Jesse Jackson want us to throw out our legal system.” “The feminists, the radical feminists are outraged because they cannot get a man.”

Is Limbaugh’s anger real or is it part of the show? I am here reminded of Martin Luther’s comment about himself, “Anger freshens all my blood, it sharpens my mind, it drives away temptation.” Maybe pseudo-anger can do the same and increase ratings.

Help a neighbor in physical need? “We do not need to spend another penny in South Los Angeles. Their problem is not poverty, but a poverty of values.” “What people need is the gumption to get off their duff and move to another town where there are jobs.” “We should tax the poor because they are the only group not giving anything back to society.” “It’s a dog eat dog world. It is, and it ought to be, despite those who think we should love one another.” For fomenting anger and for lack of sympathy—a 3.

6. You shall not commit adultery but keep yourself sexually pure and decent. If this celebrity were as promiscuous as some public figures, we would have heard. He wants wayward fathers who have abandoned children to return and take responsibility. Most of us would agree, but we would not restrict it to the poor or the blacks. At least adultery is not as important as liberalism. Score—8.

7. You shall not steal, and you should help your neighbor improve and protect his possessions and income. Rush is most concerned that the government will steal from the rich and give to the poor.

He offers to help his neighbor by advertising, in his own voice, a vocabulary-building course, which will lead to success and wealth. Is this stealing, or selling, or just free enterprise (than which there is no higher good)? Since unrestricted competition has sometimes led to stealing, give him a cautionary 8.

8. Do not give false testimony, do not tell lies, slander, or hurt your neighbor’s reputation. “Nincompoop leftist sissies are taking over our schools.” “Hillary Clinton actually talks to Eleanor Roosevelt!” “Reporters don’t tell the truth; the New York Times covers up; TV cannot be trusted.” Only the great “I am” is deserving of a kind word. Score—2.

9. Do not covet your neighbor’s house. When your earnings are in 7 figures, you don’t have to covet, you can just buy it. He may covet more listeners and viewers and sponsors and the resulting money, but that is the right and duty of every red-blooded American who doesn’t want to be left in limbo. Lose 2 points for just the slightest hint of greed, leaves him with 8.

10. Coveting wives, servants, and such. Rush says as a simple statement of fact, “Women are attracted to me.” What is he supposed to do, beat them off with a stick? He has had 2 wives and seems not to lack for companionship.

As for encouraging servants to stay and do their duty, he might suggest they buy his vocabulary-builder, get off their duff and move to another town, develop their potential and make a million dollars. Who can oppose that? Just don’t envy the rich; get going and make your own bundle. With no envy or malice, give him 9.

That adds up to 57, out of a possible 100. You’ll have to try harder, Rush, or make up a new set of commandments.
Hail and Farewell

I quivered with shock that day
I talked with Angel Gabriel.
The word I heard was more than I
could yet conceive—I was to be
a phrase in the thought of God?
Not feeling "blessed" or "favored,"
I trembled, deeply troubled.
Still I did dare to say I would
will the will of God:
"This is my body given for You."

Blessed with the fulness of promise,
seeded with heaven's expectation,
I received much more than I gave.
I sang to the child who was coming:
"There is room for you in the inn
of my womb; there is rest for you
as you nurse at my breast:
this is my body given for you."

After my fears through His last years,
my heart at last knows peace.
After my tears at the cross and tomb,
I know the balm of lasting calm
from the words He came to say:
"This is my body given for you."

Bernhard Hillila
Saints Over 65

Karl Lutze

When an editor requests the preparation of an article, it’s appropriate to ask three questions: “About what?” “How long?” and “How soon?” When Gail Eifrig called me, her answer to question one was so disarming that I forgot to ask the next two. She simply said, “Write about anything you wish.” So this is what I wish.

Today is Fritz Mohr’s birthday. We met when we were four years old and showed up to get cleared for pursuing our education in Miss Hinsky’s kindergarten. We’d both been confined under quarantine for scarlet fever. We passed. Launching pad for a friendship. I don’t suppose there was a day in my life until 14 that we didn’t spend at least a part of together. At that tender age I went off to prep school — and on weekends-at-home, as much as I loved my family, I could hardly wait till I could get over to be with Fritz.

We corresponded regularly — about once every two years. And I remember his entering the service back in ’38 or so and the letter he wrote reporting on his experiences as he headed for Fort Lee, Virginia. The form he was given posed the question, “What would you like to be in the Army?” And he penciled in the word, “general.” Unable to appreciate warm humor, the military people probably passed along their assessment of him wherever he carried his files. I think his highest rank attained was private first class. Had they asked me, I would have advised them that he’d have made a first class general.

Another letter from him demonstrated his leadership. His outfit was shipped off to the region of the Kodiak bears in Alaska. Some of his peers were with him as they came to a stream stacked bank-to-bank with glittering trout making their way to the spawning site. Fritz made the off hand observation, “There are so many of them you could walk across the other side and not get wet. So without giving it another thought one of the fellows stepped out onto the mass of fish — and of course got very wet. But the event surely showed that to be a leader all you have to have is the appropriate kind of followers.

I’ll call him tomorrow. We get updated on each other more completely with a phone call than with a letter.

Young people can hardly wait till they reach 21 when they arrive at “maturity” and all the rights and privileges thereunto appertaining—like voting, buying beer. The limitations of youth at last are behind them. Well, most of the limitations are.

And then comes the fearful eve of becoming thirty, and the realization that even though that doesn’t put one “over the hill,” the options of the earlier years are limited. Choice of career, possibly; choice of life mate, possibly; lots of dream bubbles burst.

But becoming forty can be even more sobering with its limitations (and double so if there are offspring to fill out the picture: limitations on travel, entertainment, time, and financial resources.)

At fifty, one realizes that reaching the previous benchmarks were really a piece of cake (with fewer candles and more wind capacity to blow them out). We like to call it middle age—with the absurd assumption that we’ll live to be 100. New limitations set in: the graying or balding process, fewer and fewer sound teeth (that’s what may have inspired Henry Lyte to write those sobering lines, “Change and decay in all around I see!”) and more and more root canals (remember, those are embalmed teeth!) but such should take heart, most persons get past 50 and somehow or other survive.

The really significant date is birthday 65. Even before it arrives one becomes target of a massive conspiracy which in effect spells out this message: “You are really getting old.” Complicated forms from government offices about Social Security and Medicare, frightening warnings from health insurance companies, persu-
I confess to being greedy. In thirty-two years of teaching there've been more students than I could hope to list by name who have made their way in and out of the classrooms. But certain ones I remember well, and with fondness. And I wish I could call all of them to talk with them and find out what and how they're doing — and I'd like to do that often.

And when I reflect upon my days as parish pastor, the names and faces of so many more loom up before me. Some of the especially dear are dead.

But those who still live on—the ones who shared their hearts, the ones with whom we laughed and wept, I long to see and be with again. How we hated to leave them 35 years ago! How I'd like to be close to them still!

And when I reflect upon my travels, the workshops, the conferences and meetings and the people that I came to know and care for—how I wish that they'd all live next door (It would be a heavily populated neighborhood).

And there are people who are living near me now—colleagues and fellow-church members, and community people and neighbors whose company I enjoy and find enriching, and there never even seems enough time to be with them.

People who have studied the facts and dynamics of friendship tell us we can only really have one or two good friends at a time. And maybe I can name one. That's Esther of course; and my sons, and their wives. And then another comes to mind—a really special one; and then another; and still another—and there are so many many who are really dear to me.

So I reach for the phone or drop a line or try to arrange a visit when my travels take me near to where they are. Best part of my schedule. And I'm a very happy person and feel good all over when one of them gives a call or drops a note or stops by to say "we've been thinking about you!"

Blest ties—people I'll always love but never get enough of.
To One In Love

Anger? What is that? What sounds does it make when you let it out? Set it to the light of love and see how it disappears! See now, the vapors of earth's colors showing through, straight and clean to your eyes that before were clouded by pride. Anger? It cannot stay where love rules the heart: then the mind, that shapeless thing that ticks and bloats as an island unto itself, must give way and follow the heart's flame that draws all goodness into the body that burns with fever. There is no one who does not give pain. Life is a drawing out of pain, much like bees suck out nectar, drawn by the fiery blooms into the vortex of beauty, drowning in pain that releases, then, the innermost drives and directions of its primal being. So are we all. To see the chalice there beneath the trailing flowers, to touch another heart is pain, terrible and beautiful. So it has always been. Expect nothing else. Hope for nothing else. Want nothing else. And you will feel pain. And you will be fulfilled.

J.T. Ledbetter

This is a remarkable book in both message and style. Simplistically conceived, translation consists of changing words of a source language into a translated language. However, such word-for-word inter-linear translation theory has been superseded by sense-for-sense translation theory in which the original text is analyzed, mentally transferred from one language to another, then resurrected into an acceptable form of the translated language.

In *The Translator's Turn*, Douglas Robinson is straightforward in expressing his dissatisfaction with such current translation theory: "I want to offer an alternative paradigm for the study of translation—one that is not mentalist but explicitly and completely physicalist."

It is disappointing that the alternatives are stated as seemingly exclusive choices. However, it becomes clear that by "physicalist" Robinson does not mean the elimination of mind, but rather, subsuming "mind" as one important function of the body. He claims that instead of translation theory as cognitive process reduced either to abstract principles or mysterious intuitions, "a somatics of translation will allow us to explore the feedback system between 'mind' and 'body,' intellection and emotion, analysis and gut-level certainty, cerebral and visceral response." Since his intent is not to eliminate "mind" but to counter "mentalism" and to wage war on dualism, it would seem that the case could better be made for a directly holistic approach, a synthesis of reason and feeling rather than a choice between thesis and antithesis. However, the fresh approach is thought-provoking and helpful to anyone engaged in translation.

Robinson challenges the translator to "break the three seals," which have sealed us into thinking (1) that we are to ignore somatic responses, (2) that if we do have somatic responses, they are unique to each individual, and (3) that we have been programmed to respond as robots. The translator is encouraged to attend to natural responses, renderings which "feel" right; to recognize that one's somatic responses are in fact shared by others; and to smash through "the rotten floor of ideosomatic programming to the truly idiosomatic impulses" long suppressed.

The author explores the Augustinian, Lutheran and Romantic paradigms, leading the reader through the major shifts in the history of translation theory: "the changes that Luther and the other Reformers brought to medieval thinking about translation, and then the changes that Goethe and the other romantics brought to orthodox Catholic and Protestant thinking about translation." Building on Martin Buber and Mikhail Bakhtin, he then makes the case for a third, "dialogical," paradigm.

It is evident that Robinson's approach to the history of translation theory is grounded in theology and church history. That is not surprising, in light of the importance placed on the translation of Scriptures to the Greek of the Seventy, the Latin of Jerome, the German of Luther, the English of the King James, and many subsequent revisions.

The author views translation as doing—as drama—rather than as abstract correspondence of texts; as rhetorical turning rather than as structural bridging. He encourages guilt-ridden, never-fully-achieving translators not to become fixated on one theoretically perfect translation goal, but to explore the legitimate diversity available. In a very stimulating way, the second half of the book explores the translator's "turns" as "tropes" ("active modeling patterns for the interpretive shaping" of both the original text and the translation) and "versions" ("active modeling patterns for the shaping of purpose" as related to the receiver of the translation). Robinson discusses the "ethics of translation," because there is always concern that the translator not become traitor. He believes faithful translation is user-friendly language involving poetry and creativity.

While it deals with difficult concepts, Robinson's book lacks the dryness usually associated with works in this genre. There is a sense of challenging personal dialogue with the author, and flashes of humor abound.
This is the linguist who, with Ilkka Rekiaho, produced the first Finnish-English-Finnish dictionary rendered throughout in American English and illustrated with much humor in its examples.

The Translator’s Turn is an important work in the field of translation theory; it is also a valuable resource for translators and teachers of foreign languages.

Bernhard Hillila


A great text always bears reading, and few are greater than Augustine’s Confessions. Margaret Miles, who had written on Augustine before, went with friends for a month to the Greek island of Paros to—among other pleasures—read the Confessions again. The result is this very pleasurable little book, though not anything quite as stunning as the dust jacket promises. The blurbs by Harvey Cox must set some kind of record: “To say that Margaret Miles’ New Reading of Augustine’s Confessions is ‘better than the original’ might seem an overstatement, but only just.” Then too, a nicely straightforward and unpretentious book is marred somewhat by Miles’ need to show that she has the lingo of “privileging,” “problematizing,” and “subverting.” But perhaps she expects us to be “obedient readers,” as, she says, she once was of Augustine’s life—the unnamed woman who made them. It turns out, however, such “co-authorship” seems to mean simply an intense, energetic engrossing engagement with the text, in the course of which “the reader’s life could be decidedly altered.” Augustine’s two strategies for achieving this are “indeterminacy of address” and “unresolved contradiction.” And although Miles tends to use “contradiction” where “tension” or “puzzle” would do, she succeeds here in opening up briefly some of the issues that truly bothered Augustine on his way toward God (e.g., puzzles having to do with the nature and relationship of God and world).

Chapter three treats the Confessions as an erotic text, taking up some of the questions that have most intrigued interpreters. At her worst, Miles can take the obvious and dress it up in the language of theory, as if such language could disclose something we had not seen. Thus, having discussed the two most important women in Augustine’s life—the unnamed woman who was his concubine and mother of his son, and his own mother Monica—and having demonstrated that they are present more as objects in Augustine’s story than as subjects in their own right, Miles writes: “A gendered reading of the Confessions reveals that it contains no depictions of women who, like Augustine, suffer and struggle to define and achieve their own goals.” I suspect that countless readers who did not think of themselves as engaging in anything so ambitious as a “gendered reading” have noticed this in their reading of the Confessions. At her best, however, Miles pays careful attention to Augustine’s metaphors and—in her discussion of his understanding or continence—teases out a good bit of insight into Augustine’s understanding of conversion. It is, of course, not new to note that Augustine uses metaphors reflecting male sexuality to make theological points; nevertheless, Miles is at her most effective here.

Finally, in Chapter Four, Miles takes up a question that has puzzled many readers: what to do with books 11-13, which seem so different from the first ten books and, to most readers, less interesting as well. In these last books Augustine probes the nature of time and of the self, and he engages in rather detailed interpretation of the Genesis story of creation. What, many readers have asked, are such musings doing in the story of a life? Indeed, interpreters have even been drawn to versions of the hypothesis that Augustine is simply “clearing his desk,” seizing the opportunity to answer queries that have been directed at him. Thus, John O’Meara wrote: “He combines all these parts rather awkwardly, merely placing them in succession one after the other. The result is a badly composed book.”

Miles does better. She reads Augustine as providing, in these last books, a continuation of his life story, however unlikely such a reading might seem at first. For, having been converted, Augustine is now priest and bishop, responsible for serving the people of God. And in his understanding of the creation offered here, Augustine provides a picture of order in which all created things are properly placed and ordered toward the God who made them. It turns out, however, that such an ordered world is not what Miles wants—or perhaps we should say, not what she finds pleasurable, since Augustine knew that what we find pleasurable at any moment may not be what our heart, when it is truly whole, wants.

Miles finds in these last books of the Confessions a new element of condescension, a didacticism, a form that does not invite the reader into co-authorship. No real people appear any longer, she says; instead, Augustine describes the order of cre-
Bernhard Hillila is Emeritus Professor of Education at VU, a poet, a sauna enthusiast and a former slack-rope walker.

Gilbert Meilaender teaches in the Department of Philosophy at Oberlin College.

Robert Bruce Mullin is Associate Professor of Religion at North Carolina State University. He has published a number of works in nineteenth-century religious history, including *Episcopal Vision/American Reality: High Church Theology and Social Thought in Evangelical America*.

Christopher Hodgkins teaches in the Department of English at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Kenneth Konyndyk is a member of the Department of Philosophy at Calvin College, and currently visiting senior fellow at the Center for the Philosophy of Religion at Notre Dame.

David Faber teaches at Tabor College, Kansas.

---

Bernard Hillila is Emeritus Professor of Education at VU, a poet, a sauna enthusiast and a former slack-rope walker.

Gilbert Meilaender teaches in the Department of Philosophy at Oberlin College.

Robert Bruce Mullin is Associate Professor of Religion at North Carolina State University. He has published a number of works in nineteenth-century religious history, including *Episcopal Vision/American Reality: High Church Theology and Social Thought in Evangelical America*.

Christopher Hodgkins teaches in the Department of English at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Kenneth Konyndyk is a member of the Department of Philosophy at Calvin College, and currently visiting senior fellow at the Center for the Philosophy of Religion at Notre Dame.

David Faber teaches at Tabor College, Kansas.

---

mately interesting individuals—who were not ordered toward God. This misses the deepest truth of the last books of the *Confessions*. Augustine turns to an interpretation of creation only after he has come to see that he cannot in fact know himself, that he—and, by implication, the rest of us—cannot attain the vantage point from which to see himself whole and entire. Only God can plumb the depths of Augustine’s identity. Miles laments the loss of people who have no place, people who exhibit a “delightful and confusing diversity, perversity, motility, unpredictability”—in short, what she calls “real people.”

They are not, I think, quite as interesting as Miles supposes—or as they sometimes suppose themselves to be. For they do not know who they are and cannot rightly identify themselves unless they learn to forget themselves, to see themselves as Augustine’s fellow pilgrims on the way toward God. The only alternative, ultimately, is the gathering of narcissists called Hell. But for those who learn the truth Augustine thought he had learned and are set free from constant concern for their own identity, the whole creation becomes an object for wonder and speculation—as it did for Augustine in the last books of the *Confessions*. If he did manage—and he did not—to appreciate every good pleasure as it truly deserves, he accurately pointed the way: “We see the things you have made, because they are, and they are, because you see them.”

---


John Henry Newman a failure? The man who is honored by a host of competing groups: Anglo-Catholics, Roman Catholics of various theological persuasions, students of Victorian literature, and all who admire a great soul? Yes, argues Robert Pattison. All of these groups misread the true essence of Newman, which was a dogmatic opposition to liberalism. To demonstrate this he has written *The Great Dissent*.

The liberal principle, according to Pattison, is fundamentally the denial of objective truth. It is a relativizing and subjective principle that can be seen everywhere from fourth century Alexandria to modern literary deconstructionism and encompasses both logical positivism and moral relativism. Although liberalism in our own day may seem like a pale shadow, it was against this principle that Newman fought. According to Pattison, Newman held 1) that some abstract ideas are correlated with objective reality, 2) that through instinct and reflection the mind can distinguish true ideas and false ideas, 3) that with the assistance of reason the mind can state truth, and 4) human life can and should be understood by examining ideas and beliefs. As Pattison argues, Newman’s career can be understood as a defense of his epistemological principles against all challengers. Like a nineteenth-century Allan Bloom, Newman warred against the legions of relativizers.

To his credit Pattison has reminded us of many parts of the Newman corpus we often overlook. In particular he is very persuasive of discussing Newman’s lifelong antipathy to the Arians of the fourth century, and his great battle with R. D. Hampden, the liberal theologian appointed as professor at Oxford in 1836. H. Richard Niebuhr always said that the choice of a dissertation topic was a moral act since it would shape one’s entire subsequent intellectual life. In Pattison’s picture of Newman this was clearly the case. Arius’ view that dogma was not transcendent but historically conditioned was seen by Newman as the wellspring of modern heresy, and his anti-Arian writings shaped much of his later thought. Likewise in Pattison’s account the conflict with Hampden is raised from an incident of Oxford academic politics to a clash of two competing epistemological visions.

There is much to be praised in Pattison’s Newman, and his discussion
of a number of works (particularly the Apologia, which he interprets as an anti-romantic writing) is provocative. Yet for all of this the reader is still left unconvinced. Harold Bloom, the deconstructionist literary critic, has noted that all good readings are misreadings (i.e., they are products more of the critic's genius than the author's intent). Is this the case here? Would Newman recognize himself in this portrait, let alone would other students of Newman, from F. L. Cross to Sheridan Gilley, recognize their subject? And what of the works of Newman which do not so easily fit into this picture? The observant reader cannot help but notice that Pattison is on firmer ground with Newman's Anglican writings than he is with such later writings as the Idea of the University.

Pattison has given us an intelligent and passionate discourse on the bankruptcy of liberalism as an epistemological philosophy. Whether he has given us a full portrait of John Henry Newman still remains the question.

Robert Bruce Mullin


I have always suspected that literary theory is theology by other means. Until not long ago, most Western exegetical energies were focused on the Bible; now, even though scripture and its authority are in eclipse, the energies of even the most secular literary critics nevertheless rise toward the metaphysical — to inevitable questions of creation, power, knowledge, presence, absence, justice, redemption, and desire. Most contemporary critics may indeed be triumphantly post-Christian; yet they have gone after other gods, rather than no gods at all. Like Caliban, they seek freedom, but under many new masters. It is to this multiplicity in the current critical pantheon that Clarence Walhout, Leland Ryken, and their fellow contributors address themselves.

Their book is both commendably modest in its claims and bracingly ambitious in its scope. It does not propose to offer a fully developed Christian literary theory; yet its eleven essays (along with editorial introduction and afterword) do appraise, one by one, all of the current critical movements — from formalism to feminism to deconstruction to new historicism. The essays present themselves to "teachers and students who are interested in but somewhat baffled or intimidated by the complexity of contemporary criticism," and, by and large, the authors succeed admirably in explaining each critical approach in accessible terms. (As a veteran of numerous graduate theory seminars during the heyday of deconstruction and Marxism, I can testify that the generally clear writing in this collection tends to demonstrate that a river can rise higher than its source.) Furthermore, all of the essays attempt, and most deliver, a balanced Christian response to each movement, appreciating where possible, correcting where necessary, and chuckling where unavoidable.

Thus, as a whole, Contemporary Literary Theory presents an important advance in Christian scholarship, and will be most useful for its intended readers. It is obviously — yet not bellicerently — in the Reformed tradition; Calvinist concern for preserving the baby while disposing of the bath is evident throughout, though the perceived proportions of baby and bath vary from writer to writer and from subject to subject. (Wet babies are w sorrisomely slick creatures.) The contributors are all qualified, many eminently so, as scholar-teachers, and many belong to a rising generation of Christian literary critics who are already making themselves known beyond the pale of the Christian College Coalition. Walhout, of Calvin College, introduces the volume and Ryken, of Wheaton College, provides the afterword. Of the ten contributors, only three hail from a school other than Calvin or Wheaton. One could wish for a broader representation of academic institutions, but affirmative action is less important than quality, and there is quality here.

After Walhout’s general introduction come Ryken’s two cheers for formalism, reminding us that the old "New Criticism" and its Archetypal relatives, while out of fashion as theory, still provide the lingua franca of the literature classroom, for the very good reason that "they rescue literature from being the stepchild of the other disciplines." While acknowledging that extreme formalism wrongly abstracts literary works from the author’s and reader’s worlds, Ryken nevertheless demonstrates that at its best, formalism is deeply concerned with the imitation of human experience, and therefore always timely. James Vanden Bosch’s "Moral Criticism: Problems and Prospects" examines a once-dominant approach which, in Wayne Booth’s words, "has fallen on hard times" — partly because of intellectuals' increasing aversion to moral absolutes, partly because of clumsy, reductionist practice by moral critics themselves. (Nearly every contributor of this book helpfully distinguishes between simplistic and sophisticated applications of a critical approach.) Nevertheless, Vanden Bosch claims, "sooner or later, even the purest of critics lapse into moral criticism"; indeed, currently fashionable movements such as feminism and Marxism are "ethical" in focusing on how literature affects real human behavior. I only wish that Vanden Bosch had allotted less space to summarizing varieties of moral criticism and more to developing this promising thesis.

In the following essay, Walhout finds common ground with Marxist attacks on the objectivity of reason and interpretation, but points to Marxism’s self-contradiction in claiming to have discovered a truly objective stance from which to judge. Only the Christian, says Walhout, is able to acknowledge the circularity of thought without being consumed by it, because Christians do not claim to predicate all on the basis of material experience. Next, Alan Jacobs points to the paradoxical status of psychological criti-
critic: Freudianism pervades Marxist, feminist, and deconstructionist thinking, yet psychological “character studies” are out of fashion in the age of theory. Jacobs looks back beyond Freud to Coleridge as a model (albeit flawed) of Christian psychological criticism, and calls for a post-materialist rediscovery of the mind as an authentic “archaeolog[y] of the self.” In the next essay, Michael Vander Weele speaks appreciatively of reader-response theories which, he says, are prefigured to some extent in the thought of Augustine, Dante, and Donne, all of whom express an interest in how the hearer shapes the message to his own particular interests. While cautioning against subjectivist excesses, Vander Weele notes that reader-response approaches are of great pedagogical use because they legitimize a variety of in-class responses as mutually-enriching rather than mutually-exclusive.

Roger Lundin’s discussion of hermeneutics begins by noting that its major practitioners—Martin Heidegger, Paul Ricoeur, and Hans-Georg Gadamer—all came to their interpretative methods out of particular confessional Christian traditions, and at first used these methods to interpret the Bible. However, Lundin acknowledges, each man moved beyond the particular insights of his tradition “to make more general statements about the practice of interpretation.” Thus the question for the Christian “hermeneut”: how to engage or use an interpretative approach which may lead away from specifically Christian belief? Lundin suggests that hermeneutic approaches are salutary to Christian (and other) readers when they make us aware of how all interpretative systems (even the most anti-traditional) bear a great debt to our cultural and linguistic past. However, Lundin cautions that contemporary hermeneuticians tend to be obscurantist towards the metaphysical—because they begin from the self as source of truth, they rule out a priori any wisdom revealed by a God above and outside the self. In Eddington’s words, “Whatever my net does not catch is not fish.”

Jacobs’s second piece, on deconstruction, is the most lively and entertaining of the collection—an appropriate antidote to a movement which, he says, at first seems shockingly different “but in the long run is boring.” Deconstructionists’ attention to textual ambiguity is of course valuable, says Jacobs, but he exposes their resulting nihilism as the sour grapes of disappointed hubris: they “often seem to imagine that if language lacks an absolute rational justification... then the only alternative is the eternal play of externally undecipherable differences.” This game is joyless and deadly—the text is an enemy, “with whom I am in a kill-or-be-killed relationship”—and gaming becomes an imprisonment, finally reminding Jacobs of Miss Havisham’s setting Pip and Estella before her with a pack of cards, insisting that they play. William J. Vande Kipple’s essay on a Christian theory of language provides a fine compliment to both Lundin’s and Jacob’s work; he argues that the failure of modern linguists, after great effort, to account convincingly for language in materialist-terms points to its being what Christians have always claimed: a special mark of God’s image. The limits of language are the limits of the creature; the wonderful utility of language is the handiwork of its Creator, who is still developing the gift in us by ordinary social and cultural means.

Susan Van Zanten Gallagher gives us a fine taxonomy of recent critical “feminisms” —“images of women criticism,” “gynocentrism,” “deconstructive feminism,” and “feminist social reconstruction”—while noting their common theme as “a chorus of ethical voices.” She is at her most fascinating when discussing the parallels between Christian and feminist criticism: both movements share a distrust of supposedly “value-free” interpretative methods and instead treat art as if it really does something to us and to the world; and both struggle intermittently to balance conceptual and ideological demands with respect for the integrity of texts as texts. Of all the essays in this collection, Gallagher’s is the most warmly sympathetic to its subject; her criticisms of the feminist movement are given, as it were, from within, leaving one to wonder how true feminists and true Christians could ever disagree.

John D. Cox’s examination of the “New Historicism” yields the most penetrating insight that I have read on the subject. After defining what is “new” in the movement, Cox praises new historicists for revealing how literary works are “embedded” in their historical circumstances, but faults them for “a failure of historical imagination”—their practically dogmatic refusal to see these works as reflecting a moral order outside of mere historical contingency. Thus, while he notes the fissures developing between the movement and Marxism, he finds new historicist obsession with “power relations” to be ultimately as reductive as Marxism itself. Though he believes that historically and politically naive evangelicals have a great deal to learn from new historicist approaches, he prophesies—I think rightly—that these approaches will be used less and less brilliantly as they gain wider application.

Mark Walhout’s approach to the “age of Theory” (about 1965 to the present) instructively traces the development of “theory” as a self-conscious sub-discipline, and the reactions to that development. Then, in suggesting an agenda for Christian theorists, Walhout relies heavily on Nicholas Wolterstorff’s model of the development of Christian institutions of higher learning, and shares in the strengths of that model. Wolhout, like Wolterstorff, is right to recommend that Christian critics, having passed from being pietistic adversaries to appreciative disseminators of “literary culture,” should resume a more mature adversarial role, now intent not on isolation from, but on transformation of the world. However, Walhout’s prescriptions for “Stage Three” are left largely to the imagination; and since the means to Wolterstorff’s hoped-for “shalom” are frequently indistinguishable from the academic left-liberal program, one fears that “Stage Three”
Christian literary critics of the present and future will merely recapitulate the often fruitless debates and divisions of the past decades in secular academics. No doubt the Christian Right is, in many ways, prone before the gods of consumer capitalism and andro-centric Western canon; but these, by and large, are not the gods of the secular academy to whom we are called to speak. Their gods are, too frequently, our own.

Thus the necessity, and the great value, of this book, which provides much of the substance needed to give "Christian appraisal" real meaning. These critics have done us service by bringing this world’s current wisdom to face the word of God.

Christopher Hodgkins


From two Dominicans we appear to have books on the great doctor of their order, St. Thomas Aquinas. But that is not completely accurate. One of these authors, Matthew Fox, is no longer a Dominican, having been expelled from the order after (but not because) he published his book. Furthermore, his book is more about himself than about Aquinas, as its subtitle suggests. Both authors are attempting to bring Thomas into the twentieth century, and into the twenty-first century as well, Davies by explaining to us his thought in relation to current philosophy and theology, and Fox by showing how remarkably Aquinas has approximated Fox’s post-modern views on “creation spirituality.”

Davies’ book is aptly titled the thought, not just the philosophy, nor just the theology, of Thomas Aquinas. He makes little attempt to separate the two, and his book highlights their interaction. He affirms the theological vision of Thomas and the theological focus of his philosophy, trying to present Thomas more as Thomas presents himself. He differs, then, from Etienne Gilson and Frederick Copleston, who present Thomas as a philosopher and one especially to be recommended to Christians, and he also differs from Anthony Kenny, who presents Aquinas as a philosopher worthy of study quite independently of (and even in spite of) his Christianity and his theological concerns. Davies instead presents St. Thomas’s philosophical and theological thought in the way he himself develops it in the great Summa Theologiae.

The Summa provides the structure of Davies’ book, except that Davies heavily emphasizes the First Part with ten chapters and gives only three chapters each to the Second Part and the Third Part, which is way out of proportion to Aquinas’ allocation of space. Thus the book offers a lengthy treatment of God while it spends little time on morality. In fairness I should observe that emphases cannot be judged solely by looking at chapters headings and counting because Davies sometimes jumps ahead; for example, when treating providence, he brings in the related topics of predestination, miracles, prayer, and human free will. After a chapter on Aquinas’ life, Davies turns to the treatment of God in Part One, dealing with the proofs of God’s existence, via negativa, simplicity, naming; attributes and acts of God, the Trinity, and finally the Treatise on Man. The extensive Second Part he covers with chapters on the virtues, law and grace, and the theological virtues. The Third Part, left unfinished by Aquinas, is covered by chapters on the incarnation, the work of Christ, and the sacraments.

Davies’ book is relatively scholarly and certainly very much in touch with much recent philosophical and theological scholarship on the topics it treats. Anyone desiring a more detailed treatment of any topic he treats can usually find copious references to current literature in the footnotes. However, although he provides many references to current scholarly literature, Davies’ text sticks to explaining Thomas and is not sidetracked by the contemporary debates. At the same time, the book is relatively introductory, not presupposing acquaintance with Aquinas, his terminology or his Aristotelianism, and constantly seeking to motivate for contemporary readers the problems Thomas is considering as well as the solutions he gives. Besides providing useful references to current literature, Davies often helpfully places issues in context by describing the historical, philosophical, and theological background, and he frequently puts the reader in touch with Thomas’ sources.

Although Davies does not deal analytically with most topics but tries to survey Aquinas’ views, the book is not rapid or casual reading. There are numerous quotations from Thomas, issues are not minced, and Davies explains Thomas’ questions and his terminology without extensive oversimplification and without mere paraphrase. At over 375 pages, this is a book for people who are serious about studying St. Thomas. And the idea of getting Thomas whole is a good one. Philosophy is the handmaiden of theology for Thomas, and although this book does not emphasize that fact, it does help to make it clearer, especially to those who are acquainted only with Thomas’ philosophy.

Matthew Fox is considerably better known, or should I say more notorious, than Davies. Fox has acquired a reputation as a Catholic “new agher,” promoting something he calls “creation spirituality.” As he explains in his earlier Original Blessing (1983), there are four ways or paths to the sort of spirituality he is promoting, which he calls the Positive, the Negative, the Creative, and the Transformative. This is a spirituality (I use his word, although I doubt that he means exactly what I mean by it) that seeks to experience God in four ways: through “delight and joy,” through “darkness, letting go and suffering,” through creating (or as he says, through “co-creating”), and through “doing justice, celebration, and compassion in society.”

He calls his outlook “panentheistic,” associating it with Meister Eckhart among others, distancing himself from Sheer joy;
the "theistic" outlook that has predominated in the west. He regards traditional Fall/Redemption theology, associated with such retrograde thinkers as Augustine and Luther, as a mistaken paradigm that he is trying to overthrow in favor of his "creation spirituality." One might regard Thomas' theology as paradigmatically "traditional," and so part of Fox's motive in Sheer Joy is to show us that Thomas was a lot closer to being with the program than his usual stodgy, "left-brained" interpreters (including Davies, I presume) would lead us to believe.

Fox says in his introduction that he offers "an exploration of the spirituality implicit in all of Aquinas' works but also a hermeneutic applied to that work." What he means is that he put together Sheer Joy by taking his Four Paths as these are developed in Original Blessing and pouring Aquinas into this mold. By taking portions of Aquinas' texts and presenting them as answers to his questions (an interview format), Fox claims to "de-scholasticize" Aquinas and let his spirituality and mysticism emerge. The order of the topics treated in each of the paths roughly parallels that of Original Blessing. he picks up on such themes as development of spirituality, affirmation of creation, Christ as Lord of Creation, the goodness of sexuality, and the identification of Christ and Wisdom. These are good and important themes, but Fox doesn't tell us enough here about what he thinks spirituality is and how it differs from traditional spirituality. In trying to recapture the "Cosmic Christ," he wants to get rid of Christ the personal savior from sin, and in his affirmation of the goodness of sexuality, he appears to want to affirm any kind of sexual expression.

Despite Fox's enthusiasm for Thomas, he feels compelled to indicate in his introduction that Aquinas was behind the times on a few key matters, e.g., the place and role of women, sexual ethics (based on bad biology), his failure to believe that animals will also enjoy resurrection, and his belief that Jews are responsible for killing the Christ.

Fox seems to have difficulty acknowledging a Christ that is both a human and a divine person. However, Davies points out in his chapter on Aquinas' views about incarnation that Aquinas is thoroughly Calcedonian, affirming both the human nature and the divine nature of Christ in a way that is unique to him. Thus Fox's attempt to wrap himself in Aquinas' mantle fails at this crucial point. Likewise, Fox thinks the message of individual sin and individual redemption needs to be played down, if not gotten rid of. Davies, on the other hand, shows that the purpose of the incarnation for Aquinas was the removal of our sins, our individual sins.

Sheer Joy is neither a good introduction to Aquinas nor to Fox. Someone who does not know what Fox's "creation spirituality" is will not get a clear enough idea of it from this book. And although Fox presents copious quotations directly from Thomas Aquinas (making extensive use, by the way, of Aquinas' commentaries on Pseudo-Dionysius and on various Scriptural books), Thomas is being manipulated to serve Fox's purposes, and no systematic picture of Aquinas emerges. Thus the question of audience arises; students of Aquinas probably will not like this book, nor will philosophers and most theologians. I doubt this book will be attractive to any but Fox devotees who also have an interest in and respect for St. Thomas Aquinas. To discover Fox's theology (or "spirituality"), one would do better to read Original Blessing and to discover Thomas, one would do better to read Davies.

Kenneth Konyndyk


Thomas V. Morris is one of a large number of philosophers who are carefully and sympathetically applying the rigorous methods of analytic philosophy to issues in Christian theology. (For an interesting and thoughtful account of the recent revival of Christian philosophy see, T. D. Kennedy, "After Whoredom: Teaching Christian Philosophy," The Cresset, March, 1990.)

What distinguishes Morris from many of the other Christian philosophers is his ability to communicate complex ideas to an audience other than professional philosophers. Morris has distinguished himself as a teacher (he was the CASE professor of the year in Indiana in 1990) and as a scholar (he is the author or editor of at least seven books and numerous articles in philosophical journals). In Our Idea of God Morris undertakes to deepen our understanding of what we mean by the term "God."

Morris' book can be divided into three parts. The first part, consisting of chapters one and two, defends the discipline of philosophical theology and outlines the approach that Morris will follow in the rest of the book. Morris' approach is to defend and elaborate what he calls "perfect being theology" or "an Anselmian idea of God." In chapters three through eight, the second part of the book, Morris explores the implications of perfect being theology for our understanding the nature of God. The third part of the book consists in the final chapter and addresses two philosophically troubling Christian doctrines, the Incarnation and the Trinity.

The first two chapters are arguably the most important of the book and comprise the best section of the book. These chapters are important because they address three fundamental questions: 1. Can we humans understand the nature of God? 2. Why should we try to understand this nature of God? And 3. What concept of God do we use? If these questions do not receive adequate answers, then there is no point trying to elaborate a concept of God. The exercise would be purely academic. Fortunately, Morris is up to the task of answering these questions. He is at both his philosophical and his pedagogical best in the opening two chapters.

In the first chapter, Morris
addresses the first question by rejecting “theological pessimism”—the view that we simply cannot come to any genuine understanding of the nature of God because human concepts simply do not apply to God. He points out that all versions of theological pessimism suffer from an internal contradiction. To claim that God is unknowable is to claim to know something about God.

In the second chapter Morris continues his defense of the project of thinking philosophically about God. He addresses the second question mentioned earlier, namely, why should one engage in such an endeavor? The question of the existence of God and of human response to God is clearly an important one. If there is to be rational disagreement and discussion of God’s existence and of human response to God, then it is essential that there be agreement—at least to some degree—about what we mean by the term “God.” Furthermore, it is incumbent upon the person or community making a proposal to define what they mean by the important terms of the proposal. So if the Christian community is convinced that belief in God and in God Incarnate is important, and if the Christian community wishes to convince those outside of its community that belief in God and God Incarnate is important, then it is the responsibility of the Christian community to understand and be able to explain, what it means when it uses the term “God.”

One way to explicate the term “God” is to claim that one simply means by “God” what the Bible means by “God.” Unfortunately, the Bible does not answer all of the philosophical questions that might arise about God, for the Bible is not an almighty—it does not tell us precisely what it means by the term “almighty.” Nonetheless, Morris acknowledges, the Bible plays a very significant role for philosophical reflection about God. Any philosophical account of God must be fully consonant with the biblical picture of God. The ways in which human reason goes beyond biblical revelation must, at the very least, be consistent with biblical revelation, and, it is hoped, would be suggested by biblical revelation.

Morris concludes chapter two by arguing that the most fecund and biblically responsible concept of God is the concept of a perfect being, or in the famous words of St. Anselm of Canterbury “a being than which none greater can be conceived.” To think about a perfect being we need to think about what constitutes perfections in a being. The scholarship and the pedagogy of the first two chapters are masterful. The second chapter alone is worth the price of this book.

The second part of the book—chapters three through eight—turns to the development of perfect being theology—that is, it turns to a discussion of the perfections. This part of the book is less satisfying.

Each chapter in this section is devoted to a perfection. The method used is first to try to define the perfection. Then, after an understanding of the perfection has been reached, to address some of the major philosophical issues that arise involving that particular perfection. For instance, Chapter five is entitled “God’s Knowledge.” It begins by giving an account of what perfect knowledge, or omniscience, is. After this there is an extended discussion of one of the major problems associated with omniscience, namely, the problem of foreknowledge and human freedom. If God knows the future infallibly, how can any human actions be done freely? Morris provides an account and an evaluation of the most prominent answers that Christian philosophers are giving to this question.

Three major problems exist for this part of the book. Occasionally, it is difficult to tell when a view Morris endorses is a view widely held among philosophers and when Morris’ view is a minority position. For instance, Morris’ favored account in chapter three of omnipotence, while extremely interesting and provocative (and maybe even true) is not a widely held view.

A second problem is that discussions may sometimes become too detailed for the casual lay reader. For instance, in his discussion of human freedom and divine foreknowledge, Morris presents five different responses to the problem in the space of ten pages. The different positions are subtly complicated and it will take the reader a great deal of time to keep them straight.

The third problem is that some of the perfections discussed are, I suspect, of more interest to professional philosophers than to the thoughtful lay Christian. Chapters six, seven and eight—on God’s being, God’s eternity, and God’s relation to creation—seem rather arcane for the neophyte philosopher.

Nonetheless, chapters three through eight will repay the close study which is required of them. The reader will undoubtedly find a great many thought-provoking ideas there.

Finally, in chapter nine, Morris undertakes to help us understand two of the central mysteries of the Christian religion, the doctrines of the incarnation and the Trinity. While these doctrines are not direct consequences of perfect being theology, their inclusion in this book is appropriate. I suspect that nearly every thoughtful Christian has, at one time or another, puzzled over these doctrines. Morris is not content to leave them incomprehensible. Rather, he proposes some extremely creative and provocative views. Of particular interest is his “two minds” account of the incarnation in which the person Jesus has two minds, one divine and one human. This is, perhaps, somewhat like a person with multiple personality disorder. This chapter should generate a good deal of profitable reflection and discussion among its readers.

Despite some problems in the second part of the book, Our Idea of God is a fine introduction to the current philosophical discussion of the nature of God.

David S. Faber
Some reasons to subscribe to The Cresset this year—

* articles from the 1993 Cresset Colloquium on Race in America
* Walter Wangerin’s new book, Branta
* film reviews by Rick Barton and Jennifer Voigt
* columns on political life by Al Trost and Bruce Berner
* popular culture by Jim Combs
* more on music, churches and the combination by Maureen Jais-Mick
* cover art by Frank Dudley, by prison inmates, by Deborah Healy
* John Barbour will ask what Sophie's Choice contributes to a theology of suicide
* Janet Larson reviews Richard Maxwell on Dickens' and Hugo's cities
* Patrick Byrne describes Lonergan’s theory of knowledge, belief and love

and more interesting and stimulating poetry, reviews, and articles than we know of at the moment

If you receive the Cresset at school, compliments of Valparaiso University, why not support us by giving gift subscriptions? Five or more are only $5 apiece for a year! Regular subscription, $8.50 per year. We'll send gift card, too.

Please begin a year's subscription for

Name ____________________________________________
Address _____________________________________________ Apt. ________
City _____________________________ Zip ________________

Bill me before October 1

Name ____________________________________________
Address _____________________________________________ Apt. ________
City _____________________________ Zip ________________

Mail to The Cresset, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, IN 46383